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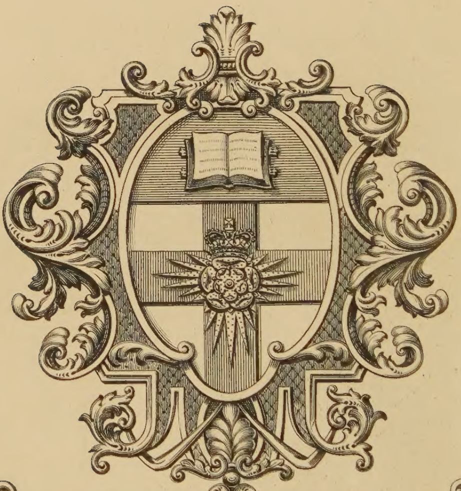

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THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

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51 VICTORIÆ, 1888.

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TO

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First Volume of the Session.

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After short debate, Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House regrets that an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan; but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After further debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words 'this House regrets an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan, but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter' be there added."

Amendment proposed to the said Amendment,

To leave out all the words after the word "but" to the end of the Amendment, in order to add the words "the circumstances attending his arrest be referred to the Committee of Privileges of this House, to consider whether any or what action should be taken thereupon, and what measures should be taken to prevent such occurrences in the future,"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day, and To-morrow of the other Orders of the Day,—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [FOURTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February :]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 384

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis* :)—Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill—*Considered* in Committee :—Resolution *agreed to,* and *reported* :—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Richard, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Carew*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 117] 475

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill—

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The House *divided;* Ayes 122, Noes 19; Majority 103.—(Div. List, No. 3.)

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Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [FIFTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 477

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. O'Brien:*)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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ORDER OF THE DAY.

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [Adjourned Debate] [Sixth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 566

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith, and to assure Her Majesty that this House will concur in empowering such Commission to take evidence on oath, to compel attendance of witnesses, to grant certificates of indemnity to witnesses in such cases as may be desirable and proper, and to call for all necessary records and documents,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*) 664

After short debate, Amendment proposed,

After the word "therewith," to insert the words "and also in the transactions of such of the London Vestries and District Boards as the Commissioners may deem necessary,"—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 39, Noes 130; Majority 91.—(Div. List, No. 4.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

STANDING ORDERS—

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SELECTION—

Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 690

Breach of Promise of Marriage Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Roper Lethbridge, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Caine, Dr. Commins, Colonel Makins*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 128] 690

[2.50.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

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France (Price of Bread)—Question, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) 698

Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services Bill (No. 3)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Steward*) .. 698
After debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly.

Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1^a (No. 16) 707

[6.0.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

Poor Law (Ireland)—Workhouses—Question, Colonel Waring; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 707

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Education Department — Technical Instruction — Institution of Schools—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 708

Burmah (Upper)—Forces Employed—Number and Costs—Question, Mr. Slagg; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 709

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Arrest of Mr. Gilhooly, M.P.—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 709

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Liquor Ordinances (Crown Colonies)—Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) .. 711

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INSPECTION OF QUARRIES—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 718

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SEVENTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 718

After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 317, Noes 229; Majority 88.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 836

Main Question again proposed 841

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Bowen Rowlands*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 129] 841

Colonial Marriages Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, Sir John Puleston*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 130] 841

[1.40.]

LORDS, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20.

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Moved, "That a Return of all cases of febrile disease in the Dublin Garrison since January 1881, ordered to be printed 9th September 1887, be continued to 31st December 1887."—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*) 851

After short debate, Motion amended, and *agreed to.*

[6.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20.

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—o—

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (REMAND OF A MEMBER IN CUSTODY)—Letter received by Mr. Speaker.. .. 857

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [EIGHTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February]:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 883

After long debate, Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Address, to add the words—" But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that another deficit is threatened in the Indian Budget, and that it has been deemed necessary to raise the Salt Tax in order to meet the same;

" That it views with anxiety these recurring deficits in the Indian Revenue Accounts, and urges greater economy in the Administration;

" That it calls upon the Government of India to meet the wishes of the Native population, both in respect of finance and administration, so far as it can do so consistently with prudence and sound policy, and that it urges Her Majesty's Government to redeem the promise made in the Queen's Speech two years ago, that an inquiry should be made into the Government of India by the appointment of a Royal Commission for that purpose,"—(*Mr. Samuel Smith*) 945

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed 979

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Dr. Cameron*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill—
Motion for Leave (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 979
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 131.]

Criminal Evidence Bill—
Motion for Leave (*Mr Attorney General*) 981
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 132.]

Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. King, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. White, Sir John Puleston, Lord Claud Hamilton, Admiral Field, Mr. Bond*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 133] 981

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister (India) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir William Plowden, Dr. Farquharson, Viscount Baring*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 134] 981

Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation) Bill —*Ordered* (*Mr. Johnston, Mr. Chance*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 135] .. 981

[1·30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21.

Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services Bill (No. 3)—
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*The Lord Steward*) 982
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *referred* to a Select Committee accordingly.
Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Committee to consider the best means for providing for the maintenance and for the services of the Cathedral Church of Truro,"—(*The Earl Stanhope*) 984
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

THEATRES—BURNING OF THE EXETER THEATRE—REPORT OF CAPTAIN SHAW—Question, Observations, The Earl of Milltown; Reply, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) 985

[5.0.]

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QUESTIONS.

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Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Suffolk County Courts—Question, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 992

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Army (India)—Coir Fibre Beds—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 993

Post Office—Addresses—"and Co."—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 994

Army—The Royal Commission on Warlike Stores—Questions, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 994

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Evictions (Ireland)—Tenants of Evicted Farms—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 996

Irish Land Act, 1870—Compensation—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 997

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India—The Telegraph Department—Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1000

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HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH—THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS —Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1008

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

—o—

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY AND MR. BRADLAUGH—Personal Explanation, Mr. Bradlaugh 1008

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day, and To-morrow of the other Orders of the Day,—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE [NINTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February :] —Question again proposed :—Debate *resumed* 1010

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Address, to add the words—" Humbly to express to your Majesty our regret that no reference is made in Your Most Gracious Speech to the acute distress which prevails in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, to the disturbances which have arisen out of that distress, or to any projected remedial legislation intended to put an end to the critical state of matters which at present exists in the North of Scotland,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) 1034

Question proposed, " That those words be there added : "—After long debate, *Moved*, " That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Wallace:*) —Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question put : — The House *divided;* Ayes 133, Noes 194; Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 6.)

Main Question again proposed 1119

Moved, " That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Anderson :*)—After short debate, Motion *agreed to :*—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. De Cobain*) 1121

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Fenwick*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 138.]

Wages (Ireland) Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. De Cobain*) 1121

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Howell*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 139.]

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT (1887) (CASES TRIED)—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Return of Cases tried under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' up to the 18th day of February, under the following heads:—Date of Trial; Place of Trial; Names of Magistrates presiding; Name and age of accused; Date when offence was committed; Place where offence was committed; Nature of offence; Result of Trial; Sentence (if convicted); whether appealed against; Date when Appeal heard; Place where Appeal heard; Name of Judge by whom Appeal heard; Result of Appeal,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*) 1122

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 92, Noes 134; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 7.)

Intermediate Education (Wales) (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Kenyon, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Swetenham, Mr. Walsh, Admiral Mayne*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 136] 1133

Steam Engines and Boilers Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Pickard, Mr. Arthur Acland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 137] 1133

Solicitors (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. O'Doherty*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 140] .. 1134

[2.40.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [TENTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February:]—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1134

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words,—"Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that, owing to the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, the payment of rents in Scotland fixed before such fall has in many cases become impossible, and that, by reason of many landlords not having made any reduction of rents or having made reductions wholly inadequate, great loss, in some cases amounting to ruin, is being incurred by occupiers of land, and to pray that, by the creation of some competent tribunal or otherwise, steps may be taken to relieve the occupiers of agricultural land from the serious consequences above mentioned,"—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 77, Noes 190: Majority 113.—(Div. List, No. 8.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech—continued.

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to draw up the Address to be presented to Her Majesty upon the said Resolution:—And a Committee was *appointed* of,—Mr. Wharton, Colonel Duncan, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Secretary Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Manners, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Akers-Douglas; That Three be the quorum:—To withdraw immediately.

Ordered, That Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament be referred to the Committee.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH—

Report of Address *brought up*, and read a first and second time .. 1172

Amendment proposed,

At the end of paragraph 7, to insert the words—"Humbly to represent to Your Majesty that it will conduce to our proper appreciation of certain of the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our consideration, if we can be informed that no Correspondence has been exchanged between Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, containing any assurances of a contractual character, which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's actual Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy, or, if such assurances have been given, that they should be brought to our knowledge,"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*:—After further short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Further Proceeding on the Report of the Address *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Anderson*) .. 1195

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mark Stewart*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 102, Noes 190; Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 9.)

Parochial Boards (Scotland) Bill [Bill 68]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) .. 1203

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 91, Noes 168; Majority 77.—(Div. List, No. 10.)

QUESTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. Henry Fowler, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1204

LAW AND JUSTICE—LIVERPOOL ASSIZES—SENTENCES OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BY MR. JUSTICE GRANTHAM—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1205

MOTIONS.

RATING AND VALUATION (SCOTLAND)—

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider the Law relating to the Rating and Valuation of the various kinds of Property subject to Assessment in Scotland, and to report what amendments may be necessary therein,"—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson*) 1206

MOTIONS.

—o—

Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. De Cobain*) 1121

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Fenwick*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 138.]

Wages (Ireland) Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. De Cobain*) 1121

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Howell*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 139.]

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT (1887) (CASES TRIED)—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Return of Cases tried under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' up to the 18th day of February, under the following heads:—Date of Trial; Place of Trial; Names of Magistrates presiding; Name and age of accused; Date when offence was committed; Place where offence was committed; Nature of offence; Result of Trial; Sentence (if convicted); whether appealed against; Date when Appeal heard; Place where Appeal heard; Name of Judge by whom Appeal heard; Result of Appeal,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*) 1122

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 92, Noes 134; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 7.)

Intermediate Education (Wales) (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Kenyon, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Swetenham, Mr. Walsh, Admiral Mayne*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 136] 1133

Steam Engines and Boilers Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Pickard, Mr. Arthur Acland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 137] 1133

Solicitors (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. O'Doherty*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 140] .. 1134

[2.40.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [TENTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February:]—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1134

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words,—"Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that, owing to the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, the payment of rents in Scotland fixed before such fall has in many cases become impossible, and that, by reason of many landlords not having made any reduction of rents or having made reductions wholly inadequate, great loss, in some cases amounting to ruin, is being incurred by occupiers of land, and to pray that, by the creation of some competent tribunal or otherwise, steps may be taken to relieve the occupiers of agricultural land from the serious consequences above mentioned,"—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 77, Noes 190: Majority 113.—(Div. List, No. 8.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech—continued.

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to draw up the Address to be presented to Her Majesty upon the said Resolution:—And a Committee was *appointed* of,—Mr. Wharton, Colonel Duncan, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Secretary Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Manners, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Akers-Douglas; That Three be the quorum:—To withdraw immediately.

Ordered, That Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament be referred to the Committee.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH—

Report of Address *brought up*, and read a first and second time .. 1172

Amendment proposed,

At the end of paragraph 7, to insert the words—"Humbly to represent to Your Majesty that it will conduce to our proper appreciation of certain of the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our consideration, if we can be informed that no Correspondence has been exchanged between Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, containing any assurances of a contractual character, which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's actual Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy, or, if such assurances have been given, that they should be brought to our knowledge,"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*:—After further short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Further Proceeding on the Report of the Address *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Anderson*) .. 1195

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mark Stewart*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 102, Noes 190; Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 9.)

Parochial Boards (Scotland) Bill [Bill 68]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) .. 1203

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 91, Noes 168; Majority 77.—(Div. List, No. 10.)

QUESTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. Henry Fowler, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1204

LAW AND JUSTICE—LIVERPOOL ASSIZES—SENTENCES OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BY MR. JUSTICE GRANTHAM—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1205

MOTIONS.

RATING AND VALUATION (SCOTLAND)—

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider the Law relating to the Rating and Valuation of the various kinds of Property subject to Assessment in Scotland, and to report what amendments may be necessary therein,"—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson*) 1206

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Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Dr. Cameron, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Trevor Lawrence, Sir Walter Foster*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 141] 1206

Official Trustee Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Warmington, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Bowen Rowlands*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 142] 1206

[6.0.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

BULGARIA—EUROPEAN TURKEY—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Address for, "Further Papers on the late events in European Turkey,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 1207

After short debate, Address *agreed to.*

Land Transfer Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª (No. 21) .. 1214

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª (No. 22) 1215

[5.15.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ST. OLAVE'S BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1215

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—BOARDS OF GUARDIANS—OAKUM PICKING—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1216

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—"EMERGENCY MEN"—Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1217

ROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—THE PROPOSED EXPENDITURE—Question, Mr. P. M'Donald; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1217

INLAND REVENUE—TRANSFER STAMP DUTIES—COMPOUNDING—Questions, Mr. S. Williamson; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1218

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—SUPERSESSION—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1219

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY NEAR ENNIS—THE LATE HEAD CONSTABLE WHELEHAN—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1220

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—BOYCOTTING THE POLICE—SENTENCES—Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Mr. J. E. Redmond, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1220

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS (WICKLOW)—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1222

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ATTACK ON A CHURCH AT CASTLECALDWELL—Questions, Mr. H. Campbell, Mr. Jordan; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1223

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MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT—THE "EMBLETON"—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1224

ARMY — OFFICERS AT REVIEWS AND INSPECTIONS — Question, Mr. W. Abraham (Limerick, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1225

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT, 1882 — Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1226

LAW OFFICERS (IRELAND)—RESIGNATION OF MR. J. C. BLAKE, CROWN SOLICITOR—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1226

EGYPT—ADMINISTRATION—SIR EVELYN BARING—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1227

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—GRAY'S INN ROAD—DWELLINGS OF THE LABOURING CLASSES—Question, Mr. Atherley-Jones; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1227

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—NEW STREET FROM HOLBORN TOWN HALL—Questions, Mr. J. Rowlands, Mr. Atherley-Jones; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1229

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CHARGES OF "BLACKMAILING" — Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1230

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IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS, CO. DOWN—Questions, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1233

INLAND REVENUE—CUSTOMS OFFICERS FOR BONDED WAREHOUSES—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1235

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CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—MILTON ABBAS SCHOOL, BLANDFORD, DORSETSHIRE—Question, Mr. Portman; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1246
"MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT"—INDEX TO THE RETURN—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) 1247
SUGAR BOUNTIES—THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1247
NORTH AMERICAN FISHERIES—THE TREATY—Questions, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1248
LAW AND JUSTICE—LIVERPOOL ASSIZES—SENTENCES OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BY MR. JUSTICE GRANTHAM — Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Powell Williams; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1248
CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—JUVENILE CONVICTS—Question, Mr. Herbert Gardner; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1249
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TECHNICAL EDUCATION—Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1250
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THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS—THE REPORT—Question, Mr. Herbert Gardner; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1250

MR. R. T. GUNTON, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1251

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Labouchere, Sir Bernhard Samuelson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1251

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1252

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1253

HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH—THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS—Personal Explanation, Mr. W. E. Gladstone 1253

ORDER OF THE DAY.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH—REPORT [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for Further Proceedings on Report of Address .. 1254

Amendment proposed,

After paragraph 11, to insert the words,—"That this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to any measure for Ireland which shall deal with the arrears of excessive and unjust rents which have accumulated in many cases during the last two years of agricultural depression from the inability of tenants to pay them, and which shall prevent the wholesale eviction of tenants which is threatened in the district of Loughrea and Woodford."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 186, Noes 261; Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 11.)

Address *agreed to*:—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

MOTIONS.

SUPPLY—

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty,—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*)

WAYS AND MEANS—

Moved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) .. 1348

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation) Bill [Bill 135]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Johnston*) .. 1349

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1350

EAST INDIA [PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS]—

Moved, "That To-morrow a Committee be appointed to consider of authorizing the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise money in the United Kingdom for the purchase of the Oudh and Rohilcund Railway, and for the construction, extension, and equipment of Railways in India through the agency of Companies (Queen's *Recommendation* signified),"—(*Sir John Gorst*) 1350

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*. [1.15.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST, AND THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS—Question, The Earl of Strafford; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Harris) 1351

Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill (No. 13)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a},"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) .. 1352

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^{a} accordingly.

Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services Bill [H.L.]—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1353

[4.45.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—TRIAL OF REV. J. M'FADDEN, P.P.—Questions, Mr. Blane; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1353

POST OFFICE AND INLAND REVENUE — STAMPS FOR CHEQUES, &c. — Question, Mr. Sydney Gedge; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1353

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE—USE OF INK IN TRANSCRIBING—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) .. 1354

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—CORK DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM—APPOINTMENT OF REV. MR. KERR—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1355

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MACROOM UNION—PROTESTANT INMATES—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1355

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IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION (CO. DONEGAL)—UNION OF STRANORLAR—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1356

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885 — ARREARS OF INSTALMENTS OF THE PURCHASE MONEY—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1356

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—RETURNS OF THE JUDICIAL RENTS—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1357

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—TREES IN ST. JAMES'S PARK—Questions, Sir John Lubbock, Dr. Farquharson; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) 1357

COLONIZATION—COLONIAL CONFERENCE—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1357

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS ACT, 1875—AMENDMENT—EMIGRATION—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1358

ARMS (IRELAND) ACT—REFUSAL OF GUN LICENCE—MR. W. COTTER—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1358

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE SORTING OFFICE, DUBLIN—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1359

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE MAGISTRACY—REFUSAL OF BAIL—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1360

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CECIL ROCHE, R.M.—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1361

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—"BLUNT *v.* BYRNE"—PRISON CLOTHING—Questions, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1363

POST OFFICE—MAIL CONTRACTS—SUBSIDIES TO STEAM COMPANIES—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1364

POST OFFICE—AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACTS—PRIVILEGES TO FOREIGN STEAMERS—Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1365

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SALARIES—DELAY IN PAYMENT—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1366

ADMIRALTY — COASTGUARD STATION ON BERE ISLAND—Questions, Mr. Gilhooly; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1366

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, SESSION 1887—Question, Mr. E. Robertson; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. 1367

ADMIRALTY—MR. F. W. SMITH, A LOWER DIVISION CLERK—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1367

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS — WINCHESTER ELECTION — Questions, Mr. Moss, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1368

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW—Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1369

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The Magistracy (Ireland)—Kanturk Petty Sessions Court—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1370

State-Aided Emigration (Ireland)—Charges against Mr. Stoney—Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1370

Charity Commission—Christ's Hospital—Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) .. 1373

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—5th Lancashire Artillery Volunteers—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1374

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Bantry Petty Sessions—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) .. 1374

Post Office—Dismissal of Samuel Harvey, a Letter Carrier—Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1375

Malta—Constitutional Changes—Question, Mr. Osborne Morgan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1375

Crofters' Commission—Holdings—Question, Sir George Trevelyan; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1375

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887—Tenants of the Lord Lieutenant—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1376

Army Contracts—Supply of Leather—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Lafone; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1376

Army—Chaplains' Department—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 1377

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Sullivan, the Kerry Blacksmith—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1378

Civil Service Commission—Suspension of Writers—Question, Mr. Gent-Davis; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. 1379

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Attack on a Belfast Funeral Procession—Questions, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1380

Business of the House—Questions, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1381

MOTIONS.

Business of the House—Resolution—

Moved, "That the Consideration of the proposed Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion on every day on which the consideration of those Rules may be set down by the Government,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1382

After short debate, Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the word "day," to insert the words "except Wednesdays,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 150, Noes 247; Majority 97.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1397

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

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Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—I. Sittings of the House—Resolution [First Night]—

Moved, "That, unless the House otherwise order, the House shall meet every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, at Three of the clock, and shall, unless previously adjourned, sit till One of the clock a.m., when the Speaker shall adjourn the House without Question put, unless a Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means, or unless proceedings made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, or otherwise exempted from the operation of this Standing Order, be then under consideration:

That at Eight of the clock the Speaker or Chairman, as the case may be, shall suspend the sitting by leaving the Chair until Nine of the clock. If, after the resumption of business, at Nine of the clock, and before a quarter-past Nine, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until a quarter-past Nine, when he shall count the House or Committee.

That at half-an-hour after midnight on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, except as aforesaid, and at half-past Five of the clock on Wednesdays, the proceedings on any business then under consideration shall be interrupted; and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the business then under consideration, and any business subsequently appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit, unless the Speaker ascertains by the preponderance of voices that a Majority of the House desires that such business should be deferred until a later day:

Provided always, That on the interruption of business the Closure may be moved, and if moved, or if proceedings under the Closure Rule be then in progress, the Speaker or Chairman shall not leave the Chair, until the Questions consequent thereon, as provided in the Rule 'Closure of Debate,' have been decided:

That after the business under consideration at half-past Twelve, and half-past Five respectively, has been disposed of, no Opposed Business shall be taken; and the Orders of the Day not disposed of at the close of the Sitting shall stand for the next day on which the House shall sit:

That a Motion may be made by a Minister of the Crown at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, to the following effect: 'That the proceedings on any specified Business if under discussion at half-past Twelve this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order 'Sittings of the House:'

Provided always, That after any Business exempted from the operation of this Resolution is disposed of, the remaining Business of the Sitting shall be dealt with according to the provisions applicable to business taken after half-past Twelve o'clock,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) .. 1400

After debate, Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the words "otherwise order," to insert the words "the Standing Orders relating to Wednesday Sittings shall no longer apply to the Sittings on Wednesday, but shall apply to the Sittings on Friday, and the Standing Orders relating to Fridays shall no longer apply to the Sittings on Friday, but shall apply to the Sittings on Wednesday, and,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) .. 1428

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 105, Noes 167; Majority 62.

Division List, Ayes and Noes .. 1432

Amendment proposed, in line 2, after the word "at," to insert the words "half-past,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) .. 1435

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-past' be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 100, Noes 214; Majority 114.—(Div. List, No. 14.)

Amendment proposed, in line 34, to leave out the words "One of the clock a.m.," and to insert the words "half-past Eleven of the clock p.m.,"—(*Mr. Broadhurst*) .. 1444

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, to omit from the proposed New Rule lines 8 to 13 inclusive,—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1447

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed new Rule," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in Rule I, line 14, to omit the words "half-an-hour after,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1448

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Rule," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 16, to leave out from the word "interrupted," to the word "day," in line 25, inclusive, in order to insert the words "and the Question then under consideration shall be put, unless at the times before mentioned a Motion shall be made 'That the Debate be now adjourned,' which Motion shall be decided without Amendment or Debate. If such Motion be resolved in the affirmative, the Business under consideration shall stand adjourned until the next day on which the House shall sit. If the Motion be resolved in the negative, the Question under consideration shall be put forthwith,"—(*Mr. Donald Crawford*) 1449

Question,

"That the words, 'and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his Report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee, That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, that every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the Business then under consideration, and any Business subsequently appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit,' stand part of the Question."

After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 23, to leave out from the word "sit" to the word "day," in line 25, inclusive,—(*Mr. Francis Powell*) .. 1450

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 29, after the word "thereon," to insert the words "and on any further Motion,"—(*Mr. Leonard Courtney*) .. 1451

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 31, to leave out the words "half-past,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*). 1451

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-past' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in line 35, to leave out the words "by a Minister of the Crown,"—(*Mr. Buchanan*) 1455

Question proposed, "That the words 'by a Minister of the Crown' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, line 38, leave out "half-past,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1457

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Rule:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words—"That whenever the House is in Committee at half-past Twelve of the clock a.m. the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means may, at the request of Mr. Speaker, take the Chair as Deputy Speaker, for the purpose of concluding the Business of the Sitting,"—(*Mr. Howorth*) 1458

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words—"That the Chairman of Ways and Means do take the Chair as Deputy Speaker when requested so to do by Mr. Speaker without any formal communication to the House. And that Mr. Speaker do nominate, at the commencement of every Session, a panel of not more than five Members to act as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) 1458

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words—"That if, during the first quarter of an hour after the Speaker or Chairman has returned to the Chair, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the Sitting until the termination of the said quarter of an hour, when he shall count the House or the Committee,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) .. 1459

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

EAST INDIA [PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS]—

Resolutions *considered* in Committee 1462

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

[12.50.]

LORDS, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27.

INDIA (CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION)—THE REPORT—Question, The Earl of Kimberley; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross) 1463

Law of Distress Amendment Bill (No. 4)—

House in Committee (according to order) 1463

Amendments made; Bill to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 23.)

AFRICA (SOUTH)—THE DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY—Question, Observations, The Earl of Rosebery; Reply, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (The Earl of Onslow) 1466

[5.15.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27.

QUESTIONS.

QUEEN'S SPEECH—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS *reported* .. 1469

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS *reported* 1469

PUBLIC HEALTH—INFECTIOUS DISEASES—COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION—Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1469

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—CITY OF CORK—Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. J. O'Connor; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1470

ARMY—COLONEL PHILIP DICKSON—Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) .. 1471

SCOTLAND—INSPECTORS OF MINES (WESTERN DISTRICT)—Questions, Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1472

TRADE AND COMMERCE—EXPORTS FROM GERMANY, 1885-1886—Question, Colonel Bridgeman; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1473

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Islands of the Southern Pacific—The Convention of 1847—Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1473
Post Office—Mail Despatches to the United States—Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1474
Army (India)—Madras—Army Clothing Department—Exclusion of European Articles—Questions, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1475
Wales—The Tithe Agitation—Cwm, Co. Flint—Alleged Assault by an Emergency Man—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1476
Law and Justice—House of Lords—Appeals—Question, Mr. E. Robertson; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) .. 1476
Army—Horse Breeding—Report of the Royal Commission—Questions, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Burdett-Coutts; Answers, The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners) 1476
Army Pensions—Invalided Soldiers—Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) .. 1477
Venezuela—Expulsion of a British Official—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1478
Law and Justice—County Courts—Question, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1479
Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Statistics—Questions, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1479
Irish Land Commission Court, Kerry—Fair Rents—Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1480
Trade and Commerce—Foreign Competition—Mr. Giffen's Report—Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1480
Malta Boundary Commissioners—Expenses—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1481
Commissioners of Irish Lights—The Bull Rock—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1481
Criminal Law—Murder of Elizabeth Oliver at East Hull—Question, Mr. Grotrian; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1482
Gambling Acts—Prize Drawing at Stoke-on-Trent—Question, Captain Heathcote; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1483
Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Proceedings at Rathmore Petty Sessions—Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1483
Allotments Act, 1887—Crown Lands—Compulsory Purchase—Questions, Commander Bethell, Mr. H. Gardner; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1485
India (Bengal)—Wreck of the "Sir John Lawrence"—Question, Commander Bethell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1485
Sea Fishery Department—Trawling within Territorial Waters—Questions, Mr. Rowntree, Mr. Esslemont; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1486

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Post Office (England and Wales)—Postal Orders—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1487
Post Office—Postal Charges at Shanghai—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1487
Post Office Contracts—The Australian Mails—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1487
Riots, &c. (Ireland)—Alleged Outrage at Belfast—Question, Mr. Johnston: Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1488
The Food Supply—Exportation of Cattle, &c. from the Argentine Republic—Question, Mr. Stephens; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1489
The Metropolitan Police—Numbers—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1489
Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission for County Down—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1490
Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission for County Donegal—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1490
The Magistracy (Ireland)—Petty Sessions Court, Kanturk—Refusal of Summons—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1491
Irish Land Commission—The Lord Lieutenant's County Down Tenants—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1492
Irish Land Commission—Special Report Schedules—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1493
Rating Assessments—Exemption of Lunatic Asylums—Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1494
The Royal Family—Additional Grants—Questions, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1494
Public Bills—Amendments to Question for Second Reading—Parochial Boards, &c. Bill — Crofters, &c. Bill — Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answers, Mr. Speaker 1495
Turkey—The Dardanelles—Alleged Purchase of an Island—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1496
The New Rules of Procedure, 1888—Rule 1 (Sittings of the House)—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1496
The Estimates—Questions, Mr. Dillon, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Childers; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1497

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—Civil Services (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—

(In the Committee.)

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

(1.) £13,000, Supplementary, Public Buildings, Ireland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1499
(2.) £12,000, Supplementary, Science and Art Buildings (Dublin).—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1517

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES, &c.—Committee—*continued.*

(3.) £1,100, Supplementary, Lighthouses Abroad.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1524

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(4.) £1, Supplementary, Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1524

(5.) £481, Supplementary, Colonial Office.

(6.) £2,277, Supplementary, Charity Commission. — After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1527

(7.) £7,100, Supplementary, Mint, including Coinage.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1530

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(8.) £38,073, Supplementary, County Courts.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1534

(9.) £7,300, Supplementary, Police—Counties and Boroughs, Great Britain.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1545

(10.) £1,963, Supplementary, Courts of Law and Justice, Scotland. — After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1547

(11.) £400, Supplementary, Police—Counties and Burghs, Scotland.

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,550, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers" 1548

After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 195; Noes 124; Majority 71.—(Div. List, No. 15.)

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(13.) £676, Supplementary, National Gallery.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1590

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit upon *Wednesday.*

EAST INDIA [PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS]—Resolutions [February 24] *reported* 1592

Resolution 1 read a first and second time, and *agreed to.*

Resolution 2 read a first time:—*Moved,* "That this House doth agree with the said Resolution,"—(*Sir John Gorst:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution 3 read a first and second time, and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Sir John Gorst, Mr. Jackson:*)—*presented,* and read the first time [Bill 143.]

MOTIONS.

—o—

SUNDAY CLOSING ACTS (IRELAND)—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the operation of the Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland),"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1594

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Companies' Acts Consolidation and Amendment Bill—*Considered* in Committee:—Resolution *agreed to,* and *reported:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. James Maclean, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Lees*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 144] 1594

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 145] 1595

Metalliferous Mines Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Burt*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 146] 1595

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sinclair*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 147] 1595

Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Extracts Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Caldwell, Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Sir Archibald Campbell, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Cunninghame Graham*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 148] 1595

ADJOURNMENT—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn ; " after short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

[12.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

NEW PEER—

The Right Honourable Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, Baronet, G.C.M.G., created Baron Knutsford of Knutsford in the County Palatine of Chester

County Courts Consolidation Bill (No. 5)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1596

Motion *agreed to ;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill (No. 16)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1597

Motion *agreed to ;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

SWEATING SYSTEM—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the sweating system at the east end of London, and to report thereon to the House : and that the witnesses before the said Select Committee be examined on oath,"—(*The Earl of Dunraven*) .. 1598

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Liability of Trustees Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Herschell*) ; read 1ª (No. 24) 1619

[6.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Grand Junction Water Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1619

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question : " —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided ;* Ayes 104, Noes 188 ; Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 16.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to* :—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

Merchant Seamen—Case of the Negro Riley — Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1636

Western Australia—Grant of Responsible Government—Questions, Mr. King, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1637

Criminal Law—Sentences of Flogging—Question, Mr. Powell-Williams; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1638

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 — John Sullivan, Blacksmith—Captain Massey, R.M. — Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1639

Civil Service Writers—Promotion to the Lower Division—Question, Sir John Puleston; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1640

Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—Action of Colonial Governments—Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1640

Egypt—Lighthouses in the Red Sea—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1641

Irish Land Commission—Mr. O'Callaghan, Sub-Commissioner—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1641

Ireland — Boycotting — Death of Michael Sullivan, Car Driver, Killarney — Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1642

Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—Labels on Goods—"Foreign Make"—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1642

Irish Land Commission—Appeal of Jeremiah Green, of Beaufort, Killarney—Questions, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1643

Army (Ordnance Department)—Failure of the 9·2-inch Guns—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1644

Army (Ordnance Store Department)—Inspection and Reception of Leather—Questions, Mr. Howell, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1645

Education (Scotland)—School Board Elections — Question, Dr. R. Macdonald; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 1647

Police (Metropolis) — Street Robberies in St. Luke's—Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1647

Central Africa—The Slave Trade—Attack on Presbyterian Mission Stations—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1648

Pensions—Civil List of King George III. — Questions, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1649

Criminal Law—Case of Cope, a Convict—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1651

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SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—TWEED FISHERIES ACTS—AMENDMENT—Question, Mr. Thorburn; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1651

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—AWARD OF THE MERIT GRANT—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1652

BURMAH (UPPER)—THE TEAK FORESTS—Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1652

POST OFFICE—IRREGULAR DELIVERY OF THE IRISH MAILS—Question, Mr. De Cobain; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1652

TRUCK ACT, 1887—PAYMENT OF WAGES—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1653

INTERNATIONAL SUGAR BOUNTIES CONFERENCE—THE BANQUET AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1654

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES — RE-APPOINTMENT — Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1654

MOROCCO—ALLEGED OUTRAGE UPON A BRITISH SUBJECT—Question, Sir John Simon; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1656

THEATRES (LONDON AND THE PROVINCES)—CONSTRUCTION—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Tatton Egerton; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1656

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER)—Letter received by Mr. Speaker 1657

ORDER OF THE DAY.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—II. CLOSURE OF DEBATE —RESOLUTION [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—

Moved, "That Questions for the Closure of Debate under Standing Order XIVA. shall be decided in the affirmative, if, when a Division be taken, it appears by the numbers declared from the Chair that not less than One Hundred Members voted in the Majority in support of the Motion."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1657

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question to add the words "Provided always that should the Question for the Closure of Debate be decided in the negative, no similar Motion shall be made on the same Question until after the time of two hours has elapsed,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*) 1659

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed 1660

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 256, Noes 131; Majority 122.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1674

Resolved, That Questions for the Closure of Debate under Standing Order XIVA. shall be decided in the affirmative, if, when a Division be taken, it appears by the numbers declared from the Chair that not less than One Hundred Members voted in the Majority in support of the Motion.

III.—DISORDERLY CONDUCT.

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do order Members whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's Sitting; and that the Sergeant-at-Arms do act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair, in pursuance of this Resolution. But if, on any occasion, Mr. Speaker

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

or the Chairman deems that his powers under this Standing Order are inadequate, he may name such Member or Members in pursuance of the Standing Order (Order in Debate), or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members.

"Provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the Service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate), shall forthwith withdraw from the precincts of the House, subject, however, in the case of such suspended Members, to the proviso in that Standing Order regarding their service on Private Bill Committees,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) .. 1677

After debate, Amendment proposed, in line 8, to leave out from the words "Order in Debate" to the end of the Question,—(*Sir Lyon Playfair*) 1689

After further short debate, Question put,

"That the words 'or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members, provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the Service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate) shall' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided;* Ayes 135, Noes 85; Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 18.)

Amendment proposed, in line 12, after the word "shall," to insert the words "if Mr. Speaker or the Chairman so direct,"—(*Mr. Whitbread*) 1696

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 89, Noes 117; Majority 28.—(Div. List, No. 19.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 13, to leave out from the word "House" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "and shall, ipso facto, be exempted for the same period from service on Committees,"—(*Sir Henry Tyler*) 1700

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 134, Noes 74; Majority 60.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1703

IV.—IRRELEVANCE OR REPETITION.

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition either of his own arguments, or of the arguments used by other Members in Debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1705

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "if it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, that a Member is addressing the House with continued irrelevance, or tedious repetition, or that he is unduly and unnecessarily prolonging Debate and arresting the Progress of Public Business, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, may so inform the House or the Committee.

"Thereupon any Member, rising in his place, may claim to move, That the Member in possession of the House be no longer heard.

"Such Motion shall be put forthwith without Amendment or Debate, unless the Member in possession of the House elects to discontinue his speech, in which case he may so inform the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees, and the Question shall not be put.

"A Member who is put to silence under this Rule by order of the House or the Committee is thereby prevented, on the first occasion, from taking part in any Debate during the remainder of that Sitting; on the second occasion during a week; and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, during a month from the time when such order of the House, or of the Committee, has been made,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*) .. 1709

Question proposed,

"That the words 'That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition,' stand part of the Question."

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, in line 3, to leave out the word "either,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*) 1712

Question proposed, "That the word 'either' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 170, Noes 94; Majority 76.—(Div. List, No. 21.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

V.—MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT IN ABUSE OF THE RULES OF THE HOUSE.

Moved, "That, if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair, or he may decline to propose the Question thereupon to the House,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1713

Amendment proposed, in line 6, to leave out from the word "Chair" to the end of the Question,—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) 1713

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 214, Noes 112; Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 22.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

VI.—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

Moved, "That, on days on which Government business has priority, the Government may arrange such Government business, whether Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions, in such order as they may think fit,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) .. 1720

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

VII.—COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

Moved, "That whenever an Order of the Day is read for the House to resolve itself into Committee (not being a Committee to consider a Message from the Crown, or the Committee of Supply, or of Ways and Means), Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, and the House shall thereupon resolve itself into such Committee, unless Notice of an Instruction thereto has been given, when such Instruction shall be first disposed of,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1721

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

VIII.—AMENDMENTS ON REPORT.

Resolved, That upon the Report stage of any Bill no Amendment may be proposed, which could not have been proposed in Committee without an Instruction from the House,—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

IX.—DIVISIONS.

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee, by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either declare the determination of the House or Committee, or name Tellers for a Division,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1722

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "and," to omit the words "he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either," and insert the words "if the minority be less than 40 he shall at his discretion,"—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler*) 1723

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it be in the discretion of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman to take the Vote of the House in the following manner:—He shall, on his decision being challenged, forthwith order the doors to be closed, whereupon he shall call upon the Members who support or who challenge his decision successively to rise in their places, and

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

he shall proceed to count them one by one in an audible voice. At the conclusion of such count he shall declare the determination of the House or Committee. Provided always, that on any Member declaring himself doubtful of the accuracy of such count, and calling for a Division, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall name Tellers for a Division,"—(*Mr. T. P. Gill*) 1724

Question proposed,

"That the words 'Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and,' stand part of the Question."

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Speeches in Parliament Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Atkinson, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Howard Vincent*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 149] .. 1731

Parliamentary Elections (Seamen's Votes) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Atkinson, Sir George Baden-Powell, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Brookfield, Marquess of Carmarthen, Sir James Corry, Sir Donald Currie, Colonel Duncan, Mr. Donkin, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Grotrian, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Heneage, Mr. King, Sir Charles Palmer, Sir John Puleston, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Thomas Sutherland, Mr. Whitley, Sir Samuel Wilson, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 150] .. 1731

Intestates Estates Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ambrose*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 151] 1731

[12.0.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE) — IX. DIVISIONS — RESOLUTION [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [THIRD NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th February:]—Question again proposed,

"That the words 'Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and,' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed* 1732

After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after the word "may," to insert the words "after the lapse of two minutes as indicated by the sand-glass,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) 1754

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to omit the words "at his discretion," in order to insert the words "if he shall be of opinion that a Division is called for dilatory or obstructive purposes,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) 1754

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Rule:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the words "at his discretion," in order to insert "if in his opinion the Division is frivolously or vexatiously claimed,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) .. 1754

Question proposed, "That the words 'at his discretion' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Words *inserted.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Main Question, to add the words "And, in case there is no Division, the Speaker or Chairman shall declare to the House, or the Committee, the number of the Minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall be thereupon taken down in the House, and printed with the lists of Divisions,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1760

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:" — After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, proposed 1762

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 236, Noes 93; Majority 143.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1763

X.—ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

Moved, "That the stages of Committee and Report on the Address to Her Majesty to convey the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, at the opening of the Session, be discontinued,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1766

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Address to Her Majesty be restricted to a Motion conveying the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and promising the careful attention of the House to the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to their consideration, and such Motion shall be put without Amendment not later than the third day of the Debate thereon, unless the House shall otherwise order,"—(*Mr. Heneage*) 1768

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

XI.—PUBLIC BILLS.

Moved, "That after Whitsuntide, Public Bills other than Government Bills be arranged on the Order Book so as to give priority to the Bills most advanced, and that Lords Amendments to Public Bills appointed to be considered, be placed first, to be followed by Third Readings, Considerations of Report, Bills in Progress in Committee, Bills appointed for Committee, and Second Readings,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) .. 1774

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "all Public Bills (other than Government Bills) introduced on or before the first Monday of the Session shall be set down in the Order Book for Second Reading in a list to be called 'The Second Reading List for Wednesdays up to Whitsuntide,' in an order to be determined by the number of signatures which shall have been subscribed to each such Bill at the close of the Sitting on the following Tuesday, each Member being entitled to subscribe his own name to three such Bills and no more; those Bills which have received most signatures being placed first, and the priority in the case of Bills which have received an equal number of signatures, being determined by lot, in a manner to be prescribed by Mr. Speaker; and that,"—(*Mr. Bryce*) 1779

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

XII.—BILLS RELATING TO RELIGION AND TRADE.

Resolved, That the Standing Order of the 9th and 30th of April 1772 concerning Bills relating to Religion and Trade be repealed.—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

XIII.—STANDING COMMITTEES.

Moved, "That the Resolutions of the House of the 1st December 1882 relating to the Constitution and Proceedings of Standing Committees for the Consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, and to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures be revived.
"Provided always, That the Committees shall consist of not more than Sixty nor less than Forty Members, subject to the power of addition to the said Committees by the Committee of Selection, as provided by the said Resolutions,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) .. 1789

Amendment proposed, after the word "Shipping," to insert the word "Agriculture,"—(*Mr. Heneage*) 1790

Question proposed, "That the word 'Agriculture' be there inserted:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed 1790

After short debate, it being half-an-hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed upon *Tuesday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

Fishing in Rivers Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. Coleridge*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 152] 1792

Nonconformist Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Atkinson, Captain Colomb, Sir John Simon, Mr. Grotrian, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham* (*Glamorgan*), *Mr. Thomas, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Ambrose, Mr. Aird, Mr. J. M. Maclean, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Sinclair*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 153] 1793

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 154] 1793

TOWN HOLDINGS—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1793

[5.40.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 1.

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (No. 12)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Stanley of Preston*) 1793

Amendment *moved*,

To leave out all the words after ("That") for the purpose of inserting ("no general measure dealing with railway traffic can be considered satisfactory which does not prohibit preferential rates in favour of foreign imports,"—(*The Earl of Jersey*) .. 1799

After debate, on Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion?"—Their Lordships *divided;* Contents 72, Not-Contents 45; Majority 27.
Division List, Contents and Not-Contents 1806

Resolved in the *affirmative*.

Original Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the 9*th instant*.

Vivisection—Motion for Papers—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for correspondence between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Anti-Vivisection Society in reference to two recent cases in which the law relating to vivisection appears to have been contravened,"—(*The Viscount Sidmouth*) .. 1810

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings—Motion for a Return (*The Viscount Cross*) 1811

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*.

[6.30]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 1.

QUESTIONS.

Local and Imperial Finance—Incidence of Imperial Taxation—Question, Sir Richard Paget; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1815

Post Office, Dublin (Telegraph Department)—Miss M. A. Gough—Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1816

The Anthropometrical System—Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1817

Post Office—Anglo-Australian Mail Contract—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1817

British Guiana—Ecclesiastical Affairs—Question, Mr. Crossley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1818

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Paddington Trustees—Sale of Land—Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson .. 1819

Law and Justice (Scotland)—Case of John Auld, a Bankrupt—Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1820

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—The Proclaimed Meeting at Dromore—Sentence on a Ballad Singer—Questions, Mr. P. M'Donald, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1821

National Education (Ireland)—Miss Donnelly, Aughiogan National School—Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1822

Army (Ordnance Store Department)—Examination and Acceptance of Leather—Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Howell, Sir William Plowden; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1822

War Office—Army Contracts—Specification and Inspection—Questions, Mr. Mattinson, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1824

Adulteration of Malt Liquors—Sale of Beer—Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 1825

Poor Law (Ireland)—Belfast Union—Charges against Dr. Spedding—Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1825

Scotland—Register of Sasines, Edinburgh—The Keeper—Questions, Mr. Macdonald Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1826

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Prison Commissioners (Scotland)—Closing of Cupar County Prison—Question, Mr. Anstruther; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1827
Literature, Science, and Art—South Kensington Museum—Loans of Works of Art—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) .. 1827
Post Office—Central Telegraph Office—Deductions from Pay—Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1829
Royal Commission on Civil Establishments—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1829
Fishery Board (Scotland)—Purchase of Boats—Question, Mr. Esslemont; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) . 1830
Customs Establishment—Outport Writers—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1830
Customs (Statistical Department)—Report of Committee—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. 1830
War Office—Island Bridge, Dublin—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) .. 1831
India—Government Publications—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1831
India—The Annual Reports—Statistics of Crime—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1832
India (Finance, &c.)—Increase of the Salt Tax—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1832
Law and Justice (Ireland)—Mrs. Ryan, a Prisoner for Contempt—Questions, Mr. Picton; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1833
Wales—The Tithe Agitation—Employment of the Military—Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1834
The Magistracy (Ireland)—Appointments under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) .. 1835
War Office (Auxiliary Forces)—The Tower Hamlets Engineer Volunteers—Burgess Short—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) .. 1835
Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—Sale of Foreign Meat—Question, Mr. C. W. Gray; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1836
Inland Revenue—Sale of Judicial Stamps for India—Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. King; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1837
Islands of the Pacific—Samoa—Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir James Fergusson) 1838
War Office (Contracts)—Default for Tenders—Question, Mr. Wootton Isaacson; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1839
War Office (Ordnance Store Department)—Recent Appointments—Questions, Mr. Howell, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1839
War Office (Contracts)—Returns—Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1840
Metropolitan Police—Numbers—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1841

WAR OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—TENDERS FOR TWEED—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) .. 1841

INDIA—GRAVING DOCK IN BOMBAY HARBOUR—Question, Mr. J. M. Maclean; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1843

BURMAH (UPPER)—THE RUBY MINES—Question, Mr. J. M. Maclean; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1843

INDIA—LICENSING OF IMMORALITY—WORKING OF THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS—Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1843

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—TITHE SEIZURES AND SALES—Question, Mr. J. Roberts; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1844

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CROSSING SWEEPERS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1845

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ASSIZES—NORTH-EASTERN CIRCUIT—Question, Mr. Herbert Gladstone; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1845

ARMY—PURCHASE OF ARTILLERY HORSES—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 1846

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1847

BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE—POLITICAL SERVANTS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1847

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT — POLITICAL SERVANTS — Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1848

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT ACT, 1887—CHARGES FOR SEARCHING—Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1848

ARMY—CIVIL APPOINTMENTS FOR RESERVE AND DISCHARGED SOLDIERS—Questions, Colonel Duncan, Sir Henry Havelock-Allan; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1849

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day subsequent to Supply be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to Public Meetings in the Metropolis,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 1850

Motion *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887-8).

(In the Committee.)

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(1.) £130, Supplementary, London University.

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Expenses of Special Missions Abroad" 1851

SUPPLY—CIVIL SECVICES, &c.—Committee—*continued.*

After debate, *Moved*, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Labouchere:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 68, Noes 314: Majority 246.—(Div. List, No. 24.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £18,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and for the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and for other Charges connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875" 1867

After debate, *Moved*, "That a reduced sum, not exceeding £300, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith:*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(4.) £7,500, Supplementary, Temporary Commissions.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1875

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,240, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses" 1875

Moved, "That a reduced sum, not exceeding £582, be granted for the said Service," (*Mr. Labouchere,*)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 151, Noes 238; Majority 87.—(Div. List, No. 25.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of open air public meetings for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis, and with a view to prevent ill-will and disorder, it is desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by a Committee of this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings may be held, and the limits of the right of interference therewith by the Executive Government,"—(*Sir Charles Russell*) 1879

After long debate, and it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

Trawling (Scotland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hunter, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Esslemont*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 155] 1954

LORDS.

NEW PEER.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

The Right Honourable Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, Baronet, G.C.M.G., created Baron Knutsford of Knutsford in the County Palatine of Chester.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND (CERTIFICATES).

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9.

The Earl of Kingston, *v.* Viscount Doneraile, deceased.
The Earl of Wicklow, *v.* Viscount Lifford, deceased.

SAT FIRST.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21.

The Earl Russell, after the death of his grandfather.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS.

DURING RECESS.

For *Cambridge University*, *v.* The Right honble. Alexander James Beresford Beresford Hope, deceased.
For *Camberwell* (*Dulwich Division*), *v.* John Morgan Howard, esquire, County Court Judge.
For *Winchester City*, *v.* Arthur Loftus Tottenham, esquire, deceased.
For *Liverpool* (*Walton Division*), *v.* Right honble. John George Gibson, Judge of High Court of Justice (Ireland).
For *Dublin University*, *v.* Dodgson Hamilton Madden, esquire, Solicitor General for Ireland.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9.

For *Southwark* (*West Division*), *v.* Arthur Cohen, esquire, Manor of Northstead.
For *Borough of Dundee*, *v.* Charles Carmichael Lacaita, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10.

For *Edinburgh Burgh* (*West Division*), *v.* Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, Manor of Northstead.
For *York, West Riding, Southern Part* (*Doncaster Division*), *v.* Walter Shirley Shirley, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

NEW WRITS—*continued.*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15.

For *Bristol* (*Western Division*), *v.* The Right honble. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, baronet, President of the Board of Trade.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21.

For *Deptford Borough*, *v.* Willian John Evelyn, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

For *Hampstead*, *v.* Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, baronet, G.C.M.G., now Baron Knutsford, called up to the House of Peers.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9.

Dublin University—Dodgson Hamilton Madden, esquire.
Winchester City—Richard Moss, esquire.
Borough of Liverpool (*Walton Division*)—Miles Walker Mattinson, esquire.
County of Kerry (*Southern Division*)—Denis Kilbride, esquire.
Borough of Camberwell (*Dulwich Division*)—John Blundell Maple, esquire.
Cambridge University—George Gabriel Stokes, esquire.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20.

Southwark (*West Division*)—Richard Knight Causton, esquire.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21.

Edinburgh Burgh (*West Division*)—Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22.

Bristol Borough (*West Division*)—The Right honble. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, baronet.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

Hampstead Borough—Edward Brodie Hoare, esquire.
York, West Riding, Southern Part (*Doncaster Division*)—The Honble. William Henry Wentworth Fitzwilliam.

THURSDAY, MARCH 1.

Deptford—Charles John Darling, esquire, Q.C.

AFFIRMATION.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20.

Burgh of Dundee—Joseph Firth Bottomley Firth, esquire, being one of the people called Quakers, made the Affirmation required by Law.

ANCASTER—*cont.*

PRESTON BOROUGH.

Villiam Edward Murray Tomlinson.
obert William Hanbury.

ROCHDALE BOROUGH.

homas Bayley Potter.

SALFORD BOROUGH.

North Division,
dward Hardcastle.

West Division,
ees Knowles.

South Division,
enry Hoyle Howorth.

STALYBRIDGE BOROUGH.

om Harrop Sidebottom.

ST. HELENS BOROUGH.

lenry Seton-Karr.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH.

ir Gilbert Greenall, bt.

WIGAN BOROUGH.

rancis Sharp Powell.

LEICESTER.

EASTERN, OR MELTON DIVISION,
ight Hon. Lord John James Robert Manners.

MID, OR LOUGHBOROUGH DIVISION,
dwin Joseph Lisle March Phillipps de Lisle.

WESTERN, OR BOSWORTH DIVISION,
ames Ellis.

SOUTHERN, OR HARBOROUGH DIVISION,
homas Keay Tapling.

LEICESTER BOROUGH.

ames Allanson Picton.
lexander M'Arthur.

LINCOLN.

VEST LINDSEY, OR GAINSBORO' DIVISION,
ol. Henry Eyre.

NORTH LINDSEY, OR BRIGG DIVISION,
amuel Danks Waddy.

EAST LINDSEY, OR LOUTH DIVISION,
rthur Raymond Heath.

SOUTH LINDSEY, OR HORNCASTLE DIVISION,
ight Hon. Edward Stanhope.

NORTH KESTEVEN, OR SLEAFORD DIVISION,
ight Hon. Henry Chaplin.

LINCOLN—*cont.*

SOUTH KESTEVEN, OR STAMFORD DIVISION.
John Compton Lawrance.

HOLLAND, OR SPALDING DIVISION,
Halley Stewart.

BOSTON BOROUGH.

Henry John Atkinson.

GRANTHAM BOROUGH.

Malcolm Low.

GREAT GRIMSBY BOROUGH.

Right Hon. Edward Heneage.

LINCOLN BOROUGH.

Frederick Harold Kerans.

MIDDLESEX.

ENFIELD DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Viscount Folkestone.

TOTTENHAM DIVISION,
Joseph Howard.

HORNSEY DIVISION,
Henry Charles Stephens.

HARROW DIVISION,
William Ambrose.

EALING DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Lord George Hamilton.

BRENTFORD DIVISION,
James Bigwood.

UXBRIDGE DIVISION,
Frederick Dixon Dixon-Hartland.

BETHNAL GREEN BOROUGH.

North-East Division,
George Howell.

South-West Division.
Edward Hare Pickersgill.

CHELSEA BOROUGH.

Charles Algernon Whitmore.

FINSBURY BOROUGH.

Holborn Division,
Colonel Francis Duncan.

Central Division,
Captain Frederick Thomas Penton

East Division,
James Rowlands.

FULHAM BOROUGH.

William Hayes Fisher.

MIDDLESEX—*cont.*

HACKNEY BOROUGH.

North Division,

Major-Gen. Sir Lewis Pelly, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.

Central Division,

Surgeon-General Sir William Guyer Hunter, K.C.M.G.

South Division,

Sir Charles Russell, knt.

HAMMERSMITH BOROUGH.

Major-Gen. Walter Tuckfield Goldsworthy.

HAMPSTEAD BOROUGH.

Rt. Hn. Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, bt.

ISLINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

George Christopher Trout Bartley.

West Division,

Richard Chamberlain.

East Division,

Cowley Lambert.

South Division,

Sir Albert Kaye Rollit, knt.

KENSINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

Sir Roper Lethbridge, knt.

South Division,

Sir Algernon Borthwick, bt.

LONDON UNIVERSITY.

Sir John Lubbock, bt.

MARYLEBONE BOROUGH.

East Division,

Lord Charles William De La Poer Beresford.

West Division,

Frederick Seager-Hunt.

PADDINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

John Aird.

South Division,

Rt. Hon. Lord Randolph Henry Spencer Churchill.

ST. GEORGE, HANOVER SQUARE.

Rt. Hon. George Joachim Goschen.

ST. PANCRAS BOROUGH.

North Division,

Hon. Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Cochrane-Baillie.

East Division,

Robert Grant Webster.

MIDDLESEX—St. Pancras Boro'—*cont.*

West Division,

Harry Lawson Webster Lawson.

South Division,

Sir Julian Goldsmid, bt.

SHOREDITCH BOROUGH.

Hoxton Division,

James Stuart.

Haggerston Division,

William Randal Cremer.

STRAND BOROUGH.

Right Hon. William Henry Smith.

TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH.

Whitechapel Division,

Samuel Montagu.

St. George Division,

Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.

Limehouse Division,

Edward Samuel Norris.

Mile End Division,

Spencer Charrington.

Stepney Division,

Frederick Wootton Isaacson.

Bow and Bromley Division,

Captain John Charles Ready Colomb.

Poplar Division,

Sydney Charles Buxton.

WESTMINSTER BOROUGH.

William Lehmann Ashmead-Bartlett Burdett-Coutts.

LONDON CITY.

Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler, bt.
Thomas Charles Baring.

MONMOUTH.

NORTHERN DIVISION,

Thomas Phillips Price.

WESTERN DIVISION,

Cornelius Marshall Warmington.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,

Col. Hon. Frederick Courtenay Morgan.

MONMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir George Elliot, bt.

NORFOLK.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,

Lord Henry Bentinck.

Norfolk—*cont.*

South-Western Division,

William Amhurst Tyssen-Amherst.

Northern Division,

Herbert Hardy Cozens-Hardy.

Eastern Division,

Sir Edward Birkbeck, bt.

Mid Division,

Robert Thornhagh Gurdon.

Southern Division,

Francis Taylor.

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir Henry Whatley Tyler, knt.

KING'S LYNN BOROUGH.

Alexander Weston Jarvis.

NORWICH BOROUGH.

Jeremiah James Colman.
Samuel Hoare.

NORTHAMPTON.

Northern Division,

Lord Burghley.

Eastern Division,

Francis Allston Channing.

Mid Division,

Hon. Charles Robert Spencer.

Southern Division,

Sir Rainald Knightley, bt.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH.

Henry Labouchere,
Charles Bradlaugh.

PETERBOROUGH BOROUGH.

Hon. William John Wentworth Fitzwilliam.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Wansbeck Division,

Charles Fenwick.

Tyneside Division,

Wentworth Blackett Beaumont.

Hexham Division,

Miles MacInnes.

Berwick-upon-Tweed Division,

Sir Edward Grey, bt.

MORPETH BOROUGH.

Thomas Burt.

Northumberland—*cont.*

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE BOROUGH.

Right Hon. John Morley.
James Craig.

TYNEMOUTH BOROUGH.

Richard Sims Donkin.

NOTTINGHAM.

Bassetlaw Division,

William Beckett.

Newark Division,

Viscount Newark.

Rushcliffe Division,

John Edward Ellis.

Mansfield Division,

Cecil George Savile Foljambe.

NOTTINGHAM BOROUGH.

West Division,

Henry Broadhurst.

East Division,

Arnold Morley.

South Division,

Henry Smith Wright.

OXFORD.

Northern, or Banbury Division,

Sir Bernhard Samuelson, bt.

Mid, or Woodstock Division,

Francis William Maclean.

Southern, or Henley Division.

Hon. Francis Parker.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.

Rt. Hon. Sir John Robert Mowbray, bt., D.C.L.
John Gilbert Talbot, D.C.L.

OXFORD BOROUGH.

Alexander William Hall.

RUTLAND.

George Henry Finch.

SALOP.

Western, or Oswestry Division,

Stanley Leighton.

Northern, or Newport Division,

Lt.-Col. William Slaney Kenyon Slaney.

Mid, or Wellington Division,

Alexander Hargreaves Brown.

SALOP—*cont.*

SOUTHERN, or LUDLOW DIVISION,
Robert Jasper More.

SHREWSBURY BOROUGH.
James Watson.

SOMERSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Evan Henry Llewellyn.

WELLS DIVISION,
Colonel Sir Richard Horner Paget, bt.

FROME DIVISION,
Viscount Weymouth

EASTERN DIVISION,
Henry Hobhouse.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Right Hon. Earl of Cavan.

BRIDGWATER DIVISION,
Edward James Stanley.

WESTERN, or WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Charles Isaac Elton.

BATH BOROUGH.
Edmond Robert Wodehouse,
Lt.-Col. Robert Peter Laurie.

TAUNTON BOROUGH.
Hon. Alfred Percy Allsopp.

STAFFORD.

LEEK DIVISION,
Harry Tichborne Davenport.

BURTON DIVISION,
Sydney Evershed.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Hamar Alfred Bass.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Justinian Heathcote Edwards-Heathcote.

LICHFIELD DIVISION,
Sir John Swinburne, bt.

KINGSWINFORD DIVISION,
Alexander Staveley Hill.

HANDSWORTH DIVISION,
Henry Wiggin.

HANLEY BOROUGH.
William Woodall.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH.
Douglas Harry Coghill.

STAFFORD—*cont.*

STAFFORD BOROUGH.
Thomas Salt.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT BOROUGH.
William Leatham Bright.

WALSALL BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Forster, bt.

WEDNESBURY BOROUGH.
Hon. Philip James Stanhope.

WEST BROMWICH BOROUGH.
James Ernest Spencer.

WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH.
West Division,
Sir William Chichele Plowden, K.C.S.I.
East Division,
Rt. Hon. Henry Hartley Fowler.
South Division,
Rt. Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers.

SUFFOLK.

NORTHERN, or LOWESTOFT DIVISION,
Sir Savile Brinton Crossley, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or EYE DIVISION,
Francis Seymour Stevenson.

NORTH-WESTERN, or STOWMARKET DIVISION,
Edward Greene.

SOUTH, or SUDBURY DIVISION,
William Cuthbert Quilter.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or WOODBRIDGE DIVISION,
Lt.-Col. Robert Hamilton Lloyd Anstruther.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS BOROUGH.
Lord Francis Hervey.

IPSWICH BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Dalrymple, bt.
Lord Elcho.

SURREY.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CHERTSEY DIVISION,
Frederick Alers Hankey.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or GUILFORD DIVISION,
Hon. William St. John Fremantle Brodrick.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or REIGATE DIVISION,
Sir James John Trevor Lawrence, bt.

SURREY—*cont.*

MID, OR EPSOM DIVISION,

Rt. hon. George Cubitt.

KINGSTON DIVISION,

Sir John Whittaker Ellis, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, OR WIMBLEDON DIVISION,

Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor.

BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM BOROUGH.

Battersea Division.

Octavius Vaughan Morgan.

Clapham Division.

John Saunders Gilliat.

CAMBERWELL BOROUGH.

North Division,

John Richards Kelly.

Peckham Division,

Arthur Anthony Baumann.

Dulwich Division.

John Blundell Maple.

CROYDON BOROUGH.

Hon. Sidney Herbert.

LAMBETH BOROUGH.

North Division,

Lieut.-Gen. Charles Crawfurd Fraser.

Kennington Division,

Robert Gent-Davis.

Brixton Division.

Marquess of Carmarthen

Norwood Division,

Thomas Lynn Bristowe.

NEWINGTON BOROUGH.

West Division,

Charles Wallwyn Radcliffe Cooke.

Walworth Division,

Lewis Henry Isaacs.

SOUTHWARK BOROUGH.

West Division,

Arthur Cohen.

Rotherhithe Division,

Colonel Charles Edward Hamilton.

Bermondsey Division,

Alfred Lafone.

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH.

Henry Kimber.

SUSSEX.

NORTH-WESTERN, OR HORSHAM DIVISION,

Colonel Sir Walter Barttelot Barttelot, bt., C.B.

SOUTH-WESTERN, OR CHICHESTER DIVISION,

Earl of March.

NORTHERN, OR EAST GRINSTEAD DIVISION,

Hon. Alfred Erskine Gathorne-Hardy.

MID, OR LEWES DIVISION,

Sir Henry Fletcher, bt.

SOUTHERN, OR EASTBOURNE DIVISION,

Admiral Edward Field.

EASTERN, OR RYE DIVISION,

Lieut.-Col. Arthur Montagu Brookfield.

BRIGHTON BOROUGH.

Rt. Hon. William Thackeray Marriott.
Sir William Tindal Robertson, knt.

HASTINGS BOROUGH.

Wilson Noble.

WARWICK.

NORTHERN, OR TAMWORTH DIVISION,

Philip Albert Muntz.

NORTH-EASTERN, OR NUNEATON DIVISION,

John Stratford Dugdale.

SOUTH-WESTERN, OR STRATFORD-ON-AVON DIVISION,

Frederick Townsend.

SOUTH-EASTERN, OR RUGBY DIVISION,

Henry Peyton Cobb.

ASTON MANOR BOROUGH.

George Kynoch.

BIRMINGHAM BOROUGH.

Edgbaston Division,

George Dixon.

West Division,

Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain.

Central Division.

Rt. Hon. John Bright.

North Division,

William Kenrick.

East Division,

Right Hon. Henry Matthews.

Bordesley Division,

Jesse Collings.

South Division,

Joseph Powell Williams.

WARWICK—*cont.*

COVENTRY BOROUGH.

William Henry Walter Ballantine.

WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON BOROUGH.

Rt. Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel.

WESTMORELAND.

NORTHERN, or APPLEBY DIVISION,

Hon. William Lowther.

SOUTHERN, or KENDAL DIVISION,

Earl of Bective.

WILTS.

NORTHERN, or CRICKLADE DIVISION,

Mervyn Herbert Nevil Story-Maskelyne.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CHIPPENHAM DIVISION,

Lord Henry Bruce.

WESTERN, or WESTBURY DIVISION,

George Pargiter Fuller.

EASTERN, or DEVIZES DIVISION,

Walter Hume Long.

SOUTHERN, or WILTON DIVISION,

Sir Thomas Fraser Grove, bt.

SALISBURY BOROUGH.

Edward Henry Hulse.

WORCESTER.

WESTERN, or BEWDLEY DIVISION,

Sir Edmund Anthony Harley Lechmere, bt.

SOUTHERN, or EVESHAM DIVISION,

Sir Richard Temple, bt.

MID, or DROITWICH DIVISION.

John Corbett.

NORTHERN DIVISION,

Benjamin Hingley.

EASTERN DIVISION,

George Woodyatt Hastings.

DUDLEY BOROUGH.

Brooke Robinson.

KIDDERMINSTER BOROUGH.

Augustus Frederick Godson.

WORCESTER BOROUGH.

Hon. George Higginson Allsopp.

YORK.

North Riding,

THIRSK AND MALTON DIVISION,

Colonel Hon. Lewis Payn Dawnay.

RICHMOND DIVISION,

George William Elliot.

CLEVELAND DIVISION,

Henry Fell Pease.

WHITBY DIVISION,

Ernest William Beckett.

East Riding,

HOLDERNESS DIVISION,

Commander George Richard Bethell, R.N.

BUCKROSE DIVISION,

Christopher Sykes.

HOWDENSHIRE DIVISION,

Arthur Duncombe.

West Riding, Northern Part,

SKIPTON DIVISION,

Walter Morrison.

KEIGHLEY DIVISION,

Isaac Holden.

SHIPLEY DIVISION,

Joseph Craven.

SOWERBY DIVISION,

Edward Crossley.

ELLAND DIVISION,

Thomas Wayman.

West Riding, Southern Part,

MORLEY DIVISION,

Charles George Milnes Gaskell.

NORMANTON DIVISION,

Benjamin Pickard.

COLNE VALLEY DIVISION,

Henry Frederick Beaumont.

HOLMFIRTH DIVISION,

Henry Joseph Wilson.

BARNSLEY DIVISION,

Courtney Stanhope Kenny.

HALLAMSHIRE DIVISION,

Sir Frederick Thorpe Mappin, bt.

ROTHERHAM DIVISION,

Arthur Herbert Dyke Acland.

DONCASTER DIVISION,

Walter Shirley Shirley.

YORK—*cont.*

West Riding, Eastern Part,

RIPON DIVISION,

John Lloyd Wharton.

OTLEY DIVISION,

John Barran.

BARKSTON ASH DIVISION,

Colonel Robert Gunter.

OSGOLDCROSS DIVISION,

John Austin.

PUDSEY DIVISION,

Briggs Priestley.

SPEN VALLEY DIVISION,

Joseph Woodhead.

BRADFORD BOROUGH.

West Division,

Alfred Illingworth.

Central Division,

Right Hon. John George Shaw Lefevre.

East Division,

Henry Byron Reed.

DEWSBURY BOROUGH.

Sir John Simon, bt.

HALIFAX BOROUGH.

Thomas Shaw.
Rt. Hon. James Stansfeld.

HUDDERSFIELD BOROUGH.

William Summers.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL BOROUGH.

East Division,

Frederick Brent Grotrian.

Central Division,

Henry Seymour King.

West Division,

Charles Henry Wilson.

LEEDS BOROUGH.

North Division,

William Lawies Jackson.

Central Division,

Gerald William Balfour.

East Division,

John Lawrence Gane.

West Division,

Herbert John Gladstone.

South Division,

Rt. Hon. Sir Lyon Playfair, K.C.B.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BOROUGH.

Isaac Wilson.

YORK—*cont.*

PONTEFRACT BOROUGH.

Hon. Rowland Winn.

SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH.

Joshua Rowntree.

SHEFFIELD BOROUGH.

Attercliffe Division,

Hon. Bernard John Seymour Coleridge.

Brightside Division,

Rt. Hon. Anthony John Mundella.

Central Division,

Charles Edward Howard Vincent.

Hallam Division,

Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley.

Ecclesall Division,

Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett.

WAKEFIELD BOROUGH.

Sir Edward Green, bt.

YORK BOROUGH.

Alfred Edward Pease.
Frank Lockwood.

WALES.

ANGLESEA.

Thomas Lewis.

BRECKNOCK.

William Fuller Maitland.

CARDIGAN.

William Bowen Rowlands.

CARMARTHEN

EASTERN DIVISION,

David Pugh.

WESTERN DIVISION,

Walter Rice Howell Powell.

CARMARTHEN BOROUGH.

Sir Emile Algernon Arthur Keppel Cowell Stepney, bt.

CARNARVON.

SOUTHERN OR EIFION DIVISION,

John Bryn Roberts.

NORTHERN OR ARFON DIVISION,

William Rathbone.

CARNARVON BOROUGH.

Edmund Swetenham.

DENBIGH.

Eastern Division,

Rt. hon. George Osborne Morgan.

Western Division,

Colonel William Cornwallis West.

DENBIGH BOROUGH.

Hon. George Thomas Kenyon.

FLINT.

Samuel Smith.

FLINT BOROUGH.

John Roberts.

GLAMORGAN.

Eastern Division,

Alfred Thomas.

Rhondda Division,

William Abraham.

Western or Gower Division,

Frank Ash Yeo.

Mid Division,

Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot.

Southern Division,

Arthur John Williams.

CARDIFF BOROUGH.

Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B.

MERTHYR TYDVIL BOROUGH.

Henry Richard.
Charles Herbert James.

SWANSEA BOROUGH.

Swansea Town,

Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn.

Swansea District,

Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, bt.

MERIONETH.

Thomas Edward Ellis.

MONTGOMERY.

Stuart Rendel.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGH.

Hon. Frederick Stephen Archibald Hanbury-Tracy.

PEMBROKE.

William Davies.

PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORDWEST BOROUGH.

Adm. Richard Charles Mayne, C.B.

RADNOR.

Hon. Arthur Henry John Walsh.

SCOTLAND.

ABERDEEN.

Eastern Division,

Peter Esslemont.

Western Division,

Robert Farquharson, M.D.

ABERDEEN BURGH.

North Division.

William Alexander Hunter.

South Division,

James Bryce.

ARGYLL.

Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm.

AYR.

Northern Division,

Hon. Hugh Frederick Hislop Elliot.

Southern Division,

Hon. Greville Richard Vernon.

AYR DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Richard Frederick Fotheringham Campbell.

KILMARNOCK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Stephen Williamson.

BANFF.

Robert William Duff.

BERWICK.

Right Hon. Edward Marjoribanks.

BUTE.

James Patrick Bannerman Robertson.

CAITHNESS.

Gavin Brown Clark.

WICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

John Macdonald Cameron.

CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS

Rt. Hon. John Blair Balfour.

DUMBARTON.

Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, bt.

DUMFRIES.

Sir Robert Jardine, bt.

DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Robert Threshie Reid.

EDINBURGH (Mid Lothian).

Rt. Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

EDINBURGH—*cont.*

EDINBURGH BURGH.

East Division,
Robert Wallace.

West Division,
Thomas Ryburn Buchanan.

Central Division,
William McEwan.

South Division,
Rt. Hon. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers.

EDINBURGH AND ST. ANDREW'S UNIVERSITIES.

Right Hon. John Hay Athole Macdonald, LL.D.

LEITH DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Ronal Crawfurd Munro Ferguson.

ELGIN AND NAIRN.

Charles Henry Anderson.

ELGIN DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Alexander Asher.

FIFE.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Herbert Henry Asquith.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Hon. Robert Preston Bruce.

KIRKCALDY DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Sir George Campbell, knt.

ST. ANDREW'S DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Henry Torrens Anstruther.

FORFAR.

James William Barclay.

DUNDEE BURGH.

Edmund Robertson,
Charles Carmichael Lacaita.

MONTROSE DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

John Shiress Will.

HADDINGTON.

Richard Burdon Haldane.

INVERNESS.

Charles Fraser-Mackintosh.

INVERNESS DISTRICT OF BURGHS.

Robert Bannatyne Finlay.

KINCARDINE.

General Sir George Balfour, K.C.B.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

Mark John Stewart.

LANARK.

GOVAN DIVISION,
William Pearce.

PARTICK DIVISION,
Alexander Craig Sellar.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Robert Bontine Cunningham Graham.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Donald Crawford.

MID DIVISION,
Stephen Mason.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
James Henry Cecil Hozier.

GLASGOW BURGH.

Bridgeton Division,
Rt. Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, bt.

Camlachie Division,
Hugh Watt.

St. Rollox Division,
James Caldwell.

Central Division,
John George Alexander Baird.

College Division,
Charles Cameron, M.D., LL.D.

Tradeston Division,
Archibald Cameron Corbett.

Blackfriars and Hutchesontown Division,
Andrew Dryburgh Provand.

GLASGOW AND ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES.

James Alexander Campbell, LL.D.

LINLITHGOW.

Peter McLagan.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

Leonard Lyell.

PEEBLES AND SELKIRK.

Walter Thorburn.

PERTH.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Robert Stewart Menzies.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Sir Donald Currie, K.C.M.G.

PERTH BURGH.

Charles Stuart Parker.

RENFREW.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Sir Archibald Campbell Campbell, bt.

GREENOCK BURGH.
Thomas Sutherland.

PAISLEY BURGH.
William Boyle Barbour.

ROSS AND CROMARTY.

Roderick Macdonald.

ROXBURGH.

Hon. Arthur Ralph Douglas Elliot.

HAWICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Alexander Laing Brown.

STIRLING.

Joseph Cheney Bolton.

FALKIRK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
William Pirrie Sinclair.

STIRLING DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Right Hon. Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

SUTHERLAND.

Angus Sutherland.

WIGTON.

Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell, bt.

IRELAND.

ANTRIM.

NORTH ANTRIM DIVISION,
Sir Charles Edward Lewis, bt.

MID ANTRIM DIVISION,
Hon. Robert Torrens O'Neill.

EAST ANTRIM DIVISION,
Captain James Martin M'Calmont.

SOUTH ANTRIM DIVISION,
William Grey Ellison Macartney.

BELFAST BOROUGH.
East Belfast Division,
Edward Samuel Wesley de Cobain.

South Belfast Division,
William Johnston.

West Belfast Division,
Thomas Sexton.

North Belfast Division,
Sir William Ewart, bt.

ARMAGH.

NORTH ARMAGH DIVISION,
Colonel Edward James Saunderson.

MID ARMAGH DIVISION,
Sir James Porter Corry, bt.

SOUTH ARMAGH DIVISION,
Alexander Blane.

CARLOW.

James Patrick O'Gorman (The O'Gorman Mahon)

CAVAN.

WEST CAVAN DIVISION,
Joseph Gillis Biggar.

EAST CAVAN DIVISION,
Thomas O'Hanlon.

CLARE.

EAST CLARE DIVISION,
Joseph Richard Cox.

WEST CLARE DIVISION,
Jeremiah Jordan.

CORK.

NORTH CORK DIVISION,
James Christopher Flynn.

NORTH-EAST CORK DIVISION,
William O'Brien.

MID CORK DIVISION,
Charles Kearns Deane Tanner.

EAST CORK DIVISION,
William John Lane.

WEST CORK DIVISION,
James Gilhooly.

SOUTH CORK DIVISION,
Joseph Edward Kenny.

SOUTH-EAST CORK DIVISION,
John Hooper.

CORK CITY.
Charles Stewart Parnell.
Maurice Healy.

DONEGAL.

NORTH DONEGAL DIVISION,
James Edward O'Doherty.

WEST DONEGAL DIVISION,
Patrick O'Hea.

EAST DONEGAL DIVISION,
Arthur O'Connor.

SOUTH DONEGAL DIVISION,
John Gordon Swift Mac Neill

DOWN.

North Down Division,
Colonel Thomas Waring.

East Down Division,
Richard William Blackwood Ker.

West Down Division,
Right Hon. Lord Arthur Hill.

South Down Division,
Michael McCartan.

NEWRY BOROUGH.
ustin Huntly McCarthy.

DUBLIN.

North Dublin Division,
ohn Joseph Clancy, M.A.

South Dublin Division,
Sir Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde, bt.

DUBLIN CITY.
College Green Division,
Timothy Daniel Sullivan.

Dublin Harbour Division,
Timothy Charles Harrington.

St. Stephen's Green Division,
Edmond Dwyer Gray.

St. Patrick's Division,
William Martin Murphy.

DUBLIN UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. David Robert Plunket, LL.D.
Dodgson Hamilton Madden.

FERMANAGH.

North Fermanagh Division,
William Hoey Kearney Redmond.

South Fermanagh Division,
Henry Campbell.

GALWAY.

Connemara Division,
Patrick James Foley.

North Galway Division,
Colonel John Philip Nolan.

East Galway Division,
Mathew Harris.

South Galway Division,
David Sheehy.

GALWAY TOWN.
ohn Pinkerton.

KERRY.

North Kerry Division,
John Stack.

West Kerry Division,
Edward Harrington.

South Kerry Division,
Denis Kilbride.

East Kerry Division,
Jeremiah Daniel Sheehan.

KILDARE.

North Kildare Division,
James Laurence Carew.

South Kildare Division,
James Leahy.

KILKENNY.

North Kilkenny Division,
Edward P. Mulhallen Marum.

South Kilkenny Division,
Patrick Alexander Chance.

KILKENNY CITY.
Thomas Quinn.

KING'S COUNTY.

Birr Division,
Bernard Charles Molloy.

Tullamore Division,
Joseph Francis Fox.

LEITRIM.

North Leitrim Division,
Michael Conway.

South Leitrim Division,
Luke Patrick Hayden.

LIMERICK.

West Limerick Division,
William Abraham.

East Limerick Division,
John Finucane.

LIMERICK CITY.
Henry Joseph Gill.

LONDONDERRY.

North Derry Division,
Henry Lyle Mulholland.

South Derry Division,
Thomas Lea.

LONDONDERRY CITY.
Justin M'Carthy.

LONGFORD.

North Longford Division,
Timothy Michael Healy.

South Longford Division,
Laurence Connolly.

LOUTH.

North Louth Division,
Joseph Nolan.

South Louth Division,
Thomas Patrick Gill.

MAYO.

North Mayo Division,
Daniel Crilly.

West Mayo Division,
John Deasy.

East Mayo Division,
John Dillon.

South Mayo Division,
James Frederick Xavier O'Brien.

MEATH.

North Meath Division,
Pierce Mahony.

South Meath Division,
Edward Sheil.

MONAGHAN.

North Monaghan Division,
Patrick O'Brien.

South Monaghan Division,
Sir Joseph Neale McKenna, knt.

QUEEN'S COUNTY.

Ossory Division,
William Archibald Macdonald.

Leix Division,
Richard Lalor.

ROSCOMMON.

North Roscommon Division,
James J. O'Kelly.

South Roscommon Division,
Andrew Commins.

SLIGO.

North Sligo Division,
Peter McDonald.

South Sligo Division,
Edward Joseph Kennedy.

TIPPERARY.

North Tipperary Division,
Patrick Joseph O'Brien.

Mid Tipperary Division,
Thomas Mayne.

South Tipperary Division,
John O'Connor.

East Tipperary Division,
Thomas Joseph Condon.

TYRONE.

North Tyrone Division,
Lord Ernest Hamilton.

Mid Tyrone Division,
Matthew Joseph Kenny.

East Tyrone Division,
William James Reynolds.

South Tyrone Division,
Thomas Wallace Russell.

WATERFORD.

West Waterford Division,
Jasper Douglas Pyne.

East Waterford Division,
Patrick Joseph Power.

WATERFORD CITY.

Richard Power.

WESTMEATH.

North Westmeath Division,
James Tuite.

South Westmeath Division,
Donal Sullivan.

WEXFORD.

North Wexford Division,
John Edward Redmond.

South Wexford Division,
John Barry.

WICKLOW.

West Wicklow Division,
Garrett Michael Byrne.

East Wicklow Division,
William Joseph Corbet.

THE MINISTRY

Of the Most Noble the Marquess of SALISBURY, K.G.,

At the Opening of the Session on the 9th February, 1888.

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs	Most Hon. Marquess of Salisbury, K.G.
First Lord of the Treasury	Right Hon. William Henry Smith.
Lord Chancellor of England	Right Hon. Lord Halsbury.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland	Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Lord President of the Council	Right Hon. Viscount Cranbrook.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Right Hon. George Joachim Goschen.
Lord Privy Seal	Right Hon. Earl Cadogan.
Secretary of State, Home Department	Right Hon. Henry Matthews.
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Right Hon. Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, Bart.
Secretary of State for War	Right Hon. Edward Stanhope.
Secretary of State for India	Right Hon. Viscount Cross, G.C.B.
Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant	Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Right Hon. Lord George Francis Hamilton.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Vice President of the Committee of Council on Agriculture	Right Hon. Lord John James Robert Manners.
President of the Board of Trade	Right Hon. Lord Stanley of Preston.
President of the Local Government Board	Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Field Marshal Commanding in Chief	H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, K.G.
Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education	Right Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, Bart.
Secretary for Scotland and Vice President of the Scotch Education Department	Right Hon. Marquess of Lothian, K.T.
First Commissioner of Works and Public Buildings	Right Hon. David Robert Plunket.
Lords of the Treasury	Hon. Sidney Herbert. Colonel William Hood Walrond. Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell.
Lords of the Admiralty	Admiral Sir Arthur W. Acland Hood, Vice Admiral Sir Anthony Hoskins, Vice Admiral Sir W. Graham, Rear Admiral Charles F. Hotham, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, Esq.
Joint Secretaries to the Treasury	Aretas Akers-Douglas, Esq. William Lawies Jackson, Esq.
Secretary to the Admiralty	Arthur Bower Forwood, Esq.
Secretary to the Board of Trade	Baron Henry de Worms.
Secretary to the Local Government Board	Walter H. Long, Esq.
Under Secretary, Home Department	Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley, Esq.
Under Secretary, Foreign Department	Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, Bart.
Under Secretary for Colonies	Right Hon. Earl of Onslow.
Under Secretary for War	Right Hon. Lord Harris.
Under Secretary for India	Sir John Eldon Gorst, Q.C.
Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland	Right Hon. Colonel E. R. King-Harman.
Paymaster General	Right Hon. Earl Beauchamp.
Postmaster General	Right Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes.
Financial Secretary to the War Department	Hon. W. St. John Brodrick.
Judge Advocate General	Right Hon. William Thackeray Marriott, Q.C.
Attorney General	Sir Richard Everard Webster, Q.C.
Solicitor General	Sir Edward George Clarke, Q.C.

SCOTLAND.

Lord Advocate	Right Hon. John Hay Athole Macdonald, Q.C.
Solicitor General	James Patrick Bannerman Robertson, Esq.

IRELAND.

Lord Lieutenant	Most Hon. Marquess of Londonderry.
Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Attorney General	Right Hon. Peter O'Brien, Q.C.
Solicitor General	Dodgson Hamilton Madden, Esq.

QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD.

Lord Steward	Right Hon. Earl of Mount-Edgcumbe.
Lord Chamberlain	Right Hon. Earl of Lathom.
Master of the Horse	His Grace the Duke of Portland.
Treasurer of the Household	Right Hon. Viscount Folkestone.
Comptroller of the Household	Right Hon. Lord Arthur Hill.
Vice Chamberlain of the Household	Right Hon. Viscount Lewisham.
Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms	Right Hon. Earl of Rosslyn.
Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard	Right Hon. Earl of Kintore.
Master of the Buckhounds	Right Hon. Earl of Coventry.
Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal	Lord Alfred H. Paget.
Mistress of the Robes	Her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch.

ROLL OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN

THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

51° VICTORIÆ, 1888.

EM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

is Royal Highness THE PRINCE OF WALES.

is Royal Highness ALFRED ERNEST ALBERT Duke of EDINBURGH.

is Royal Highness ARTHUR WILLIAM PATRICK ALBERT Duke of CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN.

is Royal Highness LEOPOLD CHARLES EDWARD GEORGE ALBERT Duke of ALBANY.

is Royal Highness GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK CHARLES Duke of CAMBRIDGE.

EDWARD WHITE Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

HARDINGE STANLEY Lord HALSBURY, *Lord High Chancellor.*

WILLIAM Archbishop of YORK.

GATHORNE Viscount CRANBROOK, *Lord President of the Council.*

GEORGE HENRY Earl CADOGAN, *Lord Privy Seal.*

HENRY Duke of NORFOLK, *Earl Marshal of England.*

ARCHIBALD HENRY ALGERNON Duke of SOMERSET.

ROLL OF THE LORDS

Charles Henry Duke of Richmond.
Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of Grafton.
Henry Charles Fitzroy Duke of Beaufort.
William Amelius Aubrey de Vere Duke of Saint Albans.
George Godolphin Duke of Leeds.
Francis Charles Hastings Duke of Bedford.
William Duke of Devonshire.
George Charles Duke of Marlborough.
Charles Cecil John Duke of Rutland.
William Alexander Louis Stephen Duke of Brandon. (*Duke of Hamilton.*)
William John Arthur Charles James Duke of Portland.
William Drogo Duke of Manchester.
Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of Newcastle.
Algernon George Duke of Northumberland.
His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale.
Henry Duke of Wellington.
Richard Plantagenet Campbell Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.
George Granville William Duke of Sutherland.
Harry George Duke of Cleveland.
Hugh Lupus Duke of Westminster.

Augustus John Henry Beaumont Marquess of Winchester.
Henry Charles Keith Marquess of Lansdowne.
John Villiers Stuart Marquess Townshend.
Robert Arthur Talbot Marquess of Salisbury.
John Alexander Marquess of Bath.
James Marquess of Abercorn. (*Duke of Abercorn.*)
Hugh de Grey Marquess of Hertford.
John Patrick Marquess of Bute.
William Alleyne Marquess of Exeter.
William Marquess of Northampton.
John Charles Marquess Camden.
Henry Marquess of Anglesey.
George Henry Hugh Marquess of Cholmondeley.
George William Thomas Marquess of Ailesbury.
Frederick William John Marquess of Bristol.
Archibald Marquess of Ailsa.
George Augustus Constantine Marquess of Normanby.
George Frederick Samuel Marquess of Ripon.
William Marquess of Abergavenny.
Gavin Marquess of Breadalbane.

William Henry Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, *Lord Steward of the Household.*
Edward Earl of Lathom, *Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*
Charles Henry John Earl of Shrewsbury.
Edward Henry Earl of Derby.
Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of Huntingdon.
George Robert Charles Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery.
William Reginald Earl of Devon.
Henry Charles Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire.
Rudolph William Basil Earl of Denbigh.
Francis William Henry Earl of Westmorland.
Montagu Earl of Lindsey.
Harry Earl of Stamford.
Murray Edward Gordon Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham.
Edwyn Francis Earl of Chesterfield.
Edward George Henry Earl of Sandwich.
Arthur Algernon Earl of Essex.
William George Earl of Carlisle.
William Henry Walter Earl of Doncaster. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury.
———— Earl of Berkeley.
Montagu Arthur Earl of Abingdon.
Aldred Frederick George Beresford Earl of Scarbrough.
George Thomas Earl of Albemarle.
George William Earl of Coventry.
Victor Albert George Earl of Jersey.
William Henry Earl Poulett.
John Francis Erskine Earl of Mar. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Sholto George Watson Earl of Morton. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Walter Henry Earl of Mar and Kellie. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Claude Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

George Earl of Haddington. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

John Trotter Earl of Lindsay. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

David Stanley William Earl of Airlie. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Alexander Earl of Leven and Melville. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

George John Earl of Northesk. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of Dundonald. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

George William Hamilton Earl of Orkney. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Sewallis Edward Earl Ferrers.

William Walter Earl of Dartmouth.

Charles Earl of Tankerville.

Charles Wightwick Earl of Aylesford.

Francis Thomas De Grey Earl Cowper.

Arthur Philip Earl Stanhope.

Thomas Augustus Wolstenholme Earl of Macclesfield.

Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl Graham. (*Duke of Montrose.*)

William Frederick Earl Waldegrave.

Bertram Earl of Ashburnham.

Charles Augustus Earl of Harrington.

Isaac Newton Earl of Portsmouth.

George Guy Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick.

Sidney Carr Earl of Buckinghamshire.

William Thomas Spencer Earl Fitzwilliam.

Frederick George Earl of Guilford.

Charles Philip Earl of Hardwicke.

Henry Edward Earl of Ilchester.

Reginald Windsor Earl De La Warr.

Jacob Earl of Radnor.

John Poyntz Earl Spencer.

Allen Alexander Earl Bathurst.

Arthur Wills John Wellington Blundell Trumbull Earl of Hillsborough. (*Marquess of Downshire.*)

Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon.

William David Earl of Mansfield.

John James Hugh Henry Earl Strange. (*Duke of Athole.*)

William Henry Earl of Mount Edgcumbe. (*In another Place as Lord Steward of the Household.*)

Hugh Earl Fortescue.

Henry Howard Molyneux Earl of Carnarvon.

George Henry Earl Cadogan. (*In another Place as Lord Privy Seal.*)

James Howard Earl of Malmesbury.

John Vansittart Danvers Earl of Lanesborough. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Edward Nugent Earl of Milltown. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Henry Ernest Newcomen Earl of Kingston (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Henry John Reuben Earl of Portarlington. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Hugh Earl Annesley. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Cecil Ralph Earl of Wicklow. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

John Henry Reginald Earl of Clonmell. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

George Charles Earl of Lucan. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Somerset Richard Earl of Belmore. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

James Francis Earl of Bandon. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

James Earl of Caledon. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Francis Robert Earl of Rosslyn.

William George Robert Earl of Craven.

William Hillier Earl of Onslow.

Charles Earl of Romney.

Walter John Earl of Chichester.

Seymour John Grey Earl of Wilton.

Edward James Earl of Powis.

Horatio Earl Nelson.

Lawrence Earl of Rosse. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Sydney William Herbert Earl Manvers.

Horatio Earl of Orford.

Henry Earl Grey.

Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.

Dudley Francis Stuart Earl of Harrowby.

Henry Thynne Earl of Harewood.

William Hugh Earl of Minto.

Alan Frederick Earl Cathcart.

James Walter Earl of Verulam.

Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl Brownlow.

Henry Cornwallis Earl of Saint Germans.

Albert Edmund Earl of Morley.

Orlando George Charles Earl of Bradford.

Frederick Earl Beauchamp.

John Earl of Eldon.

Richard William Penn Earl Howe.

George Edward John Mowbray Earl of Stradbroke.

Francis Charles Earl of Kilmorey. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Charles Stewart Earl Vane. (*Marquess of Londonderry.*)

William Archer Earl Amherst.

John Frederick Vaughan Earl Cawdor.

William George Earl of Munster.

Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of Camperdown.

Thomas George Earl of Lichfield.

John George Earl of Durham.

Granville George Earl Granville.

Henry Earl of Effingham.

Henry John Earl of Ducie.

Charles Alfred Worsley Earl of Yarborough.

James Henry Robert Earl Innes. (*Duke of Roxburghe.*)

Thomas William Earl of Leicester.

William Earl of Lovelace.

Lawrence Earl of Zetland.

Charles William Francis Earl of Gainsborough.

Francis Charles Granville Earl of Ellesmere.

George Henry Charles Earl of Strafford.

Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of Cottenham.

William Henry Earl Cowley.

Archibald William Earl of Winton. (*Earl of Eglintoun.*)

William Humble Earl of Dudley.

John Francis Stanley Earl Russell.

John Earl of Kimberley.

Richard Earl of Dartrey.

William Ernest Earl of Feversham.

Frederick Temple Earl of Dufferin.

John Robert Earl Sydney.

Henry George Earl of Ravensworth.

Edward Montagu Stuart Granville Earl of Wharncliffe.

Thomas George Earl of Northbrook.

Arthur William Earl Cairns.

Edward Robert Lytton Earl of Lytton.

Edward Earl of Lathom. (*In another Place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*)

George Watson Earl Sondes.

Roundell Earl of Selborne.

Walter Stafford Earl of Iddesleigh.

Alexander William George Earl of Fife.

Cornwallis Earl de Montalt.

William Henry Forester Earl of Londesborough.

Robert Viscount Hereford.

Henry Viscount Bolingbroke and St. John.

Evelyn Viscount Falmouth.

George Stanley Viscount Torrington.

Gerald Viscount Leinster. (*Duke of Leinster.*)

Francis Wheler Viscount Hood.

Mervyn Edward Viscount Powerscourt. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Henry William Crosbie Viscount Bangor. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Cornwallis Viscount Hawarden. (*Elected for Ireland.*) (*In another Place as Earl de Montalt.*)

Carnegie Parker Viscount St. Vincent.

Henry Viscount Melville.

William Wells Viscount Sidmouth.

George Frederick Viscount Templetown. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

John Campbell Viscount Gordon. (*Earl of Aberdeen.*)

Edward Fleetwood John Viscount Exmouth.

John Luke George Viscount Hutchinson. (*Earl of Donoughmore.*)

Richard Somerset Viscount Clancarty. (*Earl of Clancarty.*)

Wellington Henry Viscount Combermere.

Henry Charles Viscount Canterbury.

Rowland Clegg Viscount Hill.

Charles Stewart Viscount Hardinge.

George Stephens Viscount Gough.

Charles Viscount Eversley.

harles Lindley Viscount Halifax.

lexander Nelson Viscount Bridport.

dward Berkeley Viscount Portman.

athorne Viscount Cranbrook. (*In another Place as Lord President of the Council.*)

obert Viscount Sherbrooke.

enry Bouverie William Viscount Hampden.

arnet Joseph Viscount Wolseley.

illiam John Viscount Oxenbridge.

ichard Assheton Viscount Cross.

rederick Bishop of London.

oseph Barber Bishop of Durham.

dward Harold Bishop of Winchester.

ohn Thomas Bishop of Norwich.

ames Colquhoun Bishop of Bangor.

enry Bishop of Worcester.

harles John Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol.

homas Legh Bishop of St. Albans.

ames Bishop of Hereford.

illiam Connor Bishop of Peterborough.

arvey Bishop of Carlisle.

rthur Charles Bishop of Bath and Wells.

ohn Fielder Bishop of Oxford.

ichard Bishop of Chichester.

oshua Bishop of St. Asaph.

illiam Basil Bishop of St. David's.

nthony Wilson Bishop of Rochester.

illiam Dalrymple Bishop of Lichfield.

ohn Charles Bishop of Liverpool.

rnest Roland Bishop of Newcastle.

ichard Bishop of Llandaff.

eorge Howard Bishop of Truro.

illiam Bishop of Chester.

eorge Bishop of Southwell.

udley Charles Lord de Ros.

lfred Joseph Lord Mowbray.

eorge Manners Lord Hastings.

dward Southwell Lord de Clifford.

homas Crosby William Lord Dacre.

harles Henry Rolle Lord Clinton.

obert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord Zouche of Haryngworth.

awdon George Grey Lord Grey de Ruthyn.

Charles Edward Hastings Lord Botreaux. (*Earl of Loudoun.*)

Francis Robert Lord Camoys.

Henry Lord Beaumont.

Henry Lord Willoughby de Broke.

Sackville George Lord Conyers.

Hubert George Charles Lord Vaux of Harrowden.

Ralph Gordon Lord Wentworth.

Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord Braye.

Robert George Lord Windsor.

William Henry John Lord North.

Beauchamp Mowbray Lord St. John of Bletso.

Frederick George Lord Howard de Walden.

William Joseph Lord Petre.

John Fiennes Lord Saye and Sele.

John Francis Lord Arundell of Wardour.

John Stuart Lord Clifton. (*Earl of Darnley.*)

John Baptist Joseph Lord Dormer.

George Henry Lord Teynham.

Augustus Frederick Fitz-herbert Lord Stafford.

George Frederick William Lord Byron.

Lewis Henry Hugh Lord Clifford of Chudleigh.

William Coutts Lord Ashford.

Horace Courtenay Gammell Lord Forbes. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Charles William Lord Sinclair. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Charles Lord Blantyre. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Alexander Hugh Lord Balfour of Burley. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Walter Hugh Lord Polwarth. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Richard Edmund Saint Lawrence Lord Boyle. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery.*)

George Lord Hay. (*Earl of Kinnoul.*)

Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord Middleton.

Frederick George Brabazon Lord Ponsonby. (*Earl of Bessborough.*)

Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord Scarsdale.

George Florance Lord Boston.

Charles George Lord Lovell and Holland. (*Earl of Egmont.*)

George William Henry Lord Vernon.

Edward St. Vincent Lord Digby.

George Douglas Lord Sundridge. (*Duke of Argyll.*)

Martin Bladen Lord Hawke.

Henry Thomas Lord Foley.

Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dinevor.

Thomas Lord Walsingham.

William Lord Bagot.

Charles Henry Lord Southampton.

John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley.

George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney.

Henry George Lord Lovaine.

Philip Reginald Lord Somers.

Richard Henry Lord Berwick.

Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne.

John Henry De La Poer Lord Tyrone. (*Marquess of Waterford.*)

Henry Bentinck Lord Carleton. (*Earl of Shannon.*)

Charles Lord Suffield.

Dudley Wilmot Lord Dorchester.

Lloyd Lord Kenyon.

Charles Cornwallis Lord Braybrooke.

Edward Lord Fisherwick. (*Marquess of Donegall.*)

Henry Charles Lord Gage. (*Viscount Gage.*)

Thomas John Lord Thurlow.

William George Lord Auckland.

Charles George Lord Lyttelton.

Henry George Lord Mendip. (*Viscount Clifden.*)

George Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. (*Earl of Moray.*)

Alan Plantagenet Lord Stewart of Garlies. (*Earl of Galloway.*)

James George Henry Lord Saltersford. (*Earl of Courtown.*)

William Lord Brodrick. (*Viscount Midleton.*)

Frederick Henry William Lord Calthorpe.

Peter Robert Lord Gwydir.

Charles Robert Lord Carrington.

William Henry Lord Bolton.

Thomas Lyttleton Lord Lilford.

Thomas Lord Ribblesdale.

Edward Lord Dunsany. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Edward Donough Lord Inchiquin. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

John Thomas William Lord Massy. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Robert Lord Clonbrock. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Charles Mark Lord Headley. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Hercules Edward Lord Langford. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Henry Francis Seymour Lord Moore. (*Marquess of Drogheda.*)

John Henry Wellington Graham Lord Loftus. (*Marquess of Ely.*)

William Lord Carysfort. (*Earl of Carysfort.*)

George Ralph Lord Abercromby.

Charles Edmund Lord Ellenborough.

Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord Sandys.

Henry North Lord Sheffield. (*Earl of Sheffield.*)

William Macnaghten Lord Erskine.

George John Lord Monteagle. (*Marquess of Sligo.*)

George Arthur Hastings Lord Granard. (*Earl of Granard.*)

Hungerford Lord Crewe.

——— Lord Gardner.

John Thomas Lord Manners.

John Adrian Louis Lord Hopetoun. (*Earl of Hopetoun.*)

Richard Lord Castlemaine. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Charles Lord Meldrum. (*Marquess of Huntly.*)

George Frederick Lord Ross. (*Earl of Glasgow.*)

Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. (*Earl of Enniskillen.*)

William Hale John Charles Lord Foxford. (*Earl of Limerick.*)

Victor Albert Francis Charles Lord Churchill.

George Robert Canning Lord Harris.

Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester.

Schomberg Henry Lord Ker. (*Marquess of Lothian.*)

Henry Francis Lord Minster. (*Marquess Conyngham.*)

mes Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. (*Marquess of Ormonde.*)

ancis Richard Lord Wemyss. (*Earl of Wemyss.*)

hn Strange Lord Clanbrassill. (*Earl of Roden.*)

omas Lord Silchester. (*Earl of Longford.*)

otworthy John Eyre Lord Oriel. (*Viscount Massereene.*)

ugh Lord Delamere.

lando Watkin Weld Lord Forester.

hn William Lord Rayleigh.

ric Frederic Lord Gifford.

ubert George Lord Somerhill. (*Marquess of Clanricarde.*)

mes Ludovic Lord Wigan. (*Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.*)

chter John Mark Lord Ranfurly. (*Earl of Ranfurly.*)

hn Byrne Leicester Lord De Tabley.

harles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden.

illiam Conyngham Lord Plunket.

illiam Henry Ashe Lord Heytesbury.

rchibald Philip Lord Rosebery. (*Earl of Rosebery.*)

ichard James Lord Clanwilliam. (*Earl of Clanwilliam.*)

illiam Draper Mortimer Lord Wynford.

illiam Henry Lord Kilmarnock. (*Earl of Erroll.*)

rthur James Francis Lord Fingall. (*Earl of Fingall.*)

illiam Philip Lord Sefton. (*Earl of Sefton.*)

obert Bermingham Lord Clements. (*Earl of Leitrim.*)

homas Lord Kenlis. (*Marquess of Headfort.*)

eginald Lord Chaworth. (*Earl of Meath.*)

harles Adolphus Lord Dunmore. (*Earl of Dunmore.*)

ugustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore.

lewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn.

Henry Spencer Lord Templemore.

alentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry.

ohn St. Vincent Lord De Saumarez.

Thomas Lord Denman.

William Frederick Lord Abinger.

Philip Lord De L'Isle and Dudley.

Alexander Hugh Lord Ashburton.

Edward Richard Lord Hatherton.

Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. (*Earl of Gosford.*)

William Frederick Lord Stratheden.

Geoffrey Dominick Augustus Frederick Lord Oranmore and Browne. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Simon Joseph Lord Lovat.

William Bateman Lord Bateman.

James Molyneux Lord Charlemont. (*Earl of Charlemont.*)

Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore.*)

George Ponsonby Lord Lismore. (*Viscount Lismore.*)

Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore.

Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew.

Charles Frederick Ashley Cooper Lord De Mauley.

Arthur Lord Wrottesley.

Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley.

Frederick Henry Paul Lord Methuen.

Henry Edward John Lord Stanley of Alderley.

William Henry Lord Leigh.

Beilby Lord Wenlock.

William Lord Lurgan.

Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon.

James Lord Seaton.

John Manley Arbuthnot Lord Keane.

John Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair.*)

Hussey Crespigny Lord Vivian.

Henry William Lord Congleton.

Denis St. George Lord Dunsandle and Clanconal. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine.*)

Charles Robert Claude Lord Truro.

Arthur Lord De Freyne.

Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards.

George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan.

Gilbert Henry Lord Aveland.

Valentine Augustus Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare.*)

Henry Lord Belper.

Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide.
Robert Lord Ebury.
Charles Compton William Lord Chesham.
Frederic Augustus Lord Chelmsford.
John Lord Churston.
Henry Lord Leconfield.
Wilbraham Lord Egerton.
Godfrey Charles Lord Tredegar.
FitzPatrick Henry Lord Lyveden.
Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux.
Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird.
Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury.
Francis William Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge.
Luke George Lord Annaly.
Robert Offley Ashburton Lord Houghton.
William Lord Romilly.
George Philips Alexander Lord Barrogill. (*Earl of Caithness.*)
James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. (*Lord Athlumney.*)
Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl.*)
Charles Stanley Lord Monck. (*Viscount Monck.*)
John Major Lord Hartismere. (*Lord Henniker.*)
Hedworth Hylton Lord Hylton.
George Sholto Gordon Lord Penrhyn.
Gustavus Russell Lord Brancepeth. (*Viscount Boyne.*)
John Henry Lord Kesteven.
Arthur Lord Ormathwaite.
Edward Lord O'Neill.
Robert Cornelis Lord Napier.
Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. (*Viscount Gormanston.*)
John Hamilton Lord Lawrence.
James Plaisted Lord Penzance.
John Lord Dunning. (*Lord Rollo.*)
James Lord Balinhard. (*Earl of Southesk.*)
William Lord Hare. (*Earl of Listowel.*)
Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop.
Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown.
John Emerich Edward Lord Acton.
Thomas Charles Lord Robartes.
Henry Richard Lord Wolverton.
Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville.
Thomas Towneley Lord O'Hagan.
William Lord Sandhurst.
Frederic Lord Blachford.
Francis Lord Ettrick. (*Lord Napier.*)
James Charles Herbert Welbore Ellis Lord Somerton. (*Earl of Normanton.*)
Henry Austin Lord Aberdare.
James Lord Moncreiff.
John Duke Lord Coleridge.
William Lord Emly.
Chichester Samuel Lord Carlingford. (*Lord Clermont.*)
Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe.
Edmund Lord Hammond.
John Slaney Lord Hampton.
John Lord Winmarleigh.
Charles Alexander Lord Douglas. (*Earl of Home.*)
Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsay. (*Earl of Dalhousie.*)
John Henry Lord Fermanagh. (*Earl Erne.*)
William Richard Lord Harlech.
Henry Gerard Lord Alington.
John Lord Tollemache.
William Cansfield Lord Gerard.
Mortimer Lord Sackville.
Colin Lord Blackburn.
Charles Bowyer Lord Norton.
Percy Lord Shute. (*Viscount Barrington.*)
William Lord Watson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)
Lawrence Hesketh Lord Haldon.
Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne.
Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun.
Alexander Dundas Ross Lord Lamington.
Charles Frederick Lord Donington.
Arthur Edwin Lord Trevor.
Montagu William Lord Rowton.
William Francis Lord Mount-Temple.
Edward Hugessen Lord Brabourne.
Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill.
William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. (*Marquess of Tweeddale.*)

William Ulick Tristram Lord Howth. (*Earl of Howth.*)

Donald James Lord Reay.

Harcourt Lord Derwent.

Henry James Lord Hothfield.

Dudley Coutts Lord Tweedmouth.

George William Wilshere Lord Bramwell.

John David Lord FitzGerald. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

Frederick Beauchamp Paget Lord Alcester.

Alfred Lord Tennyson.

James Lord Strathspey. (*Earl of Seafield.*)

John George Lord Monk Bretton.

Walter Charles Lord Northbourne.

Arthur Saunders William Charles Fox Lord Sudley. (*Earl of Arran.*)

John Robert William Lord de Vesci. (*Viscount de Vesci.*)

Marmaduke Francis Lord Herries.

Hardinge Stanley Lord Halsbury. (*In another Place as Lord High Chancellor.*)

Mervyn Edward Lord Powerscourt (*In another Place as Viscount Powerscourt.*)

Anthony Henley Lord Northington (*Lord Henley.*)

Nathaniel Mayer Lord Rothschild.

Edward Charles Lord Revelstoke.

Robert Lord Monkswell.

Arthur Lord Hobhouse.

Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord Lingen.

Edward Lord Ashbourne.

Rowland Lord Saint Oswald.

Robert James Lord Wantage.

William Baliol Lord Esher.

Thomas Lord Deramore.

Henry John Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.

William Buller Fullerton Lord Elphinstone.

Charles John Lord Colville of Culross.

Farrer Lord Herschell.

Charles Henry Lord Hillingdon.

Samuel Charles Lord Hindlip.

Edmund Lord Grimthorpe.

Richard de Aquila Lord Stalbridge.

William Lord Kensington.

Michael Arthur Lord Burton.

John Glencairn Carter Lord Hamilton of Dalzell.

Thomas Lord Brassey.

Henry Lord Thring.

Frederick Arthur Lord Stanley of Preston.

Edward Lord Macnaghten. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

Robert Lord Connemara.

Claude Lord Bowes (*In another place as Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn.*)

George Edward Milnes Monckton Lord Monckton (*Vicount Galway.*)

John Lord Saint Levan.

James Macnaghten Lord Magheramorne.

William George Lord Armstrong.

George Lord Basing.

William Henry Lord De Ramsey.

Henry William Lord Cheylesmore.

John Gellibrand Lord Addington.

LIST OF THE COMMONS.

THE NAMES OF MEMBERS

Returned to serve in the Twenty-fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, summoned to meet at Westminster the Fifth Day of August, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Six, as by the several Returns filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery appears. Corrected to the Meeting of the Parliament on the 9th February, 1888.

BEDFORD.

Northern, or Biggleswade Division,
Viscount Baring.

Southern, or Luton Division,
Cyril Flower.

BEDFORD BOROUGH.
Samuel Whitbread.

BERKS.

Northern, or Abingdon Division,
Philip Wroughton.

Southern, or Newbury Division,
William George Mount.

Eastern, or Wokingham Division,
Sir George Russell, bt.

READING BOROUGH.
Charles Townshend Murdoch.

WINDSOR (NEW) BOROUGH.
Robert Richardson-Gardner.

BUCKS.

Northern, or Buckingham Division,
Hon. Egerton Hubbard.

Mid, or Aylesbury Division,
Baron Ferdinand James de Rothschild.

Southern, or Wycombe Division,
Viscount Curzon.

CAMBRIDGE.

Northern, or Wisbech Division,
Charles William Selwyn.

Western, or Chesterton Division,
Charles Hall.

Eastern, or Newmarket Division,
George Newnes.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY,
Rt. Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes, M.A.
George Gabriel Stokes.

CAMBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Robert Uniacke Penrose Fitzgerald.

CHESTER.

Wirral Division,
Edward Thomas Davenant Cotton.

Eddisbury Division,
Henry James Tollemache.

Macclesfield Division,
William Bromley-Davenport.

Crewe Division,
Walter Stowe Bright McLaren.

Northwich Division,
John Tomlinson Brunner.

Altrincham Division,
Sir William Cunliffe Brooks, bt.

CHESTER—*cont.*

Hyde Division,

Joseph Watson Sidebotham.

Knutsford Division,

Hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton.

BIRKENHEAD BOROUGH.

Lieut.-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C B.

CHESTER BOROUGH.

Robert Armstrong Yerburgh.

STOCKPORT BOROUGH.

Louis John Jennings,
Sydney Gedge.

CORNWALL.

Western, or St. Ives Division,

Thomas Bedford Bolitho.

North-Western, or Camborne Division,

Charles Augustus Vansittart Conybeare.

Truro Division,

William Bickford Smith.

Mid, or St. Austell Division,

William Alexander M'Arthur.

South-Eastern, or Bodmin Division,

Leonard Henry Courtney.

North-Eastern, or Launceston Division,

Charles Thomas Dyke Acland.

PENRYN AND FALMOUTH BOROUGH.

William George Cavendish Bentinck.

CUMBERLAND

Northern, or Eskdale Division,

Robert Andrew Allison.

Mid, or Penrith Division,

James William Lowther.

Cockermouth Division,

Sir Wilfrid Lawson, bt.

Western, or Egremont Division,

Lord Muncaster.

CARLISLE BOROUGH.

William Court Gully.

WHITEHAVEN BOROUGH.

Rt. Hon. George Augustus Frederick Cavendish Bentinck.

DERBY.

High Peak Division,

William Sidebottom.

North-Eastern Division,

Thomas Dolling Bolton.

Chesterfield Division,

Alfred Barnes.

Western Division,

Lord Edward Cavendish.

Mid Division,

James Alfred Jacoby.

Ilkeston Division,

Sir Balthazar Walter Foster.

Southern Division,

Henry Wardle.

DERBY BOROUGH.

Thomas Roe,
Rt. Hon. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, knt.

DEVON.

Eastern, or Honiton Division,

Sir John Henry Kennaway, bt.

North-Eastern, or Tiverton Division,

Lt.-Col. William Hood Walrond.

Northern, or South Molton Division,

Viscount Lymington.

North-Western, or Barnstaple Division,

George Pitt Lewis.

Western, or Tavistock Division,

Viscount Ebrington.

Southern, or Totnes Division,

Francis Bingham Mildmay.

Torquay Division,

Richard Mallock.

Mid, or Ashburton Division,

Charles Seale-Hayne.

DEVONPORT BOROUGH.

Sir John Henry Puleston, knt.
George Edward Price.

EXETER BOROUGH.

Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote, bt., C.B.

PLYMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir Edward Bates, bt.
Sir Edward George Clarke, knt.

DORSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Edwin Berkeley Portman.

EASTERN DIVISION,
George Hawkesworth Bond.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Charles Joseph Theophilus Hambro.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Henry Richard Farquharson.

DURHAM.

JARROW DIVISION,
Sir Charles Mark Palmer, bt.

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING DIVISION,
Nicholas Wood.

CHESTER-LE-STREET DIVISION,
James Joicey.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Llewellyn Archer Atherley-Jones.

MID DIVISION,
William Crawford.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Lieut.-General Sir Henry Marshman Havelock-Allan, bt., V.C., K.C.B.

BISHOP AUCKLAND DIVISION,
John Mellor Paulton.

BARNARD CASTLE DIVISION,
Sir Joseph Whitwell Pease, Bt.

DARLINGTON BOROUGH.
Theodore Fry.

DURHAM BOROUGH.
Thomas Milvain.

GATESHEAD BOROUGH.
Hon. Walter Henry James.

HARTLEPOOLS (THE) BOROUGH.
Thomas Richardson.

SOUTH SHIELDS BOROUGH.
James Cochran Stevenson.

STOCKTON BOROUGH.
Joseph Dodds.

SUNDERLAND BOROUGH.
Samuel Storey,
Edward Temperley Gourley.

ESSEX.

SOUTH-WESTERN, OR WALTHAMSTOW DIVISION,
William Thomas Makins.

ESSEX—*cont.*

SOUTHERN, OR ROMFORD DIVISION,
James Theobald.

WESTERN, OR EPPING DIVISION,
Right Hon. Sir Henry John Selwin-Ibbetson, bt.

NORTHERN, OR SAFFRON WALDEN DIVISION,
Herbert Colstoun Gardner.

NORTH-EASTERN, OR HARWICH DIVISION,
James Round.

EASTERN, OR MALDON DIVISION,
Charles Wing Gray.

MID, OR CHELMSFORD DIVISION,
William James Beadel.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Major Frederick Carne Rasch.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH.
Henry John Trotter.

WEST HAM BOROUGH.

North Division,
James Forrest Fulton.

South Division,
George Edward Banes.

GLOUCESTER.

MID, OR STROUD DIVISION,
George Holloway.

NORTHERN, OR TEWKESBURY DIVISION,
Sir John Edward Dorington, bt.

EASTERN, OR CIRENCESTER DIVISION,
Arthur Brend Winterbotham.

FOREST OF DEAN DIVISION,
Godfrey Blundell Samuelson.

SOUTHERN, OR THORNBURY DIVISION,
Hon. John William Plunkett.

BRISTOL BOROUGH.

West Division,
Rt. hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, bt.

North Division,
Lewis Fry.

East Division,
Handel Cossham.

South Division,
Lt.-Col. Edward Stock Hill, C.B.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH.
James Tynte Agg-Gardner.

GLOUCESTER BOROUGH.
Thomas Robinson.

HANTS.

Northern, or Basingstoke Division,
Arthur Frederick Jeffreys.

Western, or Andover Division,
William Wither Bramston Beach.

Eastern, or Petersfield Division,
Viscount Wolmer.

Southern, or Fareham Division,
Lieut.-Gen. Sir Frederick Wellington John FitzWygram, bt.

New Forest Division,
Francis Compton.

CHRISTCHURCH BOROUGH.

Charles Edward Baring Young.

PORTSMOUTH BOROUGH.

Major.-Gen. Sir William Crossman, K.C.M.G.
Sir Samuel Wilson.

SOUTHAMPTON BOROUGH.

Alfred Giles.
Adm. Sir John Edmund Commerell, V.C., G.C.B.

WINCHESTER BOROUGH.

Richard Moss.

HEREFORD.

Northern, or Leominster Division,
James Rankin.

Southern, or Ross Division,
Michael Biddulph.

HEREFORD BOROUGH.

Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, bt.

HERTFORD.

Northern, or Hitchin Division,
Robert Dimsdale (Baron of the Russian Empire).

Eastern, or Hertford Division,
Abel Smith.

Mid, or St. Alban's Division,
Viscount Grimston.

Western, or Watford Division,
Thomas Frederick Halsey.

HUNTINGDON.

Southern, or Huntingdon Division,
Arthur Hugh Smith Barry.

Northern, or Ramsay Division,
Hon. Ailwyn Edward Fellowes.

ISLE OF WIGHT.

Sir Richard Everard Webster, knt.

KENT.

Western, or Sevenoaks Division,
Hon. Charles William Mills.

North-Western, or Dartford Division,
Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, bt.

South-Western, or Tunbridge Division,
Robert Norton.

Mid, or Medway Division,
Hon. John Stewart Gathorne-Hardy.

North-Eastern, or Faversham Division,
Hon. Herbert Thomas Knatchbull-Hugessen.

Southern, or Ashford Division,
William Pomfret Pomfret.

Eastern, or St. Augustine's Division,
Aretas Akers-Douglas.

Isle of Thanet Division,
Rt. Hon. Colonel Edward Robert King-Harman.

CANTERBURY BOROUGH.

John Henniker Heaton.

CHATHAM BOROUGH.

Sir John Eldon Gorst, knt.

DEPTFORD BOROUGH.

William John Evelyn.

DOVER BOROUGH.

Major Alexander George Dickson.

GRAVESEND BOROUGH.

John Bazley White.

GREENWICH BOROUGH.

Thomas William Boord.

HYTHE BOROUGH.

Sir Edward William Watkin, bt.

LEWISHAM BOROUGH.

Rt. Hon. Viscount Lewisham.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH.

Major Alexander Henry Ross.

ROCHESTER BOROUGH.

Col. Francis Charles Hughes-Hallett.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH.

Col. Edwin Hughes.

LANCASTER.

North Lancashire,

North Lonsdale Division,
William George Ainslie.

Lancaster Division,
James Williamson.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

BLACKPOOL DIVISION,

Sir Matthew White Ridley, bt.

CHORLEY DIVISION,

Lieut.-Gen. Randle Joseph Feilden.

North-East Lancashire,

DARWEN DIVISION,

Viscount Cranborne.

CLITHEROE DIVISION,

Rt. Hon. Sir Ughtred James Kay-Shuttleworth, bt.

ACCRINGTON DIVISION,

Robert Trotter Hermon-Hodge.

ROSSENDALE DIVISION,

Rt. Hon. Marquess of Hartington.

South-East Lancashire,

WESTHOUGHTON DIVISION,

Frank Hardcastle.

HEYWOOD DIVISION,

Isaac Hoyle.

MIDDLETON DIVISION,

Thomas Fielden.

RADCLIFFE-CUM-FARNWORTH DIVISION,

Robert Leake.

ECCLES DIVISION,

Hon. Alfred John Francis Egerton.

STRETFORD DIVISION,

John William Maclure.

GORTON DIVISION,

Richard Peacock.

PRESTWICH DIVISION,

Robert Gray Cornish Mowbray.

South-West Lancashire,

SOUTHPORT DIVISION,

Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon.

ORMSKIRK DIVISION,

Arthur Bower Forwood.

BOOTLE DIVISION,

Lieut.-Colonel Thomas Myles Sandys.

WIDNES DIVISION,

Tom Cottingham Edwards-Moss.

NEWTON DIVISION,

Thomas Wodehouse Legh.

INCE DIVISION,

Colonel Henry Blundell-Hollinshead Blundell.

LEIGH DIVISION,

Caleb Wright.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE BOROUGH.

John Edmund Wentworth Addison.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

BARROW-IN-FURNESS BOROUGH.

William Sproston Caine.

BLACKBURN BOROUGH.

William Coddington.
William Henry Hornby.

BOLTON BOROUGH.

Herbert Shepherd-Cross.
Lieut. Colonel Hon. Francis Charles Bridgeman.

BURNLEY BOROUGH.

John Slagg.

BURY BOROUGH.

Right Hon. Sir Henry James, knt.

LIVERPOOL BOROUGH.

Kirkdale Division,

Sir George Smyth Baden-Powell, K.C.M.G.

Walton Division,

Miles Walker Mattinson.

Everton Division,

Edward Whitley.

West Derby Division,

Lord Claud J. Hamilton.

Scotland Division,

Thomas Power O'Connor.

Exchange Division,

Ralph Neville.

Abercromby Division,

William Frederick Lawrence.

East Toxteth Division,

Baron Henry de Worms.

West Toxteth Division,

Thomas Bland Royden.

MANCHESTER BOROUGH.

North-West Division,

Sir William Henry Houldsworth, bt.

North Division,

Charles Ernest Schwann.

North-East Division,

Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, bt.

East Division,

Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.

South Division,

Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe, knt.

South-West Division,

Jacob Bright.

OLDHAM BOROUGH.

James Mackenzie Maclean.
Elliott Lees.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Third Session of the *Twenty-Fourth Parliament* of the
United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*,
appointed to meet 5 August, 1886, in the Fiftieth
Year of the Reign of

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1888.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 9*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading*—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment* (1).

THE PARLIAMENT, which had been Prorogued successively from Friday the 16th day of September, 1887, to the 30th day of November; thence to the 13th day of January, 1888; and from thence to the 9th day of February, met this day for the despatch of Business.

The Session was opened by Commission.

The House of Peers being met;

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House,

> "That Her Majesty, not thinking it fit to be personally present here this day, has been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Great Seal, in order to the opening and holding of this Parliament."

Then Five of the Lords Commissioners—namely, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury); The Lord Chamberlain (The Earl of Lathom); The Secretary of State for India (The Viscount Cross); The Earl of Kintore (Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard); and The Earl of Rosslyn (Captain of the Gentlemen at Arms)—being in their Robes, and seated on a Form placed between the Throne and the Woolsack, commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the Commons know "The Lords Commissioners desire their immediate Attendance in this House, to hear the Commission read."

Who being at the Bar, with their Speaker:—The Commission was read by the Clerk:—Then

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR *delivered* HER MAJESTY'S SPEECH to both Houses of Parliament, as follows:—

"*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

"I continue to receive from all other Powers cordial assurances of their friendly sentiments, as well as of their earnest desire to maintain the peace of the world.

"My officers, in conjunction with those of the Emperor of Russia, have completed the demarcation of the Afghan boundary in conformity with the terms of the Convention of last year. I trust that the work which has thus been brought to a conclusion may tend to remove the possibility of misunderstanding between the two Powers in regard to their Asiatic possessions.

"Animated by a desire to prevent the effusion of blood, I despatched a Mission to the King of Abyssinia, with the hope of dissuading him from engaging in a war with Italy. I deeply regret that my efforts have not been successful.

"The deliberations of the Conference assembled at Washington to adjust questions which have arisen between the Dominion of Canada and the United States are still in progress.

"The negotiations which were commenced in 1885 with respect to the regulation of the Suez Canal have been brought to a conclusion so far as points of difference between myself and the French Republic are concerned.

"I have also entered into an Agreement with the French Republic for the protection of life and property in the group of the New Hebrides by a Joint Naval Commission.

"A Conference of Delegates from the Powers interested in the sugar industry was summoned in London in the autumn to consider the possibility of putting an end to the injurious system of bounties; and they have made considerable progress towards the conclusion of a satisfactory arrangement.

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"The Estimates for the Services of this year, which will be laid before you, have been framed with due regard to economy. You will be asked to make provision for the improvements in the defence of the ports and coaling-stations of my Empire, which have been rendered urgently necessary by the advance of military science. You will also be asked to sanction an arrangement for providing a special squadron for the protection of Australasian commerce, the cost of which will be partially borne by the Colonies themselves.

"*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

"The measures which, at the cost of great labour, you passed during the last Session for the benefit of Ireland have been carefully carried into effect during the period which has since elapsed.

"The result of this legislation, so far as it has been tested by a short experience, has been satisfactory. Agrarian crime has diminished, and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated. Measures tending to develop the resources of Ireland, and to facilitate an increase in the number of the proprietors of the soil, will be laid before you.

"Your attention will be invited to the subject of Local Government in England; and measures will be submitted to you for dealing with it, in combination with proposals for adjusting the relations between Local and Imperial finance, and for mitigating the burdens at present imposed upon the ratepayers.

"The prospects of commerce are more hopeful than any to which I have been able to point for many years past. I deeply regret that no corresponding improvement is observable in the condition of agriculture. I commend the interests of that great industry to your attentive care, in the hope that means may be discovered for enabling it to meet more effectively the difficulties under which it labours.

"You will be invited to consider legislative proposals for cheapening the Transfer of Land; for modifying the procedure by which Tithe Rentcharge is collected; for the promotion of Technical Education; for preventing undue preferences in the Rates charged by Railway Companies on foreign and domestic produce; for remedying abuses in the formation of Companies under limited liability; and for amending the Law as to the Liability of Employers in case of accidents.

"Measures for improving the position of the Scottish Universities, and for regulating the Borough Police in Scotland, will be laid before you; and proposals will be submitted to you for diminishing the cost of Private Bill legislation.

"In these and all other efforts that you may make to promote the wellbeing of my people, I pray that you may be guided by the hand of Almighty God.

Then the Commons withdrew.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

PRAYERS.

ROLL OF THE LORDS—Garter King of Arms attending, *delivered* at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Third Session of the Twenty-fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom: The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

LORD GREY DE RUTHYN.

The House being informed that his Lordship was attending with his writ of summons, the Lord Chancellor explained to the House his Lordship's descent: Then his Lordship was called in, and took the Oath; and then took his place on the Baron's Bench, next below the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Earl of Kingston a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Viscount Doneraile, deceased, and the Earl of Wicklow a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Viscount Lifford, deceased, with the Certificates of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: *Delivered* (on oath), and Certificates read.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, *pro formâ*, read 1^a.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.
ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

The QUEEN'S SPEECH *reported* by The LORD CHANCELLOR.

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD (who was attired in full Highland costume) said: My Lords, I rise to move that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, to thank her for Her Most Gracious Speech; but before proceeding with that, I must crave the indulgence that your Lordships are always in the habit of giving to those in my position.

My Lords, in the Speech are contained many and various subjects embracing matters over the whole field of politics, and to deal at length with them would take considerable time; therefore I intend merely to touch lightly on one or more of them, leaving the rest to be dealt with by those who are better qualified to deal with them than I am.

The first point that occurs in Her Majesty's Speech is the allusion to the completion of a demarcation of the Russo-Afghan boundary. You are all well aware of the whole history of the Afghan Question, how 10 years ago we were at war with the State of Afghanistan, owing, as we believed at that time, to the intrigues of Russia, to Russia having persuaded the then Ameer of that land to decline to receive the Envoy which our Sovereign desired to send to him; of the war that ensued, of the massacre of Major Cavagnari, of the great march to Cabul, worthy of the days of Xenophon, and of the peace that followed, the tale is familiar. That war endured until about 1885, when peace was secured. During the period of peace complications again arose, owing mainly to the advances which were necessarily being made by the great Empire of Russia towards the East. Russia at that time entered the Province of Penjdeh, bringing its boundary close alongside that of the Ameer of Afghanistan. The advance of Russia in that direction was a menace to our Empire of India, and means were taken at once to discover whether those ideas were correct or were not. The strain between Russia and this country became one of the greatest tension, all but coming at one time to a rupture of diplomatic functions between the two countries. However, it was agreed that a Convention should be drawn up; that a Joint Commission should be appointed to mark out the boundary between the two States, and after some period of trouble—some period of danger to those occupied upon it on the spot in Afghanistan Proper, and on the boundaries —a line was made, drawn up, and adopted by the Commissioners. The work was then adjourned from the rough country in which they were working to St. Petersburgh, and the final rectification of the Russo-Afghan boundary was happily brought to a termination at the end of last year. Though we have come to what appears a satisfactory termination of that great business, there is no doubt in the future that fresh difficulties must arise; not necessarily in that place, not necessarily of our own creating; but I think it must be conceded that in the future Russia will be drawn forward by the action she is taking in Central Asia to seek a means of obtaining access to the Eastern Seas, whether it be through Persia, through Afghanistan, or through China. But, in the meanwhile, we have implicit confidence that Russia will behave as she has said she intends to do—namely, without seeking to injure our Indian Empire.

With regard to Abyssinia, little need be said excepting regret that the Sovereign of that country has not seen fit to follow the advice and counsel tendered him by Her Majesty. A few years ago, when Abyssinia was at war with this country, the Monarch of the day committed suicide at the approach of one of the Members of your Lordships' House. A Successor was appointed, who had been a faithful ally of ours during the late campaign in the Soudan.

Then, my Lords, the Suez Canal brings forward a subject of vast interest for political and commercial matter. We rejoice to learn by the Speech from the Throne that those negotiations which have been in train for some time past with the French Republic have now happily been brought to a termination by an agreement between the two great countries. The Canal must always exist as a monument to the industry of France, and especially as a monument to the genius of him who first designed it—M. de Lesseps. Various difficulties there have been in preparing the methods for the working of this great Canal, and they have been subjects, I will not say of dispute, but of contention between the Governments which have most had to do with it. Concessions, mutual on both sides, have been made, and now we happily learn that agreement is formed. France, not content with having the Canal in its original state, has sought means whereby it may be further developed, and it is interesting to see they have brought the advance of science to bear on it, and have introduced the use of electricity along the banks of the Canal, with the result of practically doubling its capacity by allowing a ship to pass through in 16 hours, as against 36 hours in former days.

The Suez Canal is not the only point on which there have been differences of opinion and happy agreement come to with France. If we move further away to the East, near the coast of Australia, we find a small group of Islands termed the New Hebrides. A Treaty between this country and France had existed for some time, to the effect that neither of the great countries should annex that group of Islands; but a short time since a loud outcry arose from Australia that that Treaty had been broken, that all rights were gone, and that France was a traitor to her word. My Lords, that was not the case. We must allow that France did not abrogate any of her Treaties in that matter. Equally well might she say that we in England have abrogated our Treaty by having been in temporary occupation in Egypt. But the contention which arose gave rise to diplomatic correspondence, with the result that a perfect understanding had again been come to, by the appointment of a Naval Commission of the Joint Powers, which will in future guard life and property on these Islands. That Commission will come into existence somewhere about the middle of March, the date when the French temporary occupation ceases.

Passing again towards the East, we strike the shores of America, and there, my Lords, we find matter of deep interest to ourselves. On the Eastern seaboard of that country, for upwards of a century there has been a question between the United States of America and ourselves, known as the Fisheries Dispute. It is one somewhat abstruse in its nature, somewhat difficult to adjust, as many statesmen have known to their cost. Practically, the question may be resolved into the saying—"Where may a man go to fish who is not a native of the land; within what distance of the shore may he obtain the means of carrying on his avocation?" My Lords, I do not desire to enter into any question of the merits of what the three-mile radius may be; but the matter was referred last year to the able conduct of Mr. Chamberlain, one of the clearest heads of this country, who was sent out by Her Majesty's Government with full power to bring about an arrangement which would be satisfactory to both Powers. So far, I think, we may say the Fishery Question of the United States may be taken as a recurring decimal fraction; and unless some concession is made by one side or by the other, in order to change the value of the fraction, so long will this question remain unchanged. Difficulty may be staved off for the moment, but it is certain to arise again.

My Lords, I will now ask you to take one glance at the affairs of Europe. It would have been a difficult thing, and a hard matter for any man in this country, a few days ago to rise and say there would be no war in Europe; but within the last few days great changes have taken place over the feelings of the country. A Treaty, unequalled, I may almost say, in importance, a secret Treaty, has been divulged on mutual agreement of the contracting parties, a Treaty which bears upon its face the certainty of either peace or the certainty of a terrible war. I firmly believe that the promulgation, or rather the publication, of that secret Treaty has done more to avert the bloody war that might have arisen between Austria-Hungary, Germany Proper, and Russia than any other course of action, diplomatic or otherwise. If we add to that the remarkable speech which the German Chancellor has just delivered, I think we may safely agree with the general feelings of Europe that the horrors of war are, at any rate, averted for some considerable time.

In the first paragraph of Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech Her Majesty says—"I continue to receive from all other Powers cordial assurances of a friendly sentiment." My Lords, to these words might have been added words to this effect—that during the year of Her Majesty's Jubilee the Queen was at peace, at least for no inconsiderable period of the year, over the whole world. My Lords, in ancient days the Temple of Janus was closed with pomp and great rejoicing. It seldom occurred in the Roman Empire that they were at peace all over the world, and yet I believe I am right in assuming that the Empire of Great Britain is still wider in extent than was the Empire of Rome. My Lords, when they were at peace Cæsar in his days did not disdain to prepare for war, and in the paragraph which is specially directed to the Gentlemen of the House of Commons we may see that Her Most Gracious Majesty, mindful of Her Scottish motto, *Nemo me impune lacessit,* desires also to add the words, *Paratus sum.*

I do not desire to enter on the question of the coaling stations, the fortifications to be made, and the great fleet which is required in the East and the South—there are others in this House, and the noble Lord who follows me (Lord Armstrong), who will deal with that subject; but while on the question of Estimates, although we have nothing in this House to do with them, I would make an appeal to Her Majesty's Government on one small matter which I consider vitally of importance—not vitally but materially to affect the country—and that is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should extend his munificent views to the desires of the Trustees of the British Museum that they should receive again those purchasing powers which have been taken away from them. It may well be said, my Lords, that in a time of commercial depression it is not desirable to invest moneys in non-interest bearing commodities; but, on the other hand, it is only right to remember that where distress occurs there are forced sales, small competitions, and low prices, so what is bad for the original possessor of the art treasures brought forward is good for the nation at large, provided it takes it up. The power of expending money naturally depends, my Lords, on the trade and commerce of a country. We see with true joy, from the Returns ordered in the last Session of Parliament, that there was an improvement in trade and commerce. There is no doubt that the trade and commerce of this country is advancing materially. The Board of Trade Returns, which are instructive and published weekly, show that the imports and exports of this country have increased very remarkably within the last six months. Indeed, it is time such increase should take place. Our condition is piteous. Many trades are within the verge of being closed; materials have been scarce, and profits *nil.* However, I hope that the Returns given by the Board of Trade will remain and keep on growing on the lines they have taken, so far as increase and prosperity is concerned.

Her Majesty, we regret to see, takes but a despondent view of agriculture in this country. I hope—nay, personally, I think—that the view that is taken by Her Majesty is one that is rather too despondent. I think that there is a distinct improvement in the tone of farmers, though not so much in the markets themselves, over this time 12 months ago; and we hope, for our own sakes, for the sake of the country generally, that something may be done in order to improve the position of the agriculturist. Some words in the paragraph relating to agriculture may raise hopes in the minds of some persons in this country; but I believe I am right in saying that Her Majesty's Government, in speaking somewhat vaguely of the means whereby agriculture is to be remedied, had no intention of going in the direction of what is known as Protection. At the same time, my Lords, I feel that I cannot but warn your Lordships that there is a grave feeling arising throughout the country, from the lowest depths, to the effect that in some short time means will have to be taken for the revision of our fiscal policy. This is no time or season to dwell on that, nor would I have done so had I not felt that this is a growing question, and likely, of its own power and extent, to bring itself to the front of political life in the immediate future.

The legislation which we are led to contemplate by the Speech comprises many measures, some of which are already familiar to your Lordships. The measure for the transfer of land was brought before your Lordships' House last year. That measure received the consideration of your Lordships; was amended, but proceeded no further. The same I may say with regard to the Railway Rates Bill; it was debated upon, discussed, amended, and dropped. We earnestly hope that some progress may be made on both of these measures, and others which will be laid before the House. The Employers' Liability Bill, a Bill which was passed in the year 1880, and which expires this Session, is about to be brought before the House. I hope, my Lords, that when this Bill is brought up, due regard will be had to the existing societies—of which I happen in one instance to be the President—societies which exist for the amelioration of distress consequent upon accidents in mines. As the Bill originally stood, the miner was unable to place himself in such a position that, without debarring himself from the benefit of the Act, he might retain the benefit, which proved to him a far larger value than that accruing to him under the Act. I sincerely hope that any Bill that will be brought in for employers' liability may have due regard to the existing societies for the protection of life. Liability will also, I trust, be laid on the promoters of public Companies, in order to put down the evil which has grown of late years, and which was the outcome of the legislation in 1862, and which could not have been provided against at the time.

My Lords, there is one more liability to which I should wish to allude, and that is the liability of all Governments for the maintenance of law and order. Persons in various ranks of life have not scrupled, though they ought to have known better, to raise the mob against the majesty of the law. The Metropolis has been the scene of extraordinary meetings held within a short distance of this House, where Members of Parliament and others attempted to wrest possession of Trafalgar Square from the authorities supreme. Her Majesty's Government, after having exhausted the powers of the police in their employ, thought fit to issue a Proclamation announcing that all well-disposed citizens who might desire to assist in the preservation of peace might be sworn in as special constables for a limited period. My Lords, that appeal was well responded to, and, indeed, it would have been far more than it had been had not certain restrictions been imposed by the magistrates upon those who attended for the purpose of being sworn in. Those specials were called out on three occasions, and personally they had nothing to do; those who had desired to disturb the law, to upset the peaceful authority of this Metropolis, stayed away when the amateur policeman was going to be allowed to go at them, and I think, for their own sakes, they did wisely. It was a matter of some interest to me—it was a matter of surprise to many—to see among the thousands of those specials the vast number there were who were well acquainted with the rudiments of drill. I saw 2,000 men assembled in the Albany Street barracks—the Northern Division—and I really think there were not half-a-dozen of that assembly who were not perfectly acquainted as to how they ought to fall in, and the ordinary small manœuvres they might be called upon to make.

My Lords, I am now about to resume my seat and cease wearying you; but, before doing so, I wish to claim the thanks of this country which are due to Her Majesty's Ministers for having maintained law and order and the administration of the law in Ireland. That law, laid down after great difficulties, has been maintained, and, in addition to its maintenance, it has been demonstrated clearly that that law was meant to be obeyed by the peasants as well as by those who ought to have known better than to break it. We know that Her Majesty's Government have had great and almost insuperable difficulties to deal with in Ireland. We know that those difficulties have been met with a firm front; we know that the Chief Secretary for Ireland has been a man unshrinking from his duties, and performing them in a manner which we believe firmly receives and merits the thanks of the country. But, my Lords, it would be a vain attempt for the Advisers of the Crown to carry that policy of theirs into effect had it not been for the cordial, the loyal, and disinterested support of the Members of the Party known as the Liberal Unionists. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their action. We hope that the Unionists will still continue to work together, and, indeed, I believe that the time is not far distant when the Conservative Unionist and the Liberal Unionist, instead of forming, as they do now, two Parties, will combine still more intimately, and be known as one Party with one name, always joined together for the maintenance of law and order, and for the maintenance of the British Empire. My Lords, I now beg to move the Address in answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech from the Throne.

LORD ARMSTRONG (who was attired in a Court dress) said: I rise, my Lords, with much diffidence, to address your Lordships for the first time. I do so for the purpose of performing the distinguished duty of seconding the adoption of the Address, which has been moved in such appropriate terms by the noble Earl who has preceded me (the Earl of Crawford).

In the first place, I think it right to explain the grounds upon which I, as a Liberal Unionist, have undertaken a duty which might seem to identify me with the Conservative Party, especially as this duty involves my sitting on this side of the House upon the present occasion. My Lords, I am one of those who maintain that the obligations of Party are in these days much more stringent than they ought to be. For my part, I am content to accept a programme framed in a spirit of progress and moderation from whatever source it may emanate; and I consider that the Speech from the Throne accords with this description. But even if it had been less liberal and progressive than it is, the preservation of the Union and the enforcement of law and order in Ireland are of such paramount importance, that I should have deemed it incumbent upon the Liberal Unionist Party to lay aside all minor differences, and join in supporting a Government which is intent upon attaining those objects.

The Liberal Unionists have been taunted with supporting a coercive policy; but such taunts can only impose upon those who are more influenced by rhetoric than by reason. Much fervid declamation has been expended by Separatist orators upon the subject of coercion. They have denounced it as an odious thing, without any reservation in its favour as an element of law. This is precisely what the Anarchists and the Nihilists do. They reprobate coercion in the abstract; and, as a logical sequence, they repudiate all law as a violation of liberty. Coercion deserves to be reprobated when practised by terrorists to compel people to break the law; but it deserves to be applauded when applied in restriction of such tyranny. Liberty ought to be the watchword of Liberalism; but innocent liberty can only be enjoyed under the protection of law; and law, without coercion, is a nullity.

We are told that we ought to rule Ireland by conciliation; and so we ought, if Ireland could be so ruled; but of what possible use could it be to offer conciliation to those usurpers of power whose Leader has emphatically declared that he will never be satisfied until the last link between Great Britain and Ireland has been severed? Every effort has also been made to inflame disaffection in Ireland by reference to oppression by England in days long since past; but no such oppression is practised in these days. It is the present, and not the irremediable past, that we have to consider; and the people of this generation have shown every disposition to deal with the difficult problem of Irish poverty and hardship in a spirit of generosity and kindness. To relieve the sufferings of Ireland, Parliament has strained the limits of justifiable legislation by interfering with the rights of property and freedom of contract, measures which could only be palliated by the benevolence of the motive which gave rise to them. At this very time we learn from Her Majesty's Speech that measures are contemplated for developing the resources of Ireland, and for facilitating an increase in the number of the proprietors of the soil. What more that is consistent with honesty and justice can the Irish people expect from a Parliament of their own; or is there the slightest prospect that an Irish Parliament would legislate more justly and dispassionately than the Imperial Parliament?

An outcry will doubtless be raised that the benefit of the promised Local Government Act is not to be extended to Ireland; but it is obvious that it is not a time to entrust additional power to a people who are at present in a state of semi-rebellion.

As matters now stand, both Parliament and the nation have declared in favour of the policy of the Government. Amongst thoughtful and dispassionate men, the majority who uphold this policy is overwhelming; and if we analyze the minority, we find it to consist of very heterogeneous elements. Firstly, we have the disaffected Party in Ireland, and also the large body of disaffected Irishmen resident in other parts of the United Kingdom, and who together form a very large proportion of the voting minority. But it is their cause which is *sub judice*, and, therefore, they are pre-eminently interested parties. Secondly, we have the revolutionary dreamers, who naturally see in the success of Irish Home Rule a step towards the realization of their own visionary theories. And, thirdly, we have that section of the Liberal Party which has, from motives best known to themselves, deserted its colours, and gone over to the enemy, with which it had previously been in bitter conflict. On the other hand, the majority is compact and consistent, and free from the faintest suspicion of being actuated by any other motive than that of patriotism. The Government, therefore, may well be encouraged to persevere in their present course, until the tyranny of secret societies and rebellious organizations be put down, and legitimate liberty be extended to all classes of the Irish people.

The honour of England, as well as its security, is at stake in this matter; for it would be cowardly and disgraceful to abandon Ulster and the Loyalists in other parts of Ireland to the tender mercies of such rulers as would manifestly come into power under a Home Rule Constitution. The Leaders of the Liberal Unionists have done splendid service in resisting, with so much ability, the dismemberment of the Empire; and in so doing they have displayed such consistency, self-sacrifice, and purity of purpose as entitles them to the respect and confidence of the whole nation.

I now pass on to the first paragraph of Her Majesty's Speech, which expresses satisfaction at the state of our foreign relations, and the hope of a peaceful solution of the present complications. There is no Department of Government in which so much tact, firmness, and discretion is required as in that of the Foreign Office; and we may congratulate the noble Marquess who fills the Office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in addition to that of Prime Minister, upon having, in these critical times, on the one hand, avoided placing the country in a state of isolation which it would be equally unwise and unbecoming for this great nation to occupy, and, on the other, has equally avoided giving cause of offence to any foreign Power. There are those who contend that we ought to have nothing to do with foreign politics; and that our proper course is to leave foreign nations to settle their differences in their own way, and without any intermeddling on our part; but those who maintain this view are bound to show that it makes no difference to this country what Power prevails and becomes dominant in Europe. We know that we have nothing to fear from some nations, and that we are constantly on our guard against others. We know also that some nations are aggressive, and are watchful for opportunities of taking neighbouring nations at disadvantage; while others seek only for repose, and to be left in peace to develop their own resources. Surely it would be dangerous for this country to let aggression get the upper hand. There would be old scores to settle with us, as well as new demands to be made upon us, which, single-handed, we might be unable to resist. Our moral influence, therefore, should be exercised in favour of that side which seeks only for peace; but moral influence goes for very little, unless it implies that material aid will be forthcoming as an ultimate resort. At this moment we live in constant oscillation between fears of war and prospects of peace. Nations actuated by mutual animosity and conflicting interests are armed to the teeth, and are visibly striving to gain superiority over each other in Armies, in weapons, and in power of mobilization. Now, the natural inference is that some one or more of these nations are only waiting for a favourable opportunity of attack, in order to achieve some cherished object or gratify feelings of revenge. It is folly to talk, as some amiable enthusiasts do, of binding nations by Treaty to settle disputes by arbitration. In the present state of the world Treaties are nothing without a background of force; just as law is nothing without a background of coercion. How long the outbreak may be delayed it is impossible to say; but that it will eventually come is all but certain, unless the peace-loving nations act in concert, and pre-arrange measures to prevent it. There is no nation in the world less disposed to break the peace of Europe than our own; but our great wealth, the vulnerability of our commerce, and our absolute dependence upon it, present the greatest possible temptation for an aggressive Power, flushed with military success, and strengthened by its results, to make war upon us, if, without Allies, we should be too weak to resist. It would be easy to construe previous neutrality into hostility, and to invent grievances in excuse for recourse to arms.

And this leads me to make a few brief remarks on the question whether our national defences are adequate to insure our safety under all possible eventualities of European war. We can never compete with Continental nations in the magnitude of our Armies; but our insular position gives us great advantage as a Naval Power. We have hitherto maintained our ascendancy on the ocean, and it is a matter of life or death that we should continue to do so. If we lose it our nation will be in the position of a beleaguered city, with a community living on half-rations, with the certainty of being eventually starved into submission, and of having a war indemnity levied upon us, the amount of which would be proportioned to our ability to pay, rather than to the justice of the demand or the clemency of the victors. I do not say that this is likely to happen; but it should be impossible to happen; and if we showed it to be impossible, it would never be attempted. Moreover, the possession of an unequivocally dominant Navy on our part, ready to operate on the side of peace, would be the most efficacious means of preventing the initial outbreak of war. Hence, therefore, it is not enough that our Navy should be merely on a balance with that which could, under the most adverse circumstances, be used against us, but it should be absolutely supreme. It should be not only sufficient to render hopeless the invasion of our shores, but it should also be adequate to protect our commerce and distant Possessions, and to aid our Colonies.

I am aware that it is a delicate and a dangerous thing for a Government to propose any abnormal expenditure of public money for any purpose in the absence of a popular desire for it; but I am glad to see that there are now indications of the public mind becoming alive to the urgency of the case; and I trust the Government will receive sufficient encouragement to induce them to carry out, with a due regard to economy, whatever measures may be necessary to give complete supremacy to our naval power. They have already taken a wise step towards the protection of our commerce, by arranging with the principal Steam Navigation Companies to adapt certain selected mercantile vessels for armament, so as to be available as cruisers in case of war. But it must be recollected that these selected vessels are the very ships that would be most needed in time of war for military and naval transport, and for the conveyance of mail despatches and of bullion, and possibly also of food for the people; because, being of exceptional speed, they would be best suited to elude an enemy, and to carry their precious cargoes in safety to their destinations. The arrangement for thus arming them is, however, a very proper measure, because, whether used as cruisers or transports, they would require to be armed; but it must be borne in mind that, as cruisers, they would only be capable of coping with cruisers of the same hybrid character belonging to other nations, because they could be easily destroyed by much smaller ships built specially for war. England, therefore, requires to be strong, not only in armed mercantile vessels, but also in genuine war cruisers; and it seems to me that the multiplication of vessels of what is termed the protected cruiser type, being vessels with little or no side armour, but otherwise constructed to minimize the effect of projectiles, is a much more important object than adding further to our Fleet of iron-clads.

I will not dwell upon this subject, because it may not be usual to introduce technical matters on an occasion like the present; but being intimately acquainted with what has been done, and is being done, in regard to modes of attack and methods of resistance, I think I ought not to miss the opportunity of stating that all past experience shows that the powers of attack tend to overtake the powers of resistance, and the prospect of that tendency continuing to operate appears to me to be at least as great at this time as it has ever been before. Iron-clads may grow obsolete, and will probably do so; but swift vessels, unburdened with side armour, and thereby enabled to carry a larger armament, more powerful engines, and a greater amount of fuel, will never be out of date. Great speed and nimbleness of movement, combined with great offensive power, are, in my opinion, the qualities which will in future be found of most value in naval warfare; and the saving which would be effected by dispensing with side armour would enable us to possess a far more numerous

Fleet than we can otherwise have, and such as we require to command the immense area of sea which is occupied by our commerce, and also to protect our distant Dependencies.

Then, again, there is the subject of the defence of our ports and coaling stations, to which special reference is made in Her Majesty's Speech. This subject—so far, at least, as commercial harbours are concerned—was, about six years ago, fully inquired into by a War Office Committee, of which Lord Wolseley and Sir Frederick Campbell were Members, and was reported upon by them; but that Report has never reached the public eye, nor has anything been systematically done towards carrying out its recommendations. And why? Because no Administration has the courage to propose the necessary expenditure, for fear of giving a handle to the Opposition wherewith to damage them. Such, my Lords, is the mischievous operation of Party faction in this age. At the present time, I believe, there is not a commercial harbour in the Kingdom that is not at the mercy of hostile cruisers, unless watched by a ship of war, which could ill be spared in time of war.

Upon this subject I may observe that I think much might be done by the organization of local Volunteers suitably trained, thereby further developing the patriotic spirit of the nation, which has been so nobly displayed in the great Volunteer movement which has taken place in recent years.

The subject of our coaling stations requires the prompt and vigorous attention which I trust it is now receiving. Nothing so much jeopardizes our naval supremacy as the insecurity of our coal depôts; for it would be impossible for our steamships to keep the sea without means of replenishing their coal. It is a humiliating reflection that the English people are never mindful of national insecurity until they fall into a panic, in which they are invariably joined by Parliament; and then money is voted lavishly, and spent wildly and wastefully. If the subject were taken up in a methodical and business-like manner, and carried through with well-considered efficiency and economy, panics, with their wasteful effects and injurious interference with trade, would be avoided, thereby causing a saving which would go far towards the expense of placing the country in a state of absolute security. The outlay, of course, would be large, but so is the wealth of the country, and the amount should be judged of in relation to that wealth. Besides, there are considerations which greatly qualify the objection of expense. The whole of the money would be spent on native industry; and no labour need be withdrawn from reproductive purposes, seeing that the supply of labour in the country is redundant for all purposes. The money spent would, in fact, be money paid by the country to the country for the insurance of the country; and I cannot see that the country would be much the poorer for the transaction. The working classes, at all events, who would doubtless be appealed to in opposition, would have no cause to complain: for, whatever change of pockets might take place, it would be their pockets that would receive the most. Nor would the benefit be confined to particular industries: for, by increasing the spending power of one section, we indirectly increase that of others, which supply its needs; and this process goes on in an enlarging circle until the money is diffused over the whole field of industry.

But it is not only in a financial and economic point of view that this question should be regarded. The Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which I am glad to be still able to call a United Kingdom, holds a foremost place amongst the nations of the world. It rules, with more or less sway, over something like one-fifth of the whole human race. To maintain that sway, and our influence amongst nations generally, we must maintain our *prestige,* and to do that we must maintain our power. It is human nature to despise the impotent; and if we once exhibit feebleness, this great Empire, of which we ought to be so proud, will break up and dissolve away. It will be a shame if this vital question of national security be made a Party question; but Party spirit unfortunately runs so high that it is difficult to keep anything out of its sphere. I hope, however, that under the present Administration the subject will be more seriously and impartially considered than it has hitherto been; especially as our great Australian Colonies are evincing a disposition to co-operate with the parent country in giving strength and security to the Empire. There may possibly be some who may attribute these observations to interested motives. I trust it is unnecessary for me in such an Assembly as this to disavow any such motives; but in any case it is facts and arguments, and not motives, that must determine the issue.

As to the remaining topics of the Royal Speech, there is much to invite comment; but holding, as I do, that long speeches are amongst the reproaches of the day, I will not occupy more of your Lordships' time on this occasion than formally to second the Motion for the adoption of the Address to Her Majesty in reply to Her Most Gracious Speech.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, it has not unfrequently been my happy lot, with perfect sincerity, to compliment the Mover and Seconder of the Address in this House; and I have done so with perfect propriety, inasmuch as, generally, they have been chosen from among those young Peers who have their spurs to win. But it would be presumptuous in me to do so to the noble Lords who have moved and seconded the Address to-night. Indeed, with regard to the noble Earl who moved it, I am rather inclined to criticize than to compliment him, and for this reason—I think the House has some right to complain that since his accession to the hereditary honours of his family, with so high a reputation for ability and culture, and especially after having shown this night the facility of speaking which he possesses, hitherto he has taken so small a share in our debates. I trust that he and we shall profit by this respectful reproof. I am much more inclined to compliment my noble Friend the Seconder of the Address—who has just sat down — because, although there appeared to me to be a fine Conservative ring about his sentiments, and an intense admiration for Her Majesty's Government, which would not have been incongruous even from the place where Seconders of Addresses usually sit, yet I was very pleased with the ready firmness with which he repudiated the invitation, so graciously made to him by the noble Earl, to merge himself at once and for ever into the Conservative Party. I believe we were all agreed that when he was called to this Assembly he fulfilled many of the principal conditions and qualifications which should lead to a seat in this House. I am glad that he should have been asked to second the Address, and for this reason. We are constantly told that the noble Marquess, owing to the good company he keeps, is casting off every day his Conservative principles. I therefore welcome any innovation which indicates a love of change, and this happens to be the first time I ever remember a Peer who has just shown his confidence in the Government by accepting a Peerage to be called upon immediately afterwards to give the further proof of it by moving or seconding an Address. I hope we shall also hear him on the many subjects on which he can enlighten the House. A much sadder duty has sometimes fallen to my lot. I have had to allude to losses which this House has sustained during the Recess. This year, among others who have passed away, there are three whose names I cannot pass over in complete silence. A great diplomatist has died, of the highest public and private reputation—a man of consummate prudence and judgment. He must have made mistakes, but I know of none during his long career. An excellent adviser, and, from the confidence which he inspired both in his own Government, whatever Party was in power, and in that of the country to which he was accredited, Lord Lyons was able to render great services to both nations. Another Peer who has died was an intimate personal friend of mine. Lord Wolverton, an excellent man of business and administrator, was also a keen politician. His zeal for his Party, for his political associates, and for the cause which he had espoused was of the most genuine character; and I am sure that even noble Lords opposite will agree that it is a distinct damage to this Assembly, which ought to be fairly representative of opinions out-of-doors, that an able man, with a great stake in the country, whose views were more advanced than those of the generality of your Lordships, should have been thus suddenly taken away. Again, I am sure your Lordships will not believe that I mention Lord Dalhousie because we were in political agreement. He had no enemy, no ill-wisher, in this House. If the cares of great possessions, and the obligations imposed upon him by this House, and which he entered into with such geniality, had not taken him from his first profession, his naval career would have been brilliant. The promise of his political course has been cut short in youth, and under the most heart-breaking circumstances. I quite agree with the noble Earl the Mover of the Address as to the satisfactory character of the assurances on foreign affairs contained in Her Majesty's Speech. With regard to the general European Question, and the prospects of peace, I wish to avoid anything like pressure upon the noble Marquess to state anything which he does not wish to say. The responsibilities of a Minister in his position are great. He may not be able to give his opinion as fully and frankly as the German Chancellor has done in his remarkable speech. One thing I hope he will not do. Your Lordships may have read the predictions of newspaper sporting prophets, some of whom suggest one or two winners of a race, but also several others as likely to get places, others to show in front, others to be dangerous. Great is the subsequent triumph if the horse indicated wins; but it is almost as much so if any of the others named come in front. England and, indeed, Europe were agog the other day to know what the noble Marquess would say in Lancashire on foreign affairs. He alluded to his prophecy of six months before in favour of peace. He pointed out that there had been no war. He then delivered an oracular opinion, so full of qualifications and re-qualifications that we were none the wiser; but he is sure to be right whatever may happen. I trust that he will be able to confirm the pacific declarations of Prince Bismarck. I cannot, having mentioned the Chancellor's speech, avoid pointing out the light it throws on the glories of British diplomacy as to the Treaty of Berlin. We were told by our Plenipotentiaries, coming back from Berlin laden with "Peace with honour," how successful British diplomacy had been, and how completely they had vanquished Russian diplomatists and foiled their ambitious efforts. We this week learn from the highest authority the authentic history of these transactions—that our negotiators were so modest that they abdicated the care of the negotiations and placed themselves unreservedly in the hands of the most powerful and able diplomatist of Europe. An excellent choice, if it had not been unfortunately the case that he considered himself as a Plenipotentiary, with Count Schouvaloff, of the Russian Government, and in that capacity advocated and obtained for Russia every single object she desired. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* I am glad that negotiations begun under Mr. Gladstone's Government, and I believe on the same lines, respecting Afghanistan and the Suez Canal have made progress. The noble Marquess will tell us whether it is the case that the Suez Canal negotiation is hung up at Constantinople, and likely to remain so. I, of course, can give no opinion on the details of these arrangements till the Papers are before us. We shall be glad to know how matters are at Suakin. Attacks have been made upon the administration of Colonel Kitchener in our time. He is an excellent public servant, and of his severe wound I heard with very deep regret. I trust the noble Marquess will be able to confirm the opinion which we always held, that the dangers to Egypt from the Soudan were at the time grossly exaggerated. The noble Marquess will himself be desirous to give some explanation as to the arrangement made between the Government of Egypt and the late Khedive, and the part which a Member of his Government played in the matter. I do not know whether it was the case with my noble Friend the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Rosebery); but I was several times sounded with regard to the claims of the late Khedive, consequent upon his enforced resignation. As far as I remember, everyone whom I consulted who was competent to judge considered those claims to have no foundation, with the exception of those for the standing crops, for which a sum of money had been received. A large portion of them seem now to have been acknowledged. I can give no opinion as to the merits of the arrangement without more information; but, at first sight, it seems to have been a compromise where no compromise at all was needed; and the grant of residences at Constantinople and in Egypt, and of large domains in the latter country to the late Khedive—who has been up to the present time in constant opposition to his son, who succeeded him—does not, at first sight, seem to be politic. The best defence I have seen does not touch this point, but describes the compromise as a good business arrangement, and particularly acceptable as a proof of the supremacy of the British Government in Egypt, afforded by the concession made to an agent of the late Khedive — a Member of the present Government. I can conceive no possible occasion on which it was less desirable to show any supremacy on the part of the British Government, or a less desirable mode of showing it. I wish to know why the Government separated from the previous policy of non-interference in this case; and whether the Judge Advocate General, who sits on the Ministerial Bench in "another place," and who receives a salary for performing duties in this country, acted without sanction from the noble Marquess as Prime Minister or as Foreign Secretary, or, if he did obtain that sanction, on what grounds it was given? I presume it is too early to ask for any information as to the Fishery negotiations which are going on at Washington. It is a question which ought not to create ill-blood between us, the Dominion, and the United States; and I, for one, earnestly hope that the Government and their Representative will succeed in concluding an arrangement satisfactory to all parties. With regard to Colonial matters, the principal questions on which Parliament will desire information are connected with the South of Africa, with Samoa, and the New Hebrides. I presume that Papers on all these matters will be presented to the House. Before alluding to the legislation which is promised in Her Majesty's Speech, I should like to say a few words as to the legislation of last year. I remarked that at the beginning of the Recess the language of the Ministry and their supporters was extremely modest. They apologized for the meagreness of the repast by accusing the Irish Members of Obstruction, and by quite unfounded complaints of their having been helped by my late Colleagues. But lately they have taken another line, and boast of the great legislative measures of the past Session. I hope that legislation will do good, but as yet I have not been able to discover the evidences of it. Take the Allotments Bill, passed as a great remedial measure, though defined by one Member of the Government as containing the thin edge of Socialism. It has not yet produced any effect, and there are free complaints that it has been useless and will be so in its present form. Take the great Margarine Bill, with its audacious proof of the omnipotence of Parliament actually changing the use of the English language, giving new significations to old words. What are its results? Take the Mining Act, which has an undoubtedly good and humane object. All I hear at present of it is that while the coal masters state that it will add from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per ton on the cost of coal, the miners are actually striking against its provisions being carried out. Of the Trade Marks Act I see grave complaints are being made, both as to its wording and the manner in which it is administered. With regard to the Irish Land Act and the great measure of last year—the Crimes Act—I will speak a little later. Before alluding to the promised legislation of this year, I wish to speak of the very important announcement made in Lancashire the other day. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) promised that nothing but a direct Vote of Censure will turn out the Government. He declares that the position of the Government will not be in the least affected by their measures, great or small, being rejected — including, I presume, the Local Government Bill, the relief to agriculture, the subsidies to Ireland, the Budget, and the middle-aged Bills born some time ago. He says that such a course will be perfectly Constitutional. I deny that such a course is consistent with Constitutional practice. Governments have wisely not always pinned their existence to the passage of small and unimportant measures. They have ever made a few questions what are called "open questions." But I do not remember a precedent for a Government treating the whole of their legislative proposals as things which can be improved off the face of the earth with perfect impunity to the Government who originate them, and without disturbing a rose-leaf in their bed of roses. But even if I were wrong as to consistent Constitutional usage on this point, what can be the object of the Head of the Government in announcing beforehand this indifference to their own proposals, giving every encouragement to Parliament to treat with contempt the measures which may be laid before them? Supposing such a course to be Constitutional and wise, what possible reason can there be for its premature announcement? I am glad to note that there is nothing in Her Majesty's Speech savouring of Fair Trade. The noble Marquess expressed in Lancashire great surprise and indignation at Mr. Gladstone having, at Dover, thrown out some doubts as to his devotion to Free Trade. I am afraid that if this was wrong in Mr. Gladstone I am also guilty in this respect. The noble Marquess hardly ever speaks on the subject without regretting that he has not in his hands those weapons which would enable him to renew the old and unsuccessful warfare of hostile tariffs on the reciprocity system. He always alludes with something like exultation to the failure of the anticipations of the promoters of Free Trade 40 years ago as to the result which our example of Free Trade would have upon the rest of the world. He condemns that great work—the simplification of the tariff. He hints at the resumption of duties on silk manufactures, forgetting that it was on the question of the silk duties that Mr. Huskisson fought the first triumphant battles of Free Trade. When describing the defects of limited liability companies, he has stated, among other objections, that their principle was good, but only so long as small capitalists joined them, and he asserted that they had reduced the wages of labour. The noble Marquess may be right in all these contentions; but they certainly savour of Protection, and not of Free Trade, and are more acceptable to Mr. Howard Vincent and to one or two noble Lords opposite than to Mr. Gladstone, to Mr. Bright, or to the numerous Free Traders in this House. But I admit we ought to be all the more grateful to him for having set down his foot and pledged the Government to resist protective duties of any kind, and I believe that the gratifying announcement as to the improvement of trade will make it still easier for him to defend the position. As for the principal measure of the Session — the Local Government Bill—much will have to be said as to the justice and expediency of confining it to England in the teeth of declarations almost amounting to pledges. Otherwise all difficulties on the subject have disappeared. Mr. Ritchie, the author of it, has announced that it is perfection. I can only say that I am sure that if it should seem so to our Friends in "another place," no Party spirit, no jealousy on their part of Her Majesty's Government, will prevent them giving it a hearty support. The Speech refers to Ireland in very roseate terms, such as to create some surprise, not only in the minds of the small minority which I represent, but also in those of many of the Peers I see on both sides of the House. Nearly 88 years ago a certain number of Liberal Peers protested against the Act of Union, because it had been passed against the sense of the Irish people, and was, therefore, unjust in principle and dangerous in its consequences. The echo of that declaration can be found in one of the sentences of a Protest entered last year on the Journals of your Lordships' House, in which it is stated that the experience of a long series of years conclusively shows that exceptional legislation of this kind has failed to secure any permanent respect for law and order, while it tends to make the present system of government in Ireland odious to the Irish people. The same idea—although not in the same words—was expressed by Lord Carnarvon, when commissioned by the noble Marquess to declare what was the Irish policy of the Government. But adherence to the original system of policy of Her Majesty's Government has exposed us to severe reproaches. We have been accused of being in alliance with the Party of disorder—with men who were in league with ruffians and assassins. The connection has never been proved to us; and we do not pretend to approve of many things done by Irish Members. We went further, and used the *ad hominem* argument, asking the Government, if the Irish Members of Parliament were such as they described, why it is more wicked of us to accept their support than it was of the Government to communicate with them in and out of Office, and to obtain their support at a time when, if the accusation held good at all, it was then applicable. Well, we were told in reply that there never had been communications—that there never had been any alliance. This assertion has led to statements and counter-statements as to communications into which I do not desire to enter. But, as to an alliance, the Chief Secretary, with great candour, has recently acknowledged that there had been an alliance between the Government and the Parnellites. He defended it—though it lasted two and a-half years, and effected the overthrow of a Government—on the ground that it was casual, and had only lasted a short time. In short, he defended it on exactly the same grounds as was done by Midshipman Easy's wet nurse, who, when a baby obtruded itself into the world in an undesirable manner, defended the act on the ground that the baby was so very small. The alliance of the Conservative Party, while they did not agree with the principles of their allies, was for the obvious object of turning out their opponents. We have accepted Irish support on a question about which we believe the Representatives of Ireland are competent to speak, and, as we believe, are on the right course. The noble Marquess the Prime Minister has complained much of the criticism which has been made by the Opposition on the repressive measures of last year. I object to illegality, to outrage, and to crime; but I cannot do so more thoroughly than Mr. Gladstone, when he emphatically declared at Nottingham that—

> "Come from whom it may, and be its circumstances what they may, illegality, be the excuses what they may, I have never defended, and will never defend."

If we encouraged outrage and crime we should be as foolish as we should be wicked. For those who have adopted a conciliatory attitude towards Ireland nothing could be more impolitic than that such offences should be rife. I may add that we are not much helped by the Government attributing any tranquillity that may exist to the fear of their repressive Act. While I admit our duty to denounce illegality, I deny that we are prohibited by any Constitutional or moral obligation from condemning a law which we think bad; still less from criticizing what may seem to us to be the faulty application of such laws. How can we be logically condemned for criticizing the repressive Act of last year if the Prime Minister is justified in denouncing the remedial measure of 1881, not only to us, but to all who supported that measure? We have been told that the law is the same in England as in Ireland. As long as I find that there are a number of things which I and others can do or say in England, which cannot be said and done in Ireland—unlearned as I am—I decline to receive any amount of assurance that the law is the same in both countries. My noble and learned Friend on the Bench behind me (Lord Herschell) laid down the law at Manchester the other day—the noble Marquess admits that he is an authority—that noble and learned Lord said with regard to the repeated declaration that has been made as to no new offences having been created by the late Act—

> "You can, to-day, upon proof of certain acts being done, and certain words spoken in Ireland, lawfully obtain a conviction, where prior to the passing of the Crimes Act, if you had proved the same acts, or the same words spoken by the same persons under the same conditions, no tribunal could have convicted them."

I do not know what answer can be made to that statement, or as to the effect of the Act; nor do I know what the reply is to the complaint that your administration of the law is not impartial—that while, wisely or unwisely, you take no notice of hundreds and thousands of men who break the law by attending meetings, yet by late legislation you punish persons of all ages who, in pursuance of their ordinary avocations, sell newspapers with certain descriptions of these unchecked meetings held with perfect impunity. I propose leaving to others who have better information of the facts and more intimate acquaintance with the law to discuss the complaints that have been made as to the severity, and even illegality, of some of the proceedings of the Government in administering the new law. But I should like to go a little further, and ask what is the practical effect of the punishment which you are now inflicting? I presume that you punish not for the sake of revenge, but to deter others from following the same course. Do you imagine that a short imprisonment has a very deterrent effect when the head of the Municipality comes out of prison as a triumphant conqueror; when the priest emerges from his confinement, and is received as a saint by his flock; when Members of Parliament come back to their constituents with a still more certain security of being re-elected; and when men in an ordinary position are received by their fellow-citizens, not as criminals, but as heroes? It is asserted in Her Majesty's Speech that the two measures—the Crimes Act and the Land Act—have had satisfactory results. I trust that this is the case with regard to the Land Act, notwithstanding the strong complaints made of its action on the one side by the tenants, and on the other by the landlords, of whom a deputation recently waited upon the Prime Minister, and who seemed to have been rather easily satisfied with the reasons he gave for the non-fulfilment of the pledge that they should have compensation from the British Exchequer. The noble Marquess gracefully sympathized with them in their present position, and there is no one who does not feel for misfortunes—though not without their parallel in this country—which the great majority have done nothing to deserve. I venture to think that the Land Bill proposed by Mr. Gladstone was a proof of this sympathy. I thought, and I still think, that it was a very judiciously constructed measure, which, while it gave relief to landlords and tenants, threw no appreciable risk upon the British Exchequer. But not a word for it was said in Ireland by those most interested, and in this country it was hastily but almost universally condemned, and possibly from its provisions not having been fully understood and mastered. I did not expect, however, that this measure—conceived in a just and liberal spirit towards Irish landlords—would have been described by no less a Minister than the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a bribe—a phrase not very encouraging for any proposal that may in the future be made on the Land Question. I presume I should awake the indignation of the Government if I were to apply any such word to the promises of subscribing British money to be expended on Irish local wants. The Speech does not show in what proportion a tranquillizing effect has been produced by the two Acts. I do not know that in any case the Crimes Act has furnished the means of punishing crime and outrage which do not exist under the ordinary law; that it has caused rents to be paid, which would otherwise not be paid, or that it has enabled landlords to let land which had ceased to be occupied. Has it, by a few isolated punishments for Boycotting, prevented the practice? Has it in any degree falsified the previous opinion of the Prime Minister that no legal provision can do so? The Speech does not show in what proportion the tranquillizing cause has arisen from the Crimes Act, or from the remedial measures; or how much of such effect from the latter is due to the strengthening by the Opposition of the measure which was obtained by the Government last year. We assert that any increased tranquillity that may exist is owing to the sympathy shown on this side of the water for the Irish people. Her Majesty's Government assert that it is chiefly owing to repression—assertion on both sides. But we have this advantage—that if we are right as to the cause, it will be enduring; whereas if the Government is right, judging from all that has previously taken place, it is merely driving discontent under the surface to break out again with renewed vigour. It must not be forgotten that the postponement of evictions for six months has had in itself a very considerable effect. The present policy of the Government is to consolidate the Union by a continuous application of force for many years. We differ from the Government as to the advantage of the application of force; but suppose we are wrong and they are right as to the system, and that it is as beneficent as it is described, is there any reason to believe that it will be continuously applied? After all, the best guide of the future is the lesson of the past. In 1880 Lord Beaconsfield's Government dissolved without renewing the Coercion Act. Mr. Gladstone's Government on its accession did not do so, although later it did introduce repressive measures, chiefly owing to the outrages produced by the rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. There seems little doubt that our passing that repressive measure minimized the good effect of the Land Act of 1881. It was in 1883 that the virtual alliance between the Conservative Party and the Irish Members began. In 1884 the Franchise Act was given to Ireland, upon the importance of which the noble Marquess once so forcibly dwelt as a regulator of our conduct towards Ireland. In 1885 the Conservatives and Parnellites reduced Mr. Gladstone's majority to 14 in February, and in June destroyed his Government. The Government of the noble Marquess declined to introduce any repressive measures. They did not say it was for want of time, but based it upon benevolence to Ireland, and attacked Lord Spencer—whom they had previously blamed for leniency—for the severity of his administration. During the autumn the Government did everything to ingratiate themselves into the good opinion of the Irish Leaders, and gave to them and to the world in general the impression that they were averse to coercion. This policy continued to the beginning of 1886. In the Queen's Speech there was only an allusion to a future Coercion Bill. Mr. Smith was sent over on his famous 24 hours' mission of inquiry, and a sudden conversion to coercion was announced, and this after the Irish had been assured by the Representatives of both the Government Parties that coercion was impossible after the extension of the franchise. Could we with consistency turn our front as rapidly as the Government had done? I am talking of the Government—not of many of those who sit opposite, and who had never wavered in their language as to the right policy to be adopted in Ireland from their point of view—but I am talking of the Government, who at one time were against exceptional measures, and declared that they were for giving everything for the peace, contentment, and happiness of the people of Ireland that the unity of the Empire and the supremacy of Parliament would allow. After such recent proofs of the difficulty which both Parties have felt in consistently holding to repression, what chance is there of a persistent attitude on the part of any Government, more especially after millions have in Great Britain adopted the Irish view? Before sitting down, I feel bound to make one remark upon a statement which was made by the noble Marquess opposite the other day in Lancashire. It was a suggestion from the Prime Minister that a great majority of the Conservative Party would prefer not to hold conversation with Mr. Gladstone—a suggestion of pure and simple Boycotting, which could not be touched by law in this country, although I am not so sure that it might not be in Ireland under the new law. The statement was absolutely in disagreement with all the best traditions in this country, and especially in this House, of social and political life, and one which I believe the great Conservative Party would indignantly repudiate. My experience of friendly and personal courtesy from political opponents is completely unbroken. Out of the long list that occurs to me I will only mention the names of four Prime Ministers—the Duke of Wellington, the late Lord Derby, Lord Beaconsfield, and I am proud to add the noble Marquess himself. I hardly know how such a suggestion could have come from one of his position, his character, and his intellectual abilities with regard to a great political rival who has all these qualifications in so remarkable a degree, besides his much greater age and longer public services than the noble Marquess. I venture to assert that the example which Members of this Assembly ought to give is to follow the advice of my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook), a late First Lord of the Admiralty, who, the other day, while declaring open war against our policy, adjured both sides to conduct the contest with arguments, and not with bitterness and personalities.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I must commence by expressing my thanks to the noble Earl for a large portion of his speech, with which I am able most sincerely to agree, and most of all for the very graceful compliment which he paid to my noble Friend below me, and also to the noble Lord on the Bench below the Gangway, for the speeches which they have made this evening. I was sorry, however, to incur his censure for the breach of precedent or breach of custom—though I was not aware of it—by the placing of the seconding of the Address in the hands of a new Peer by the Government which created him. Whether that is so or not, I frankly confess that I did not think for a moment whether I was inviting the noble Lord to show confidence in the Government or not. What I thought was, and I anticipated justly, that I was providing for the House a high intellectual treat, and making a very great addition to the value of our debates. We are indebted to the noble Lords, men already distinguished outside this House in fields other than those of politics, for their kindness in moving and seconding the Address; and I can only say that if there be any custom that hindered me from asking them, it was a custom more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The noble Earl passed almost at once from the merited praise which he bestowed on the speeches of my two noble Friends to a sadder theme; and, again, I have to thank him for the language in which he has noted the merits and acknowledged the great experience of my valued friend, the late Lord Lyons. A greater loss to diplomacy and to the Public Service we have not suffered for many a day. His singular distinction was the broad, calm, judicial spirit, and the active patriotism which made him a trusted and sought-for counsellor of every Ministry that he served. I can well remember again and again in troublous times how some knotty point of foreign diplomacy was solved by the suggestion that we should refer to his unfailing wisdom and to his vast store of experience. My Lords, I cannot mention foreign affairs without feeling that there is another very sad topic that I can hardly pass by, though I touch upon it with the deepest sorrow. The heir to a great Empire, closely united to us in bonds of sympathy, stands in a situation of peril—a peril the exact extent of which I will not venture to measure, and I should be very sorry to use exaggerated language—but, at least, in a situation which has excited, and which must continue to excite, the deep solicitude of his many friends and those of his family. We could wish that there was some other head on which this blow could fall. Among all the leading figures in the political field of Europe there is not one who has excited so deep and affectionate an admiration as the Crown Prince of Germany. Our sympathy is with him in his suffering; our sympathy is with his distinguished Consort, and with all his relatives, among whom the one, perhaps, who feels most deeply is our own Most Gracious Sovereign. My Lords, I have been moved to say this because the news has just reached me that the operation of tracheotomy has been successfully performed on the Crown Prince this afternoon by Dr. Bramann, several other doctors being present. According to the accounts received His Imperial Highness is going on well. I can only add that such news as that does not suffer any further comment than the repetition of the words that we watch the vicissitudes of so anxious a time with our deepest sympathy and solicitude. Well, now, the noble Earl very kindly and very rightly forbore to press me upon the present state of foreign affairs, with respect to the great issues of peace or war. I am sorry that the observations which I made some weeks ago in the Provinces have, as he puts it himself, had the effect of making him no wiser. I should be very glad indeed to make him wiser. But I will not attempt to do now what I failed to do then. I certainly will not attempt to give him the "straight tip" as to what is going to happen in this terrible crisis in Europe. My Lords, the prospects of peace or war, and the precise political position of those whom public rumour is disposed to look upon as the probable combatants, have been described by a master hand, and I shall not spoil the picture by attempting to add anything to it. I may say that I hope that some kind friend in Germany may furnish the noble Earl with an accurate report of Prince Bismarck's speech. I am afraid that he has derived a very imperfect notion of what the Prince really said, if his representation of it to-day is to be trusted. But I observe that the noble Earl, though he referred to several speeches, referred not only to Prince Bismarck's speeches, but also to those of the humbler persons on these Benches. He referred to my own speeches at Liverpool and elsewhere, and to the speeches of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but one characteristic marked all his citations — namely, that they had not any but the most fantastic resemblance to what was originally uttered. I cannot help thinking that the noble Earl must have fallen asleep while reading what I said, and that his quotations represent, not his recollections, but his dreams. Certainly, the noble Earl's quotation of what Prince Bismarck said is entirely at variance with all that I have seen and heard on this subject. I did not in the least gather that Prince Bismarck represented himself to have said that he had obtained for Russia everything that she desired. If he did say so, Russia certainly has not been of that opinion during many years past.

But, however, Prince Bismarck is quite strong enough to defend himself, and I will not venture to cross swords with the noble Earl in defence of his accuracy. As far as I remember the events of the Berlin Conference, they were like those of most other Conferences; they ended in a middle term—a compromise which did not correspond with the extreme demands of either side. I dare say that Prince Bismarck's astuteness may have gone a good way in inducing us to accept that compromise; but it was a compromise which, I believe, was anything but acceptable to the Government of Russia at the time, and it was highly acceptable to the English people. That, I think, is a sufficient defence of Lord Beaconsfield for accepting such a compromise at the instance of Prince Bismarck. My Lords, in the speech of Prince Bismarck there is one point to which I ought to refer. He spoke—as he has spoken for years past—of the events which might take place in the Turkish Empire or on the Turkish Frontier as being a matter that affected Germany very little; and the whole of his solicitude was directed to other events which might take place on the frontier of Germany or of Austria. In so doing he was strictly consistent with all that he ever said; he was also consistent with the traditions of his country, because your Lordships will remember that in the Crimean War Prussia was the only one of the Great European Powers which was not engaged in that conflict. But in that respect, in its entire indifference to what took place in the East of Europe, Germany differs from the other Powers—from Austria, Turkey, and Italy, from France, and from England; and though in general, I think, our sympathies would be strongly evoked in favour of the allied people over whom the Emperor of Germany rules, we are not precisely in the same position as they are in that respect. We, too, have a past; we have traditions and a policy—a policy from which we have no intention of departing, a policy that we shall consistently uphold. We have interests; we have, for the last three or four generations, asserted our interests in the South-East of Europe; and we shall not show ourselves more indifferent to those interests than those who have gone before us. But though I should be misrepresenting the policy of Her Majesty's Government if I were to indicate the slightest alteration in the disposition or the policy which, with regard to those regions, has been almost uniformly pursued, I still entirely share Prince Bismarck's belief in the maintenance of peace; and I do so on the same ground. The only danger to our interests in the South-East of Europe might arise from some adventurous or illegal action on the part of Russia. We have had the most specific and categorical assurances that Russia contemplates no such illegal action, but will carefully abstain from it. I agree with Prince Bismarck that in the words of the Emperor Alexander there is great security. Of course, I speak of what I officially know. We have had one negotiation with the Emperor Alexander—the negotiation to which reference is made in the Queen's Speech—and I am bound to say that the action of his Government in that negotiation has been not only conciliatory, but eminently straightforward. I think, therefore, that I can concur with the German Chancellor in attaching great value to the assurances which have come from the Emperor Alexander; and I maintain the firm conviction that he will do his utmost to maintain the peace of Europe. The noble Earl asked me, in a desultory manner, a vast number of questions with respect to foreign and domestic affairs. One question came after the other so fast that they had rather the effect of small shot upon me. I was not able to distinguish the impact of one from the other. I would merely select one or two to which, I think, he appeared to attach great importance. The noble Earl asked a question about Colonel Kitchener. It is a matter of great satisfaction to know that the wound inflicted upon that most distinguished officer owing to his great gallantry at Suakin is not likely to prove dangerous. With regard to Samoa and South Africa, I think it will be more convenient, after the Papers are laid on the Table, that the noble Earl should raise the question. The House at present has hardly sufficient information to discuss these questions properly. With respect to the claims made by the ex-Khedive, I think the noble Earl is labouring under an error. He seems to imagine that it was a matter for the decision of the British Government whether these claims were to be conceded or not. This is an entire mistake. So far as these claims were legal, they would have been enforced by the mixed tribunals. But it was a controversy of a legal character, and there was no harm in the Judge Advocate General taking that sort of business as well as other business, it being a well-understood rule that the Legal Advisers of the Crown are entitled to increase their income by taking private practice, so long as it does not interfere with their official duties. It was desirable to compromise these claims. I do not say my sympathy was moved for the sufferings of the ex-Khedive; but, as a matter of prudence, it was desirable to compromise the claims. The matter was practically settled, not by the Egyptian Government, but by the Egyptian Government acting through the medium of Sir Edgar Vincent. On the other hand, I believe it was really a great advantage to this country that Mr. Marriott was the counsel of the ex-Khedive. I cannot speak on this matter with any great fulness; but it is obvious that such a position and such a suit might, in the hands of an ill-wisher of this country, have given a great opportunity of interfering and intriguing in Egypt. It was, therefore, fortunate that the interests of the ex-Khedive were committed to the charge of an Englishman. I think we might have run into very considerable embarrassment if the ex-Khedive had selected for his adviser and counsel a person of some nationality jealous of England. There are only one or two further observations which I shall venture to trouble your Lordships with in regard to the noble Earl's speech. The first I will refer to is the solemn refusal on his part to grant me the diploma of a Free Trader. I thought the noble Earl's tone on that question very much illustrated the remarks which my noble Friend below the Gangway made on the prevalence of Party in this country—namely, that people care more for the name and organization of Party than for the opinions which that Party professes. The noble Earl is indignant with me, not because I have professed any doctrines which were contrary to Free Trade, but because I professed doctrines which could not be ticketed as Free Trade, and which Free Traders did not profess. For instance, I ventured to doubt the great wisdom of the enormous re-arrangement which, 25 years ago, Mr. Gladstone made in the tariff of this country. It was thought at the time to be a great achievement to simplify the tariff; but I believe it has taken away from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a great many very useful taxes on which he could have relied in moments of difficulty, and which pressed not upon the poor, but upon the rich—not upon the necessities of the nation, but only upon its luxuries. I do not think any advantage that was obtained by stimulating International communication in respect of gloves, silks, and wines at all meets or compensates the loss that the Chancellor of the Exchequer now has, when he looks over the resources of the country in a time of difficulty, in finding any item by which the Revenues of the country can be increased. It is the great difficulty of England—as it is of India—that, though we have Revenue enough for ordinary times, if we want to raise more Revenue against an emergency we are almost cut off by past legislation from doing so. That is the explanation of the very heretical doctrine which troubles the noble Earl. Now one word as to Ireland; and first a word as to my great offence against Mr. Gladstone. I thought the noble Earl would have sat down by proposing my formal excommunication, and that I should have been driven forth from your Lordships' House. He rebuked me with great solemnity for advising the Conservative Party never to speak to Mr. Gladstone. Surely I never gave the Party any such advice. That is another instance of the facility with which I have plunged him into sweet sleep by the dulness of my discourse. In this case it is not his dreams, but his nightmares that have disturbed him.

EARL GRANVILLE: I referred to what appeared in *The Times* report.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What I really did say was this—that Mr. Gladstone had very much misrepresented the Conservative Party, grievously misrepresented them, when he said that in their ordinary conversation they admitted that some kind of Home Rule must eventually be granted. On that I observed, in the first place, that it was not true; and, in the second place, that Mr. Gladstone was the last man in the world to have known if it was true, because, I said, as a matter of fact, I did not believe Mr. Gladstone had had any large amount of Conservative society, and that he does not spend his evenings in Conservative society. As a matter of fact, although it may be very lamentable, I suspect Conservatives generally cultivate the society of those who agree with them, more especially upon essential doctrines of politics and patriotism, more than they do the followers of Mr. Gladstone. A word now as to the alliance. We are accused of having had an alliance with the Irish. The noble Earl says that our alliance with the Irish began in 1883. It is very odd; but Mr. Parnell supported Mr. Gladstone in all the Divisions on the Reform Bill, which was the great contest of the Session of 1884. I doubt, therefore, whether the alliance could have been a strong one at that time. What the alliance consisted in, as far as there was an alliance, was that on certain questions we went into the same Lobby. On two questions we went into the same Lobby. One was on the question whether the policy of the then Government in Egypt was to be admired or not; and the other was the question whether we should levy a new tax on beer. The whole question as to whether that sort of alliance is blamable or not depends upon the further question whether you did or did not depart from your own principles in the course you took. If it is according to our principles to censure the Egyptian Campaign or to object to a new tax on beer, surely it is hypercritical on the part of anyone to demand that we should abstain from enforcing those principles because Mr. Parnell and his followers might vote with us. What I maintain is, that we were strictly following our own principles in going into the same Lobby with them, and that the fact that we went into the Lobby with such companions did not in any way detract from the rectitude of our course in supporting the principles we had always supported. But the alliance of the noble Earl is an alliance of a very different kind. I do not complain of his going into the same Lobby with Mr. Parnell and his Friends; but what I do complain of is that his young men, and some who are not young, have gone over to Ireland and have stood upon platforms in support of organizations for resisting the law of the land. That is the sort of alliance of which I complain; and when the noble Marquess opposite—I hope he was misreported on the point—talks of "my friend, Mr. Davitt"—

The Marquess of RIPON: As a matter of fact, I never mentioned Mr. Davitt's name, nor had I any occasion to do so.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I am glad I have drawn that contradiction from the noble Marquess. I really thought he must have been misreported; for I could not help thinking when I saw the remark that he must have been very ignorant of contemporary history not to have known what Mr. Davitt's life had been. But Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who is an ex-Cabinet Minister, and a former Colleague of the noble Earl, has supported those who encouraged resistance to the law. What he and his friends have done is not to support any particular set of political opinions, not to attempt to turn the Government out of Office, which is always the legitimate enterprize of every English politician, but to unite themselves with people who were resisting the law of the land; and that divides off their conduct by a sharp line, which you cannot pass, from anything that they can impute to the Conservative Party, or to any other Party, which for the last 200 years has conducted the Government of this country. That is the complaint which I make to the noble Earl; and if he will show the sincerity of his retort upon us by abandoning, on behalf of himself and his Colleagues, this combination with the men of disorder when they are resisting the application and the enforcement of the law, and instead of doing so will return to that legitimate form of alliance I have indicated, and will simply try in the Division Lobby to turn the Government out of Office, I will quite agree that there is nothing to choose between his conduct and ours. The noble Earl asked, in conclusion, whether we expected this policy of ours to have any ultimate success—whether we thought it was possible that we could consolidate the Empire by force? Unless I have very much misread history, my impression is that every Empire and every Kingdom that has ever been, has been, in the first instance, consolidated by force; and it has been under the Empire of the laws so established and rigorously enforced that an opinion favourable to those laws has gradually grown up, and in the end patriotism, and a sense of the blessings that law and order produce, have sufficed to secure the political stability of the edifice, which at first was built up by means of the scaffolding of force. My Lords, the force of which we speak is only that coercion which, as my noble Friend below the Gangway, the Seconder of the Address, so well said, is the necessary sanction of all law. I understand the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Herschell) to have said that we have made things and words punishable now which were not punishable before. I must wait until my champion comes back from abroad before I venture to cross swords with so skilled an adversary as the noble and learned Lord upon this point; but I can only say that my noble and learned Friend (the Earl of Selborne)—who may, at least, be mentioned in the same breath with the noble and learned Lord—is entirely of a different opinion. At all events, in considering the nature and essential character of the Coercion Act now applied to Ireland, you must never forget that what we are enforcing is not abstinence from any particular form of political propaganda, not abstinence from any political discussion or political abuse—it is not abstinence from the effort to overthrow any particular institution. Our laws, and the laws which we have passed, and which we administer, are not levelled against conduct of that kind. It is as free as ever it was for any Englishman or Irishman to agitate against any institution of this country, and to express himself with what freedom he pleases on the characters and actions of public men. What we have enforced is the private right to the payment of those debts which the law declares to be just. The elementary rights of the creditor and the owner, that right upon which all civil society is based, and which, if the noble Lords opposite came into Office to-morrow, or if Home Rule were granted to Ireland and a Home Rule Government created, would have to be enforced and carried out by them under the penalty that without the enforcement of that right no civilized society can be maintained.

THE EARL OF JERSEY called attention to the absence from the Queen's Speech of any reference to the measure which had been contemplated for establishing a Minister of Agriculture. He should be glad to know whether that question had been shelved, or whether it was intended to bring forward a Bill upon the subject during the present Session? He should also be glad to know whether in the Government Bill upon railway rates and charges the clauses of the Bill would be so framed as to leave it, as in the Bill of last year, in the power of the Railway Companies to charge a lower rate of freight upon imported produce than was charged upon British produce. If so, it would not be satisfactory.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, it was not usual to refer to the details of Government measures in the Queen's Speech; but the matters referred to by the noble Earl were under consideration.

Address *agreed to, nemine dissentiente,* and ordered to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS appointed, *nemine dissentiente,* to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session.

COMMITTEE FOR PRIVILEGES — Appointed.

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE JOURNALS—Appointed.

APPEAL COMMITTEE—Appointed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Electric Lighting Act, 1882—Was *presented* by The Lord Thurlow; read 1ª. (No. 1.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 9th February, 1888.

The House met at half after One of the clock.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and having returned;—

NEW WRITS DURING THE RECESS.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House,—that he had issued Warrants for *New Writs, for* Cambridge University, *v.* The Right honble. Alexander James Beresford Beresford Hope, deceased; *for* Camberwell (Dulwich Division), *v.* John Morgan Howard, esquire, County Court Judge; *for* Winchester City, *v.* Arthur Loftus Tottenham, esquire, deceased; *for* Liverpool (Walton Division), *v.* Right honble. John George Gibson, Judge of High Court of Justice (Ireland); *for* Dublin University, *v.* Dodgson Hamilton Madden, esquire, Solicitor General for Ireland.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Dodgson Hamilton Madden, esquire, *for* Dublin University; Richard Moss, esquire, *for* Winchester City; Miles Walker Mattinson, esquire, *for* Borough of Liverpool (Walton Division); Denis Kilbride, esquire, *for* County of Kerry (Southern Division); John Blundell Maple, esquire, *for* Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division); George Gabriel Stokes, esquire, *for* Cambridge University.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

For Southwark (West Division), *v.* Arthur Cohen, esquire, Manor of Northstead; *for* Borough of Dundee, *v.* Charles Carmichael Lacaita, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

NOTICES.

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS—TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): To move as an Amendment to the Address—

> "But humbly to represent to Her Majesty that, in the interests of the good government of the inhabitants of the Metropolis, and especially in order to assist in promoting that goodwill between the police and the people which is essential to good government, it is necessary that full and public inquiry be made at once into the conduct of the Metropolitan Police in connection with the meetings in Trafalgar Square and the processions connected therewith."

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): I beg to give Notice that I shall move as an Amendment or addition to the Address at the end the following words:—

> "Humbly to assure Her Majesty that, having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of open public meeting for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis, and with the view to prevent ill-will and disorder, it is desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings may be held, and the limits of the right to interference therewith by the Executive Government."

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) gave Notice that he should move as an addendum to that Motion—

> "And this House humbly assures Her Majesty that it would ensure greater confidence in the administration of the law if a full and public inquiry were granted into the alleged unlawful assembly in Trafalgar Square on Sunday, November 13th, 1887, and the conduct of the police in connection therewith."

PERSONAL STATEMENT.

MR. BRADLAUGH AND THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I desire to make a personal statement in reference to a matter which has occurred since the adjournment of the House. In February, 1886, there was a debate in the House on the conduct of some persons in Trafalgar Square in connection with the re-organization of the Metropolitan Police Force. On that occasion I am reported to have said that if an inquiry were granted I would undertake to prove that during the six weeks preceding the date of the meeting in Trafalgar Square large sums of money, far exceeding the legitimate allowance for expenses incurred by a meeting of that kind, were supplied to a Mr. S. Peters by leading Conservative Members of both Houses of Parliament; that part of the money was paid by cheque; that some of the cheques reached the hands of the bankers through beerhouse keepers, at whose shops some of the money was spent. I was recently called as a witness, in connection with the prosecution of the hon. Member for North-West Lanark (Mr. Cunninghame Graham) and Mr. John Burns. In the course of cross-examination by counsel for the Crown I was asked as to meetings in Trafalgar Square in February, 1886. I answered that I had no personal knowledge of these meetings, not having been present at them. The counsel for the Crown, who held a paper in his hand, said—"Do you mean that you knew nothing about them?" I replied—

"I know something about them, and I stated in my place in Parliament that I am prepared to trace cheques from leading Conservative Members in connection with Fair Trade and unemployed meetings that culminated in a riot in Trafalgar Square."

I further stated that one of the cheques which I was prepared to trace was a cheque of the Marquess of Salisbury's. Mr. Poland, who was counsel for the Crown, interrupted me, and said I should not speak of things which I did not know. I replied that before I made this statement I had seen some of the cheques. Since then a letter has appeared in *The Times*, purporting to have been written by R. T. Gunton, by the direction of the Marquess of Salisbury. The letter is addressed to a person named Kelly, and is as follows:—

"Hatfield House, Hatfield,
"December 5, 1887.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to say that he is much obliged to you for your letter of the 1st instant, with reference to the untrue statement in respect to his alleged support of meetings held in Trafalgar Square, sworn to by Mr. Bradlaugh at Bow Street. I am to say in reply that the Marquess of Salisbury agrees with you in thinking that the statement amounts to wilful perjury; but he believes it would not be punishable as such, as it is not relevant to the issue which was before the magistrate. He has already contradicted the statement publicly, and does not think it requires any further notice.

"I am, your very obedient servant,
"R. T. GUNTON."

On the previous Saturday a letter of mine, addressed to the Marquess of Salisbury, had appeared in *The Times*, in which I repeated what I have already stated to the House. I added—

"This statement I adhere to, and I am ready, directly Parliament meets, as I stated that I was ready when an inquiry was spoken about in the House in the spring of 1886—if the Government will grant a Select Committee, with power to call for persons, books, and papers, and on which I may sit to call and examine witnesses—to trace several cheques signed by leading Members of the Conservative Party, including one signed by the Marquess of Salisbury, some of which were payable to S. Peters, all of which, I believe, passed through the hands of S. Peters, and which were used in connection with the so-called Fair Trade meetings of the unemployed, which preceded the riotous meetings in Trafalgar Square."

I also wrote to the Marquess of Salisbury, asking his Lordship whether he, on the part of the Government, would consent to the appointment of a Select Committee? I received this reply, also signed "R. T. Gunton"—

"Hatfield House, Hatfield.
"December 10, 1887.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant.

"In reply, I am to say that in respect to a purely personal matter the Marquess of Salisbury cannot venture to anticipate the decision to which the House of Commons may come on any Motion which is made before it."

Now, Sir, I desire to say that I have taken great pains, irrespective of this very strong denial, to feel sure of what I can say; and I state that I adhere to every word that I stated, first in this House, and afterwards at the Bow Street Police Court, and which has been described as "wilful perjury." I now appeal to the Leader of this House, and ask whether the Government will signify its consent to the appointment of such a Committee? I gave the right hon. Gentleman Notice that I intended to make this appeal. I do not think I ought to rest under the imputation of wilful perjury from the Prime Minister in relation to a matter which I stated in Parliament. I can find no becoming terms by which I may properly describe this imputation other than by asking that I may have the means of showing whose is the falsehood.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member communicated with me only this morning. I have not had time to communicate with the Marquess of Salisbury in reference to this matter. The hon. Member will, therefore, understand that I am quite unable to give an answer; but if he will repeat his Question on Monday I will give him an answer then.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I will repeat the Question on Monday.

ELECTIONS.

Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the Return for that place; and if anything shall come in question touching the Return or Election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double Returns do withdraw till their Returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the Election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the Election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a Candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by Bribery, or by any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such Bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any Witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime and misdemeanour; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein, or thereabouts; and that the Serjeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

Bill "for the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ARREST OF MEMBERS.

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received the following Letters relating to the Imprisonment of certain Members of this House:—

Metropolitan Police Court,
Inns Quay, Dublin,
8th December 1887.

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you that, on the 2nd December instant, I convicted Mr. Timothy Daniel Sullivan, a Member of the House of Commons, of the offence of having "on the 29th September 1887, in a certain newspaper called *The Nation*, purporting to bear date the 1st October 1887, under the heading of the 'Shelburne Branches of the National League,' unlawfully published within the Police District of Dublin Metropolis, with a view to promoting the objects of the Association named and described as the Irish National League, a Notice of the proceedings of the said Association at a Meeting of the said Association held at Ramsgrange on Sunday the 25th September 1887, being a district within the Barony of Shelburne, in the county of Wexford, specified by order of the Lord Lieutenant in Council, dated 17th September 1887, made in pursuance of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, by which order the said Association in the said District was suppressed, and which order was after and in pursuance of a Special Proclamation in pursuance of the said Act made by the Lord Lieutenant by and with the advice of the Privy Council."

And that for the said offence I sentenced Mr. Sullivan to two months' imprisonment; and that upon the same day I convicted Mr. Sullivan of a similar offence under the same Act of Parliament, and sentenced him to two months' imprisonment to take effect concurrently with the first-mentioned sentence, and that he was accordingly committed to Her Majesty's Prison at Richmond, in the City of Dublin.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
C. J. O'Donel.
Chief Divisional Magistrate for Police
District of Dublin Metropolis.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Mitchelstown, county Cork,
Novr. 3, '87.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. William O'Brien, a Member of the House of Commons, who was convicted on the 24th of September last of an offence under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act of last Session, and sentenced to a term of three months' imprisonment, having appealed from said sentence, said appeal was heard before the Recorder of Cork County on the 31st ultimo, when the said conviction and sentence was duly confirmed, and Mr. O'Brien was thereupon committed to prison for a period of three months on a warrant signed by me and Captain Stokes, R.M., and that he (Mr. O'Brien) is now in the gaol at Tullamore.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obdt. servt.,
Richard Eaton,
Resident Magistrate.

The Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary,
21st December 1887.

Sir,

We beg to inform you that we have to-day convicted Mr. David Sheehy, a Member of the House of Commons, of the offence of having on the 6th of November 1887, at Clonmel, in the County of Tipperary, being a proclaimed district under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act (Ireland), 1887, unlawfully incited certain persons to wilfully and unlawfully resist and obstruct one Gerald Fitzgerald, being Sub-Sheriff of County of Tipperary, and certain Constables and Bailiffs while in the execution of their duty as such Sub-Sheriff, Constables, and Bailiffs respectively as aforesaid. And we have sentenced him to be imprisoned in the Gaol at Clonmel for a period of one month.

And we beg to inform you that he is at present in the Prison at Clonmel.

We have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servants,
Albert Meldon, R.M.
D. G. Bodkin, R.M.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Sligo, on Circuit,
February 6, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you, as is, I believe, my duty, that after hearing an appeal at Roscommon under the provisions of the Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act, David Sheehy, Esq., a Member of the Hon. the House of Commons, was sentenced by me to imprisonment, as a misdemeanant of the first order, for three months, beginning from 5th January 1888.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
Wm. O'Connor Norris,
Co. Court Judge.

Cork, 31st December, 1887.

Sir,

We beg leave to inform you that on the 19th inst., we convicted, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, Mr. Alderman John Hooper, a Member of the House of Commons, of the offence of having published in *The Cork Daily Herald*, of which he is the Editor, proceedings of Meetings of Suppressed Branches of the Irish National League, and sentenced him to two months' imprisonment.

He is at present in the Prison of Tullamore.

We have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servants,
Robert B. Stokes,
J. B. Irwin,
Resident Magistrates.

To the Rt. Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons,
The Speaker's House,
Westminster,
London. S.W.

Limerick,
Ireland,
22nd January, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Lane, M.P. was convicted at Cork on the 18th instant, by a Court constituted under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, and sentenced to one month's imprisonment without hard labour.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. B. Irwin, R.M.
Chairman of the Court.

The Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.
House of Commons,
London.

Ennis,
1st February 1888.

Sir,

We beg leave to inform you that we have to-day convicted Mr. Joseph R. Cox, a Member of the House of Commons, of the offence "inciting certain persons unknown to take part in an unlawful assembly, to wit, a meeting of the National League in the county of Clare," under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, and have sentenced him to one month's imprisonment, and that he is at present in the Prison at Limerick.

We have the honor to be,
Your obedient servants,
F. G. Hodder, R.M.
Cecil R. Roche, R.M.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

County of Donegal,
Donegal,
4 February, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Alexander Blane, M.P. for Louth, Armagh, was brought before me, at Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, on the 20th ulto. under a Warrant, charging him with having, at Derryart, in said County, on the 2nd ulto. taken part in, and incited to an unlawful conspiracy, known as the "Plan of Campaign," contrary to the provisions of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," on which charge I committed him to Londonderry Gaol, on remand.

On the 31st ult. Mr. Blane was tried at Dunfanagher Petty Sessions, before me, and Mr. Garrett Nagh, B.L., Resident Magistrate, found guilty, and sentenced to four months' imprisonment in Londonderry Gaol, from which sentence he appealed, and was admitted to bail, to appear at Letterkenny Quarter Sessions on 18th April next, which said appeal will be heard.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedt. Servant,
Thos. Hamilton,
Resident Magistrate.

The Right Honble.
The Speaker, M.P.,
House of Commons, Westminster.

Tralee,
December 8th, 1887.

Sir,

We beg leave to inform you that we have to-day convicted Mr. Edward Harrington, a Member of the House of Commons, of the offence of "That he, the said Edward Harrington, esqre., Member of Parliament, on the 30th day of November 1887, in a certain newspaper called *The Kerry Sentinel*, purporting to bear date the 29th November 1887, under the heading of 'The Proclamations of Kerry,' unlawfully published within the Petty Sessions District of Tralee, with a view to promote the objects of the Association known and described as the Irish National League, notice of the proceedings of the said Association, at a meeting of the said Association at Tralee, held on the 27th November 1887, being a district, to wit, within the county of Kerry, specified by order of the Lord Lieutenant in Council, dated the 21st November 1887, made in pursuance of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, by which order the said Association in the said district was suppressed, and which order was after, and in pursuance of a special Proclamation, in pursuance of the said Act, made by the Lord Lieutenant by and with the advice of the Privy Council," under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, and have sentenced him to one month's imprisonment in the County Kerry Gaol, and that he is at present in the prison at Tralee.

We have the honor to be,
Your humble servants,
Cecil R. Roche, R.M.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

To the Rt. Hon. The Speaker
of the House of Commons.

Sir,

Mr. Timothy Harrington, M.P., was convicted at Tralee, before me and Col. Pearse, R.M., for publishing report of suppressed meetings of the National League. He was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment, and, on application of his Counsel, a case was stated on a Law point for decision of the Exchequer Division.

In the meantime he was admitted to bail.

CECIL ROCHE, R.M. Millstreet.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM'S IMPRISONMENT.

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received a Letter relating to the imprisonment of Mr. Cunninghame Graham, a Member of this House:—

Gartlet, Watford, Herts,
Jan. 25.

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you that Mr. Cunninghame Graham, M.P., was tried before me at the Central Criminal Court, on Jan. 16, 17, 18, for (1.) Riot; (2.) Taking part in an unlawful assembly; and (3.) Assaults on the Police in the execution of their duty. The Jury acquitted him of the first and third charges, but found him guilty of the second. I sentenced him to be imprisoned without hard labour for six weeks.

I have to apologise for not notifying to you this sentence earlier, and remain,

Faithfully yours,
ARTHUR CHARLES.

QUESTION.

——o——

PARLIAMENT—ADMISSION OF STRANGERS TO THE SPEAKER'S GALLERY.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): I beg leave to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department the Question of which I have given him private Notice, Whether he can give any information as to how a person who had been recently sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude for being implicated in a dynamite conspiracy gained admission on more than one occasion to the Gallery and precincts of this House; and, whether he proposes to take any steps to inquire into the circumstances connected with the admission of the person in question?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have inquired into the subject referred to in the Question of the noble Viscount. The convict, Harkins, recently sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude for participation in a dynamite conspiracy, gained admission to the Speaker's Gallery on the 5th of August last, under the name of M'Tin. In company with him was admitted another person, under the name of Melville, whose real name is Moroney. He is implicated in the same conspiracy, and there is a warrant of arrest out against him as yet unexecuted. These two persons appear to have been admitted to the Gallery in the usual way, by an order obtained by an hon. Member of this House. It is not clear that they were introduced to the Gallery by this same hon. Member; because, although his name appears in the register of admissions in the usual column, that name, as well as the names of Melville and M'Tin, appears to be in the handwriting of another hon. Member. Happily, Melville was known to be a suspicious person, and he was kept under close observation by the police. He not only entered the the Speaker's Gallery, but he spent some time on the River Terrace, in the company of the hon. Member who appears to have signed the register of admission. On another occasion Melville and Harkins were together in the approaches to the House; but do not appear to have entered the Galleries or precincts. These circumstances show that the admission of strangers to the House and its precincts requires to be accompanied by some better safeguards than exist at present.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

MR. SPEAKER *reported* Her Majesty's Speech, made by Her Chancellor, and read it to the House.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

MR. WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon) (who was attired in the uniform of a Deputy Lieutenant), in rising to move that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty to thank Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Speech, said: Sir, in making this Motion I must ask the House to grant me that indulgence which is usually extended to a new Member; although, perhaps, I hardly come under that category. It is 14 years since I had the honour of addressing this House; therefore I hope that any shortcomings on my part will be pardoned during the few minutes I propose to occupy the time of the House.

Sir, the Gracious Speech which we have just heard speaks, in the first place, of the relations of England with other nations. It will, I am sure, give the greatest possible satisfaction to Her Majesty's subjects, generally, to learn that England is at present at peace with the whole world. I am perfectly certain that the fact that peace prevails all over the world must be a subject of satisfaction not only to Englishmen, but to all those peoples with whom we are brought in contact in any way.

I do not propose to deal, myself, with the next subject in the beginning of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, which treats of the details of our work in relation to foreign Powers, because I have the pleasure of knowing that I shall be followed by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holborn Division of Finsbury (Colonel Duncan), who has passed a large portion of his useful life in the service of his country, and whose observations on these subjects will be of greater value, and will, I am sure, be listened to with much greater interest by the House than any remarks of mine.

What I mean to deal with to-night, in the few observations which I propose to offer to the House, are what may be called the domestic questions which are referred to in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech—such as the questions of Local or County Government, Railway Rates, the Transfer of Land, and the great and important subject of Agriculture.

First, then, with regard to the question of Local Government. We learn that a Bill is to be introduced into this House by Her Majesty's Government dealing with this great subject. I feel sure the House will understand me when I confess that I approach the subject with somewhat mingled feelings, because I am in the position of a man who is invited to inspect his own death warrant—and that is a document which it is not everyone who is anxious to examine—I feel that possibly the duty hitherto undertaken and, I believe, well carried out by county magistrates may, in future, be carried out by other and quite different persons. As I have been Chairman of Quarter Sessions for something like a period of 17 years, I may, like other hon. Members who vote for the Bill, be excused if I feel, when I pass the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, very much like the Roman gladiator, who exclaimed—"*Ave Cæsar, morituri te salutant.*" I hope, however, that we may still be allowed, under the new Bill, to take our part, as far as possible, in carrying out those duties in reference to county government which have hitherto devolved upon us. I feel strongly that there are two questions which are mainly involved in any Bill introduced for the purpose of local government in order that it may be successful. First, it should simplify the existing complex and confused state of Local Bodies, and remove that confusion which at present exists by simplifying local government; but, at the same time, it is necessary that these objects should be brought about without increasing the expenditure which already presses so heavily upon the ratepayers, and which, I imagine, is the great difficulty which the House has to face.

We have heard that considerable excitement, and, as I think, unnecessary irritation, has been caused in the country by the projected alteration of boundaries. I believe that on this question there has been considerable misapprehension. What is the Boundary Commission, and what are the functions of the Commissioners? To inquire and obtain evidence as to the best boundaries for the future new local areas, and to report to Her Majesty's Government, who will, no doubt, make such use of information thus obtained as they may think fit; but I cannot believe that the Government will refuse to listen to representations from the localities themselves, and to act upon such representations if they should think that the recommendations of the Boundary Commissioners are not the best that can be made. The Government, in fact, I take it, are only anxious, as far as they can, to meet the wishes, the wants, and the interests of the localities, and not to act upon any hard-and-fast line in regard to the boundaries themselves. I read with pleasure that part of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech which says that this measure proposes to bring about an adjustment of the relations between local and Imperial finance, and to mitigate the burdens at present imposed upon the ratepayers. I only hope and trust, Sir, that Her Majesty's Government may be successful on this subject, for I know that the burdens upon the ratepayers are at present sore burdens indeed, and very difficult to be borne. I remember that when I sat in this House before, on the other side, we passed a Resolution, by a majority of 100, binding the House to deal with this very question; but the Resolution has never, to this day, been acted upon, and, therefore, if the question be now satisfactorily dealt with, a great boon will be conferred on the country—a boon which will, indeed, be welcome to every ratepayer in England. There has, I believe, been a great deal of anxiety in connection with this subject as to the mode which may be adopted for the election of the new County Boards. I have heard many speculations and a great many suggestions on the subject. I may inform the House that two years ago I had the honour of being President of a Conference of Delegates from Unions in the four northern counties of England upon this very subject. That conference, after very full, impartial, and careful discussion, came to the conclusion that the best method for the election of County Boards was for the ratepayers first to elect the Guardians of the Poor, and then for the Guardians to elect from their own number the members of the County Boards. By that means there would be this advantage—that the expense of a system of double election would be saved, and the irritation produced in consequence would be avoided, and the best men secured. I only, be it understood, throw this out as a suggestion for what it is worth. I would further add that this is a question which ought never to be made a Party question, and I hope it will never be so regarded. It is a question which affects all Parties in the State, and I hope all Parties will approach it with the sincere object of bringing it to a successful issue.

As to the question of tithes, which I see, from the Royal Speech, is also to be dealt with, I hope that the Bill which is to be introduced will, in some way, succeed in removing the grievances both of the tithepayer and tithe-receiver.

I also hope that Her Majesty's Government may succeed, by their Land Transfer Bill, in simplifying and cheapening the transfer of land; and I may say that if the Bill should accomplish this object, it will be a notable Bill. Wise heads have tried to accomplish this object before now, and have failed; but let us hope that Her Majesty's Government, who mean to deal earnestly with the subject, will be more successful, and I would, before leaving this subject, express a hope that the system of registration which will accompany the Land Transfer Bill may be made as simple and as cheap as possible.

I come now to a matter in which I feel considerable personal interest—namely, the question of railway rates. We are told in the words of Her Majesty's Speech that a Bill is to be brought in for preventing undue preference in the railway rates charged on foreign and domestic produce. As a member of the Board of Directors of one of the largest railways in the Kingdom, I believe that railway directors—at any rate those I am conversant with—will welcome the introduction of such a Bill. We feel that a great misapprehension exists with regard to what are called differential rates; but the public are not aware that there are many circumstances which would justify those charges which they now think unjustifiable. On the other hand, I am willing to admit that there are many cases of hardship, and I hope that when this Bill is introduced it will be fully and fairly discussed, and an equitable solution arrived at, which will be fair both to the Companies and to the producers who send from one quarter to another.

All these subjects which I have touched upon bear upon the great question which is also alluded to in the Royal Speech—namely, the depression of agriculture at the present time. Everybody admits that depression exists, and I hope and trust that, in the words of the Royal Speech, in the interests of that great industry, a means may be discovered for enabling it to meet more effectively the difficulties under which it labours, and that in every possible way, compatible with existing questions of economy, arrangements for such relief as can be fairly given to that depressed industry will be made by the House. At the present time, we know that those who live by the land are burdened by rates and charges far higher than those who obtain their income from other sources. I hope that we shall have a fair balance struck between the two, so that those who live by the land

and those who live by other means may contribute fairly and equitably to the taxation of this country.

I arrive now at the last matter with which I propose to deal—that part of Her Majesty's Speech which comes first in the matter of legislation. This House is informed that the result of legislation for Ireland, so far as decided by the short experience we have had, has been satisfactory; that agrarian outrages have diminished, and the powers of coercive conspiracies sensibly abated. These are words which will be read with satisfaction and interest by all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. Every loyal subject of Her Majesty will, indeed, rejoice that the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated, and will recognize and know that it is the result of legislation—will recognize that it is the result of the careful exercise of the powers under the Crimes Act of last Session. We have seen, lately, that the legislation, and the exercise of that legislation by the Government, have, as far as we can judge from the action of the people, been approved of by the people of both England and Ireland. The only way we can test that is by the results of the recent elections. Take the election at Winchester, the unopposed election at Liverpool, and lastly, and not least, take the fact that the most educated constituency in Ireland, the University of Dublin—[*A laugh.*] Do hon. Members say it is not the most educated? There, again, the Party of Home Rule failed to bring forward a candidate. From these three results I think it is only fair to argue that the legislation, and the exercise of legislation by the Government, meet with approval in England, and to a certain extent in Ireland. There is, I believe, an increasing feeling—a feeling growing day by day—in favour of upholding the law, and we are happy to know that day by day the power of the spurious Government in Ireland—the National League—is dwindling away, while that of Her Majesty's Government is being strengthened. The legislation passed for Ireland last Session has been carried out ably and well; and I should not be doing justice either to my own thoughts or to those with whom I have conversed, either at public meetings or in this House, if I did not say that the country owes a deep debt of gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for the able manner in which he has carried out the Irish legislation. I believe it is owing to his ability, to his courage, and to the strict impartiality of his conduct, that the legislation of last year is now bearing such good fruit. Mr. Speaker, I beg now to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, to thank Her Majesty for the Most Gracious Speech which Her Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for the information that Her Majesty continues to receive from all other Powers cordial assurances of their friendly sentiments, as well as of their earnest desire to maintain the peace of the world:

"To assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that Her Majesty's Officers, in conjunction with those of the Emperor of Russia, have completed the demarcation of the Afghan boundary in conformity with the terms of the Convention of last year. That Her Majesty trusts that the work which has thus been brought to a conclusion may tend to remove the possibility of misunderstanding between the two Powers in regard to their Asiatic possessions:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that, animated by a desire to prevent effusion of blood, Her Majesty despatched a Mission to the King of Abyssinia, with the hope of dissuading him from engaging in a war with Italy, and that Her Majesty deeply regrets that Her Majesty's efforts have not been successful:

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that the deliberations of the Conference assembled at Washington to adjust questions which have arisen between the Dominion of Canada and the United States are still in progress:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that the negotiations which were commenced in 1885 with respect to the regulation of the Suez Canal have been brought to a conclusion so far as points of difference between Her Majesty and the French Republic are concerned:

"To assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that Her Majesty has also entered into an Agreement with the French Republic for the protection of life and property in the group of the New Hebrides by a Joint Naval Commission:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that a Conference of Delegates from the Powers interested in the sugar industry was summoned in London in the autumn to consider the possibility of putting an end to the injurious system of bounties; and that they have made considerable progress towards the conclusion of a satisfactory arrangement:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that the Estimates for the Services of this year, which will be laid before us, have been framed with due regard to economy. That we shall be asked to make provision for the improvements in the defences of the ports and coaling stations of Her Majesty's Empire which have been rendered urgently necessary by the advance of military science. That we shall also be asked to sanction an arrangement for providing a special squadron for the protection of Australasian commerce, the cost of which will be partially borne by the Colonies themselves:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that the measures which, at the cost of great labour, were passed during the last Session for the benefit of Ireland have been carefully carried into effect during the period which has since elapsed:

"To assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that the result of this legislation, so far as it has been tested by a short experience, has been satisfactory. That agrarian crime has diminished; and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated. Also, that measures tending to develop the resources of Ireland, and to facilitate an increase in the number of the proprietors of the soil, will be laid before us:

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that our attention will be invited to the subject of Local Government in England; and that measures will be submitted to us for dealing with it, in combination with proposals for adjusting the relations between Local and Imperial finance, and for mitigating the burdens at present imposed upon the ratepayers:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that the prospects of commerce are more hopeful than any to which Her Majesty has been able to point for many years past. To assure Her Majesty that we join with Her Majesty in deeply regretting that no corresponding improvement is observable in the condition of agriculture. To thank Her Majesty for commending the interests of that great industry to our attentive care, in the hope that means may be discovered for enabling it to meet more effectively the difficulties under which it labours:

"Humbly to thank Her Majesty for informing us that we shall be invited to consider legislative proposals for cheapening the transfer of land; for modifying the procedure by which tithe rent-charge is collected; for the promotion of Technical Education; for preventing undue preferences in the rates charged by Railway Companies on Foreign and Domestic Produce; for remedying abuses in the formation of Companies under Limited Liability; and for amending the Law as to the Liability of Employers in case of Accidents:

"To thank Her Majesty for informing us that Measures for improving the position of the Scottish Universities and for regulating the Borough Police in Scotland will be laid before us; and that proposals will be submitted to us for diminishing the cost of Private Bill Legislation:

"Humbly to assure Her Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the Measures which may be submitted to us; and that we earnestly trust that in these and all other efforts which we may make to promote the well-being of Her Majesty's people we may be guided by the hand of Almighty God."—(*Mr. Wharton.*)

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second, in brief terms, the Motion which has just been made by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Wharton), that a respectful Address be presented to Her Majesty in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne.

I desire, first, to express my entire agreement with my hon. and learned Friend in the joy he feels in ascertaining that the relations of England with foreign countries are peaceful. This, Sir, is a country in which a foreign policy is absolutely necessary. It is not every country which is so happily situated as the United States, possessing, as it were, boundless resources of her own, almost within a ring fence, and enabling her to be indifferent as to the foreign policy of other countries. This country spreads and trails, so to speak, the garment of her Empire all over the world, and there is hardly a part of the world on which its fringe may not be exposed to the tread of a hostile foot. It is, therefore, necessary for her to have a foreign policy by which she may secure the support and co-operation of other nations by conciliatory measures, and, if necessary, by her firmness and self-respect, make her rights respected. I am but a young politician, and a young Member of this House, but I am an old soldier, and, as a soldier, I do not know anything which has given me greater pleasure than the change which has taken place with respect to our foreign policy, and the way in which it is conducted now by Parties in this House. Within the last few years we have seen both great Parties recognize the necessity of continuity in our foreign policy. The policy of the noble Lord who held the Seals of the Foreign Office under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in the last Government was supported by the Conservative Party. The right hon. Gentleman himself has approved the manner in which our foreign policy has been conducted by Lord Salisbury, and we on this side of the House acknowledge the generous frankness with which the right hon. Gentleman has recognized the merits of that policy.

With regard to Afghanistan, which has been the scene of so much trouble and intrigue, and of so much war, it is well to find, at last, that something like a definite boundary has been laid down, and, coupled with that definition of boundary, it is well that we should remember what a wonderful source of strength has been found in the readiness of the Native Princes of India to assist us in case the boundary of our Indian Empire should be exposed to attack. I attribute that result to the justice and firmness of our rule in that country. All anxiety as to troubles in regard to the frontier of Afghanistan may now disappear from our minds, and we may direct our attention to more important and troublesome questions.

We are told in the Speech from the Throne that the negotiations which were commenced in the first instance in 1885 by the Government of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, with respect to the regulation of the Suez Canal, have been brought to a conclusion so far as points of difference between ourselves and the French Republic are concerned. It may be true that Conventions seem to last only as long, or as short, as it suits Powers not to break them, and when they are broken other Powers do not feel bound to interfere; but they put an end for the time to much political friction, and act as international lubricators. I rejoice that the high road to the East is in a fair way to be neutralized; and, speaking from a personal point of view, I only wish that we could neutralize Egypt as well.

Colonel Duncan

We are also told, in the Gracious Speech of Her Majesty, that our relations with France are satisfactory, and that every cause of uneasiness has been removed in reference to the New Hebrides, and also that in the case of the Commission now sitting at Washington we hope to adjust the questions which have arisen between the Dominion of Canada and the United States. It is thoroughly recognized by Her Majesty's Government that it is our duty not to look only to our own interests here, but also to the interests of our high-spirited Colonial fellow-subjects. If we had failed to take action on the representation of the Australian Government, or if we had failed to take action at the request of the Canadian Government, we should have forfeited our right to this great Empire, which I trust, in the future, is to become greater. We are now receiving, in return for our action, a reward we ought to cherish, for we are seeing in our Colonies a readiness to spend, and be spent, for the Mother Country, which we never saw before. We are told, in one part of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, that a share of the cost of providing a special squadron for the protection of Australian commerce will be borne by the Colonies themselves; but it must be remembered that, up to the present date, for many years these Australian Colonies have been spending large sums of money for their defence, in fortifying their own harbours—and that is a thing which is useful not only to them, but to us. I think it is well that we should recognize the conduct of our Australian brethren in this matter, for it shows that they appreciate their connection with this country in a way they hardly appeared to appreciate it before. They are now showing that there are duties, as well as privileges, which they are willing to bear. The Speech from the Throne suggests a further development in the way of protection for our coaling stations. I, as a soldier, am able to appreciate and recognize the full value of these coaling stations. It would be impossible to overrate their value should a war break out. They mean the existence of our country. We cannot feed ourselves. Our population is so great that it has to depend for its food upon the golden grain which is brought from other countries; and if our Mercantile Marine cannot be protected by our Fleet it means national destruction. Whatever Government may be in power, a cry would go up to Heaven against us if we neglect the means by which in time of need the food of our people may be secured. If these coaling stations are to form the basis for the action of our men-of-war, as well as the means of coaling our large Mercantile Marine, it may be said—"Protect these places by men-of-war." But that would be a mad idea. You would lock up your men-of-war instead of making them of use if you were to attempt to carry out such a proposal. What is necessary is that you should make your coaling stations able to protect themselves, and set free your men-of-war for service wherever they may be required. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War and the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will do, I am sure, what they can to encourage the Volunteer Service. Speaking as a soldier in the Regular Army, I say that you cannot too highly admire or praise the Volunteer spirit. I have recently been in the North of England, and I have witnessed the extraordinary activity and energy displayed by the Torpedo Volunteer Companies there. What I would say is, let these Volunteer Companies for the defence of our own ports be increased over and over again, for the science of war is no longer a secret art. Everyone can discuss it; everyone knows it value—its merits and demerits, owing to the Volunteer movement. The Volunteer Force is a Force which cannot be too highly praised; and, owing to it, this country has gained not merely a physical strength, but an immense moral and social strength as well. By means of the Volunteers a bridge has been built between the Army and the civil population across which mutual and kindly sympathies constantly travel.

In the Gracious Speech from the Throne we are told that the prospects of commerce are more hopeful than any to which we have been able to point for many years past. One thing which we have learnt during the past 10 years is the amount of poverty and distress which prevail in the country. Many earnest but indiscreet men, and many who sought only to advertise themselves, have done much to alienate the charitable from those who need help. But let us not be unjust; let us bare our heads and bow before the majesty of the uncomplaining poor. It is terrible to think that there are children by thousands who, from the day they open their eyes on this world to the day they close them in death, see nothing but misery and tears and pain. Is this our boasted civilization? Personally, we express sympathy for them; but is it not our duty to make the world a little brighter and happier than it is now? Words cannot express the misery that is in our midst. Far better than words would it be if, below the Bar of this House, we could see what can be seen by thousands in the land —the pinched little face of a hungering child. These are to be seen all over the country, and we cannot find a better means of alleviating their condition than that of practically expressing our sympathy for them. I hope we are now going to have a turn of the tide, and to see more prosperity in our trade; and it is at such a time, in performing our duty as legislators, we should remember that unless we raise our eyes higher and higher to the Second Table of the Law—our duty to our neighbour—we shall fail miserably as citizens and legislators. Government means more than administration, and law, and order—it means also sympathy; and it must be a sympathy which blossoms into fruitful action. There are so many of us in the world who think we are sympathetic when we are only emotional. Our sympathy is unworthy of the name of sympathy unless it blossoms into action. Let us look back to what we did last Session. We passed the Mines Regulation Bill, and, having had some experience in the North of England, I rejoice to find how well that measure has been worked, and how cheerfully it has been accepted by all of those who are interested in it. Not only are arrangements being made to secure the safety of the miners, but the men themselves are putting themselves forward to acquire the knowledge necessary to protect them from accident.

The lesson I brought back from the North of England is this—that the legislation which always succeeds in a country is not the legislation which is in advance, but the legislation which is a little in the rear of public opinion. Such legislation is like seed sown in a ready soil, and no trouble is found in obtaining for it the complete support and sympathy of all concerned. We are now about to commence another Session. We see before us much to do, and many difficulties to encounter, but we must remember that difficulties have existed in the past and have been overcome. Even the greatest difficulties in Parliament, as in the case of individuals, will disappear if they are fairly grappled with. Let us commence the Session by fully acknowledging the great responsibility under which we, as legislators, lie towards our fellow-countrymen. I trust that as in the past, with God's help, our Predecessors, by the wonderful characteristics of our race, accomplished great objects and conquered greater difficulties than those with which we have to contend, so we, in the future, may conquer the same difficulties by the same characteristics and under the same God.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, &c."—[See page 64.]

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Mr. Speaker, I rise at this early period, not only in conformity with the usage of many years, but likewise because I think that in so doing I shall be pursuing a course most likely to contribute, so far as it depends upon myself, to the expeditious progress of Business. So far, at any rate, as I content myself with general observations upon the Speech upon the Address, apart from great and what might be called burning questions, where great differences of opinion prevail, I think that I may be doing something to promote the direct and even the rapid advance of the discussion which is now before us. Sir, the two hon. Gentlemen who have moved and seconded the Address had the advantage of a reputation already earned in this House, and they have discharged their task—if I may presume to pay them a compliment—in a manner which, I am sure, has completely satisfied the favourable expectations of the House. The hon. and learned Member who moved the Address will not think it invidious if, with regard to the speech of the Seconder of the Address, I venture to say that, spoken from his point of view, as a Member of the Tory, of the Conservative Party, it was at once one of the shortest and one of the very best speeches that I have ever heard delivered in seconding an Address. I thought the hon. and gallant Member did himself, in a manner perfectly unostentatious, great and various credit—as a man when he referred to our duties towards our fellow-men, and when he warned us not so to delight, not so to rejoice in the improving prospects of trade as to forget the misery that still subsists among us, and our duty individually, as well as collectively, to keep the thought of that misery near our hearts. I thought he did himself equal credit as a professional man and as a soldier in the warmth with which he referred to the voluntary efforts of the country with a view to its defence in the hour of danger. And, finally, as a politician, when, in referring to the foreign policy of the country, he expressed the desire, in which I, for one, join fervently, that not only to some extent, but to the greatest possible extent, that foreign policy may, both at this time and in the years that are to come, be kept free from the dangers and the difficult associations that attach to it under the influence of the action of political Parties. Sir, this remark leads me to refer to the earlier portions of the Speech, on which I shall make but few remarks, because I am able, happily able, to comprise in a single observation the opinion that I entertain—that so far as the wording of the Speech is concerned, and so far as the measures of the Government to which it points are concerned, we have no reason—I admit with imperfect information, and, therefore, without final judgment—we have no reason to regard these seven paragraphs—the first paragraphs in the Speech—otherwise than with satisfaction as relates to the contents of any one amongst them. As relates, Sir, to the second of these paragraphs—the first which deals with a specific subject—I must express particular satisfaction, because there can be no doubt that the question of the Afghan Frontier has now for many long years been a source of suspicion and of apprehension, if not of positive danger, to the people of two great Empires. The Speech is just, and, I think, modest, in expressing a hope that the final adjustment of this question, so long sought and desired, may tend to remove the possibility of misunderstanding between the two great Powers in regard to their Asiatic Possessions—may tend, I venture to add, to remove the possibility of a misunderstanding which, if it should occur in a practical form, would be a misunderstanding of the most formidable and dangerous character. By the removal of this possibility of misunderstanding, I venture to add there will remain, so far as I am able to form a judgment, no other subject in respect of which we have any reason, as Englishmen and as subjects of the British Crown, to view with jealousy or suspicion the growth of the great Russian Empire. I am aware that justifiable and necessary conflicts may occur, in the many vicissitudes of human affairs, grounded upon considerations other than the particular and narrower interests of one or both of the parties involved. I do not speak of questions of that class; but I refer to this question of the Afghan Frontier as one in which the direct, what may be termed the selfish interests—though it is a word liable to misapprehension—of the two countries were directly involved; and I rejoice in contemplating, as I think we now may as a matter of fact, the removal of this particular cause of possible misunderstanding—I rejoice in the fact that, so far as I am aware, no other such cause of misunderstanding remains. With regard to the topics touched upon in the other five paragraphs, I will not speak in detail, but only say that I view with sympathy what I understand to be the spirit and intention of the proceedings of Her Majesty's Government in respect to those five important matters. There is one omission in this part of the Speech to which I must refer; but it is not necessary to make the reference in a polemical spirit. It is this—out of the six subjects to which reference has been made, four—namely, the Afghan Frontier and three of the others—are mentioned as subjects in which the transactions have apparently been completed. Now, Sir, these transactions having reached their completion, I should have expected in the Speech—and I think it has been an omission due to the pressure of Business—I should certainly have expected an intimation on the part of the Crown that Papers relating to these matters would be laid on the Table of the House for our information. I have no doubt that some Minister who speaks in the course of this debate, if that expectation of mine is reasonable, will be able to give us the assurance the absence of which I have noticed. Upon the important question alluding to the Estimates, and the expenditure these Estimates propose, I am desirous of following the example set me by the Mover and Seconder of the Address, and will not unnecessarily detain the attention of the House. Then I pass on, and come to the two paragraphs which deal with the case of Ireland; and here, indeed, I am approaching much tenderer ground. We now come to what may be called debatable land, and in connection with that subject I likewise ask myself whether we can do anything, in connection with the Address which has been moved, to expedite the progress of Business. There are some subjects which Her Majesty's Government have not advised the Crown to include in the Speech, with respect to which, at the same time, they, I am sure, will feel no surprise that other Members of the House should be disposed to desire and demand full and reasonable consideration. One hon. Friend of mine (Dr. Cameron) has given Notice of an Amendment to the Address in relation to the case of the crofters, and I do not see that anyone can be either astonished or disappointed at that Notice. For although we are here touching, happily, but a small portion of the surface of the community in relation to the vast population of these Islands, yet unquestionably the nature of the facts, and the sufferings of the people with which they are connected, the action which has taken place at certain points in reference to the maintenance and observance of the law, are of such a character that the subject requires the earnest attention and the earliest consideration of the House. Well, my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General of the late Government (Sir Charles Russell) has given Notice of a Motion by way of Amendment to the Address, in which it is stated that recent occurrences in London—I will not now quote any material part of his words—raising anxieties with respect to the right of open public meeting in the Metropolis, render it desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings should be held. Here, again, I think Her Majesty's Government can feel no surprise at learning that there is an intention of promoting an immediate discussion of this subject. I own it has occurred to me as worthy of consideration, and I hope the Government will give it their consideration, whether a declaration like that of my hon. and learned Friend, which points to an inquiry by this House, will be as conveniently debated upon the Address to the Crown as it would be by a separate Motion. It may be said—Why carry to the Crown the expression of an intention which, after all, when the Notice is given and when the speech is made, is only the intention of a particular Member to ask the House to do something which, without the aid of the Crown, it is competent and able to do? What I would venture to suggest to Her Majesty's Government is that they should consider whether, in order to disembarrass the debate on the Address from the discussion from this subject, they would not engage to grant my hon. and learned Friend—instead of leaving him to the chances of miscellaneous ballots, into which I think this question could not be expected to enter—an early opportunity of a debate on the subject; and if they were so disposed, in consideration of the request which I make on my own behalf and on behalf of the Friends who sit around me, then I own I think there would be considerable advantage in severing that subject from the debate on the Address. If the Government be so disposed, I recommend my hon. and learned Friend that he should avail himself of that opportunity, and that we should, in a manner which I think would be most regular and most Parliamentary, discuss the important questions which have been raised with respect to the right and the usage of public meeting in London. I shall not say a word upon this question which would either prejudice the debate, or would in any degree anticipate the debate. I pass it by without any entering into particulars. I feel sure Her Majesty's Government themselves must be conscious that the position of the case as it stands cannot, from any point of view, be regarded as entirely satisfactory; and where we have assembled together the most vast population ever known to have been so aggregated in any particular city in the whole history of the world, and that population forming part of a free and self-governing country, it is most desirable that we should arrive at some clear and definite understanding with regard to the reasonable exercise of that right of public meeting which undoubtedly lies at the very root of British liberty. But now, Sir, with respect to Ireland, I touch, perhaps, upon the more difficult portion of my task; but, at the same time, I will endeavour, so far as I can, to avoid anticipation by detailed remark of what is to come. This I may say, without reproach, is a challenging portion of the Speech, and the Address is in some degree a challenging Address, because in the Queen's Speech it is stated that the Act of last Session has been carefully carried into effect, and unless my hearing misled me, the House of Commons is invited to say that it learns with satisfaction that, in consequence of the legislation of last year—I do not mean that such are the terms used, but that is the sense—

> "Agrarian crime has diminished, and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated."

With respect to that careful carrying into effect of the Act, the Government will be prepared to find that many of us sitting on this side of the House are disposed to substitute for the word "carefully" some very different and less laudatory epithet. I should take it for granted, although no formal intimation has yet been given to the House, that the subject of the administration of the Coercion Act in Ireland must form, in the shape of some Amendment or other, a natural and necessary portion of the debate upon the Address. I, therefore, Sir, will not attempt to anticipate that debate; but I will refer very briefly to two allegations in the Speech—that

> "Agrarian crime has diminished, and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated."

Now, no one would be better pleased than I—and I believe the sentiment will be common to all who sit around me—to know that agrarian crime has diminished. With respect to coercive conspiracies, as I dislike coercion when it appears upon the side of the Government, so I dislike coercion when it comes in the form of the conspiracies which we are told here have been sensibly abated. Sir, there is one assertion which, if Her Majesty's Government could have given it, would indeed have carried joy into every heart, and that is the assertion which lies at the root of the whole Irish case—for when it can be made the whole Irish Question will be solved, and until it can be made no other assertion can supply the lack of it—and that is the assertion that the Irish people, the Irish nation, have become more reconciled to the law, and are ceasing to be estranged from its administration; and that the Irish nation are profiting by and enjoying some extensions, at least, of the powers of self-government, which this House shall have been pleased to grant to them. That is an assertion for which we must look with the greatest interest, and with respect to which, I fear, not only that it cannot be made, but that the very reverse is the case. The conduct of the Irish nation, as a whole, has, it seems to me, been admirable. When I look back upon what happened 50 or 60 years ago, upon the exorbitancy of crime in that country, under the pressure of difficulty and distress, perhaps not less than what now exists, I am amazed at the progress which they have made, at the self-command and self-control which is becoming more and more the habit of that country. Let us distinguish, then, between that self-control and self-command which lead to abstinence from crime, and that process of gradual assimilation in heart and feeling which alone, as I have said, will be the measure of any real progress in the great work we have to perform. The immediate object of my reference, however, to this portion of the Speech is to ask Her Majesty's Government in what manner they propose to supply us with the means of examining these extremely important allegations, that—

> "Agrarian crime has diminished, and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated."

But, apart from material objects, I shall rejoice in the establishment of these propositions; but the simple allegation in the Speech, until it is sustained by credible facts, does not advance us one inch upon the road towards the point we all desire to reach. For instance, "agrarian crime has diminished." Well, Sir, during last year, while we were debating the Coercion Act, agrarian crime, it was admitted, was low. What is agrarian crime? What are the Parliamentary test and measure of agrarian crime? So far as I know, they are to be found in the offences reported specially to the Irish Constabulary. For years, and for scores of years, those Reports have been taken as supplying to the House authentic information and conclusive information, on which you might rely, with respect to the prevalence of agrarian crime. I have seen it stated in the newspapers, apparently after much care to ascertain facts, that a number of persons, approaching 350, have been sentenced, or have been tried, under the recent Coercion Act. I presume that all these offences must have been made the subject of special Report to the Constabulary. Is the House to understand that, after throwing into the table those 350 offences, agrarian crime has still diminished in Ireland when compared with what it was in the corresponding months of the previous year? I do not desire to express any final opinion upon this subject. We absolutely need—and we can make no progress without—full information to be given us, and I hope promptly given us, by the Government. We again hear of the conspiracies—that their force is abated. How is that known? In what way are we in a position to form a candid and conclusive judgment upon the question whether the force of these conspiracies is diminishing or increasing? Now, Sir, as I have said, I am not going to give any final opinion upon it; and as I see the Chief Secretary for Ireland unlocking his box I am bound to say that, though I should be very thankful for any information that he may give us in debate, I am looking for something more than information in debate. These are questions which are capable of being tested by Returns and figures, and for figures I distinctly ask. And in order that it may be seen that, from my point of view at least, there is some cause to ask for these Returns and figures, I may tell you what are the general impressions that I conceive are made by persons who read the Irish newspapers, who examine the details of what has been going on in Ireland, of which the smallest possible portion comes to the knowledge of the English public through the Press, some portion of which is not disposed—hardly any portion of them is able—to give the facts the amount of space and attention they deserve. But I would state what would appear, I think, to a reader of the intelligence from Ireland, in the absence of these assurances of Her Majesty's Government, and upon forming the best conclusions he can from the reports of journals, which I admit may contain error, and on which I should not wish to place any final reliance, nor any final judgment, until I know what is the information which Her Majesty's Government desires to lay before us. The propositions that have been naturally suggested by such a study of the Irish Returns as is alone possible to independent Members of this House, not having the advantage of official information, I would state as briefly as possible. In the first place, it would appear that while in Ireland the administration of the Criminal Law in general is extremely easy—easier than in England or Scotland—less crime being in proportion to the population, and seldom presenting those horrible cases of human depravity which, I am sorry to say, too frequently occur on this side of the water—while that easy portion of the Criminal Law remains, and very properly remains, where it was, in the hands of Judges and juries, there is, on the other hand, one department of Criminal Law in Ireland that is delicate, morbid, and susceptible, that is also kept alive with almost all that is most painful in the last three centuries of Irish history, that is the Agrarian Criminal Law; that Agrarian Criminal Law, which, of all others, demands in Ireland the application of the ablest and the finest hand. That Agrarian Criminal Law, so far as we are able to discern, has been, as an ordinary rule, transferred from Judges and from juries, taken away from the Superior Courts, hardly finding its place there at all, carried over to men of a lower stamp, in the great majority of instances to men dependent on the Executive Government for the appointment to their places, for their retention in their places, for promotion from their places, so that the Executive Government, with regard to this most delicate, this only delicate and difficult portion of Irish administration—the Irish Government, representing a particular Party in this House, has become, more, perhaps, than in any other period, *primum mobile*, the mainspring of the action of this Criminal Law, with this further difficulty and defect, which also appear to be suggested by the facts of the case—that those who suffer under the Criminal Law, whether they be Members of Parliament or others, do by that suffering obtain a higher standing and higher place in the affections of the people than they have ever had before. Well, then, Sir, as we are speaking of this Act, and as I am speaking of the suggestions which appear to me on the perhaps superficial, certainly imperfect examination, I would say that I am not aware of any facts tending to show that, as far as crime is concerned, the Coercion Act of last year has in the slightest degree strengthened the hands of the Executive Government; and, therefore, when we are told that Parliament, with a great expenditure of time—and that unquestionably I shall not challenge—has passed an Act, and that the experience of it is satisfactory, and that that is attested by the decrease of agrarian crime, I want to know what are the provisions in the Act, and what are the points in the Act, that have been provided as a means to putting down crime, and what are the crimes that have been prevented or detected by means of the passing of the Coercion Act? I am sorry to say the first suggestion is that our assertions of last year are verified; that the Act was not an Act aimed at crime; it was an Act aimed at combination as apart from crime—combination which did not, to use the expression of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, fatally blossom into crime—which did not develop itself in crime; and even that allegation of ours, which was so much contested and which was treated as almost ridiculous, is verified; that not even combination was the sole object of the Act; but that exclusive dealing by Irish Nationalists was to be made a punishable offence. I am bound to say that it appears to me that, as far as I have read the accounts of some of these convictions, the simple act of exclusive dealing by an individual has been made a crime. But observe, not irrespective of persons—only if the exclusive dealing was the exclusive dealing of a Nationalist, and, commonly, of some very poor Nationalist in some humble station. The rector in Dublin, whom I mentioned last year, who deprived his curate of his bread because he was a Home Ruler, remains totally untouched by the Act. The rector in London, who himself having delivered two speeches in the name of sermons from the pulpit against Home Rule, brought upon his curate the moral necessity of abandoning his curacy and seeking his bread where he could—these gentlemen they do not prosecute for their exclusive dealing. It rests with Her Majesty's Government to show—and to show in detail and by particulars and figures—that they are not prosecuting people in Ireland for that which appears to be the practice of some of their clerical friends; and that this practice, objectionable under all circumstances, is not punished in one class and allowed to be freely resorted to by another class. Well, Sir, these things being so, I want to know what has become of the doctrine of equal rights? The justification of the Legislative Union was to be found in the enjoyment by Irishmen of equal rights with Englishmen, with Scotchmen, and with Welshmen. This is beyond all question, that the Act of last year took away from Irishmen certain rights possessed by Englishmen. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) gave Notice of a most important Motion which was intended to secure to the people of Ireland the rights enjoyed by the people of England. This was not connected with the payment or refusal to pay rent, for that involves other considerations and doubtful arguments, and therefore the Motion of my hon. and learned Friend was completely disembarrassed from that question. It was limited to exclusive dealing, and it provided that, so far as exclusive dealing was concerned, the Irishman and the Englishman should stand on equal footing. He was not permitted to discuss that. The Rules of Procedure closed the Committee without my hon. and learned Friend being able to raise the question that Englishmen and Irishmen should have equal rights. I put a Question, in concert with my hon. and learned Friend, to Her Majesty's Government, whether they would accept an Amendment establishing that equality; and, after most properly taking time for consideration, the answer was that they would not. If that be so—it is so, and it admits of no question—the time seems to have come when it would really be little less than a mockery to speak of equality between Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen. Still, Sir, I reserve myself for that information which I ask the Government to give us. I admit that all these inferences, so far as they are drawn from what has taken place in Ireland in the last six months, are drawn from imperfect sources. As in the case of Mitchelstown, as far as I know, we have no absolute and official Report upon which we can absolutely rely as a full and entire exhibition of the case, still less in other cases have we the necessary information; and the question I address to Her Majesty's Government is, when and in what form they propose to give us the information? I wish to limit my question to this, Sir—What form, what particulars they propose to give us; and I wish to limit what I say to probable inferences and conclusions until I know what the case of the Government really is—not in the shape of Parliamentary allegations tossed across this Table, the futility and worthlessness of which, in many previous instances, I have too well known, and of which I may have future and prospective experience—but in some definite shape. Now I have done with the sorest portion of the case, and I come to what I may term the fourth part of the subject—namely, that which relates to the subject of legislation; and in regard to that I wish to say that I desire to do what little may be in my power to bring about a more satisfactory and efficient Session in the year that is now before us than that of which we have had recent experience. I certainly think that Ireland might have expected a wider promise of legislation. When I consider the declarations of all kinds which have been made by Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, and Gentlemen on this side who concur with Gentlemen on that side, I think we were entitled to expect that there should have been an approximate promise of measures intended—I do not say to meet our views, or to give us satisfaction—but relating to the Parliamentary engagements given by Gentlemen opposite with respect to the extension of local government in Ireland. One of the most distinguished of these Gentlemen has told us that the existing system of local government in Ireland ought to be reconstructed, and that the death-blow ought to be administered to the system of what is known as Dublin Castle. I do not understand that to mean that Home Rule should be granted; but it was understood at the General Election that those who invited us to refuse Irish autonomy said that they were the friends of the extension of local government in Ireland, and they made one specific point in particular—that the Irish administrative system ought to be re-constructed. Well, it has been re-constructed. It has been made more intensely Dublin Castle than it was before. The question whether, in a given place or on a given day, the Irish people are to be allowed to meet under an English association depends now, not as such things do in this country, upon the Local Authority, but upon the political Executive. With regard to the increase of Irish proprietors, all I can say is if that increase is to be formed by the extension of the already objectionable and dangerous relations between the Treasury of England on this side of the water and individual cultivators of Ireland on the other side of the water, with no responsible body standing between one and the other, then that extension of proprietors in Ireland ought not to be founded on so false a basis. Now, there are in the Speech eight or more questions upon which we are invited to legislate. We are to have a Bill dealing with the procedure by which tithe rent-charge is collected. That is a subject of great importance and difficulty, and one in respect to which, if we approach the proposal of the Government in a captious spirit, anything like a satisfactory settlement would be impossible. But, it appears to me, the whole House ought to be prepared to approach any rational proposal in a spirit the reverse of captious, and for this reason. The House is divided into two opinions on the subject of Church property. There are those who think that the tithe is the sacred and indefeasible patrimony of the Church. They would be bound to study the integrity of the property in any measure they passed, while mitigating and improving, as they best can, the conditions under which from time to time the property is realized. But there is another body—much more largely represented on this side of the House—who hold a directly reverse opinion, and who are disposed to hold to the doctrine that the tithe is the property of the nation. I am not going to debate either one or the other of those opinions; but whether we hold it to be the property of the Church or the property of the nation, it is a property of which we are the stewards, for the custody of which we are responsible, and for the preservation and maintenance of which we are also responsible. I hope it will be in that spirit, and not in the spirit of simple condescension to the difficulties of the moment, that we shall approach the consideration of the proposal of the Government. Then I see that our old friend the transfer of land again does duty on this occasion. Frequent intercourse, as we know, tends to beget kindly feeling; and I have so often met this transfer of land, and have been so often introduced to him, and have had so kindly a greeting from him, that I do not like to be rude; but I am bound to say that I am extremely sceptical, and not at all sanguine that these Government proposals for the transfer of land will completely meet the case, unless you combine them with a measure touching the descent of land, and providing for its real freedom. The great question is undoubtedly that of local government. It is one of the most complex which has ever been before Parliament, and one of the largest. I remember very well the magnitude—the magnitude and complexity—of the task when an attempt was made, 15 or 20 years ago, to deal with the subject. The question of the boundaries of counties is only part, and what we once called the fringe, of the question; yet the discussion and settlement of those matters may take considerable time and lead to danger and difficulty. There is another difficulty attending this question of local government. Our failures with respect to it have been innumerable and grievous. Happily, we have no Party divisions on the subject, yet it involves many questions on which opposing interests may be numerous and strong—questions on which the propulsive power is, unfortunately, weak. I wish earnestly to impress upon the Government that they will find on this side of the House, so far as I know, the most earnest desire to advance legislation on this subject. I, for one, feel ashamed to stand before a constituency and offer apologies for not dealing with it. But if the Government are going to deal with it, let them recollect there is one thing worse than not dealing with it at all, and that is dealing with it in a manner which is sure to secure defeat: If there is a serious intention of dealing with local government—we are told the Bill is prepared, and from the activity of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) I am disposed to believe it—let the measure be introduced at the earliest possible moment, in order that the whole of the Session may be available for the discussion of the details, which, undoubtedly, must be very considerable. What is to be the course of the Session ?—and that is the last question I will put. Is the Session to be necessarily employed in painful discussions, such as those of last year, exhausting time, and exhausting strength, not favourable to the growth of Christian charity, and leaving everybody at the end in a worse humour than they were before ? As far as this side of the House is concerned, I think I may venture to say, not, indeed, as the result of positive communications at this early date, but still from communications with my hon. Friends near me, and from a general knowledge, at all events, of the sentiments which prevail, there is no disposition on this side of the House to renew the constant agitations and combats of the last Session. What we want is a legislative Session. I admit that I have expressed in the country the strongest apprehension that until the Irish Question is settled you will hardly be able to make any sensible impression upon the vast arrears of your legislation. But although I have said this, we on this side of the House will do our best to fulfil our own prophecy—[*laughter*]—I mean to disappoint our own prophecy—provided that we receive reasonable assistance from a majority of the House; for it is quite evident we cannot do it as a minority. Gentlemen opposite are well aware that although nothing can exceed the depth of the convictions we entertain as to the vast importance of the question of Irish autonomy, yet it was not by the discussion of Irish autonomy that the time of the last Session was occupied. I will not undertake to say—and I cannot form an opinion at this moment—whether it will be possible to go through this Session without debating the subject; but even if it be not found possible, I feel persuaded that the debate will be confined within reasonable limits, and I feel assured that any debate on Irish administration will also be confined within reasonable limits. We have had Notice of an important subject which, although it could not enter into the Speech, yet is in the minds and mouths of men—I mean the question of Procedure. Last year, before the Session commenced, Notice was given on the part of the Government that the plans of Procedure were in contemplation, and the nature of those plans was explained. That communication made to us was not arbitrary or novel; on the contrary, it was in conformity with what I may call the usual, established, and useful practice of this House. When the right hon. Gentleman who now sits for a Division of Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach)—and in whose recovery to health I rejoice—was Leader of the House, although he contemplated no measure more drastic than the appointment of a Select Committee, yet before the House met, and before the Speech of the Queen from the Throne, he was pleased to make known to me, as Leader of the Opposition, the intention of the Government upon that subject in full detail. I, myself, when Prime Minister, had pursued a similar course in communication with Sir Stafford Northcote. We have not yet had—and I am glad we have not yet had—any like communication from the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but I would venture to speak respectfully on that subject, and to express the hope that if proposals upon Procedure are made, they will be most carefully considered by the Government beforehand, and will not be of a nature to lead to protracted debates and vehement differences of opinion among large sections in this House; but that they will aim rather at giving effect to general principles of good government, and to the general sense and good feeling of the House, than at attempting to establish domination by mere triumphs of one Party over another. That I mention because it is of great importance with regard to the Business of the Session. As to foreign policy, we have, happily, no occasion to anticipate serious interruption of Business in connection with it. With reference to Procedure, if that matter be prudently handled, and we are not compelled to enter at great length into discussion in relation to its details, if the bulk and substance of the Session is left to promote the important legislation of which the Government have given Notice, then I am sanguine—if the Government make that contribution towards the just progress of Public Business—that there will be no reason in the world why this should not be a useful, and even a distinguished, Session. Your legislation begins well in the selection of subjects, as far as they go; and though I cannot recede from the complaint I made with regard to Ireland, I may say that in the selection you have made you have contemplated wider interests than those of Party. We shall desire to second your efforts in that direction. That will apply, I believe, to all the subjects that you have mentioned; it will apply most of all to that great and most important subject in which not only the general interests of the country are involved, but after such long delays, for which we must all, perhaps, bear our share of responsibility, the character and honour of Parliament also. I do trust that the course which the Government take with regard to the introduction and prosecution of that great Bill will be such as to show that, now you have the intention formed and the opportunity in your hands, you mean to make it the main object of your legislative attention, to strain every muscle for the purpose of carrying your measure into law, and at once putting an end to what has become a public scandal, and fulfilling the reasonable and just expectations of the people.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): In following the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), I must first of all pay my tribute of admiration to the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Address. The observations of the right hon. Gentleman with respect to those speeches will, I am sure, be echoed by every Member of this House, especially in reference to the eloquent terms in which my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Duncan) referred to our duties in caring for the sick and suffering. I can fully confirm the view which my hon. and learned Friend the Mover of the Address (Mr. Wharton) took of the position of the Boundary Commissioners, and of their action under the Act of last year. Their duty was simply to recommend for the consideration of the Government and of Parliament measures which they thought to be expedient, but which in no respect whatever bound the Government, nor are the Government in any way committed to the adoption of a scheme which the Commissioners approve, and which may be laid on the Table of the House. I now proceed to the questions raised by the right hon. Gentleman. As was to be expected from him, he has again repeated his confidence in the administration of foreign affairs by the Prime Minister, and has expressed satisfaction at the course that has been followed during the last Session and during the Recess. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the frank expression of his opinion upon those topics; and I cordially agree with him in the principle which he laid down, that the conduct of foreign affairs, and our relations with foreign States, ought to be kept free from the influence of Party politics. The interests of the country are immensely superior to those of Party in this House or in the country itself; and we as a Government, and the Opposition as an Opposition, have first of all to consult the interests of the country as a whole, and not by any of the means which may be found ready to the hand seek, at the cost of the country's interests, to advance those of mere Party. I may, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, state that Papers have already been laid on the Table with regard to the New Hebrides Convention; with regard to the negotiations respecting the Suez Canal; and also with regard to Afghanistan. There will be no delay in furnishing the House with such information as we can properly supply on those topics. I cordially concur in the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman as to the great advantage to this country and to Russia in the removal of possibilities of misunderstanding. There is only one aim and one object of Her Majesty's Government, and that is to be at peace with all the world, while we maintain the rights and interests of the people of this country. We have a great trust to discharge, and we can, we believe, discharge that trust with proper regard to the susceptibilities and to the interests and rights of other peoples, while we maintain the rights and interests of our own. I will now refer to the omissions which the right hon. Gentleman detected in the Speech from the Throne. With regard to the crofters in Scotland, I think the House will agree that the course of legislation on that subject has not been so satisfactory, so complete in its results, or so beneficial to all parties concerned, that the Government could rashly undertake to promote the measures, or extend relief under conditions of extreme difficulty, and under conditions which seem to imperil the social existence of a considerable portion of the community. We are engaged in considering in what way we can extend relief to people who are suffering under conditions which appear to make it almost impossible to maintain existence with due regard to the decencies of life. We are engaged in considering in what way we can do so without thoroughly demoralizing these people, and leading them to the belief and conviction, which unfortunately has prevailed in the past and which may be renewed in the future, that they are certain to obtain eleemosynary aid and be protected from the consequences of the condition of things in which they find themselves, without any exertion of their own to gain a livelihood, which every other subject of the Queen is expected to gain for himself. I speak with the greatest sense of pity for these poor people, placed as they are in this great Metropolis. But the consideration of a question like this must be conducted with extreme care and prudence, lest the evil we seek to remedy may not be followed by consequences much more serious even than the sufferings of these poor people. The Government are engaged in a careful study of the question, but we were not justified in putting a paragraph into the Speech from the Throne on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Notice of Amendment to the Address which stands in the name of the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). I agree that the form in which it is proposed to raise the very important question to which the Notice refers is open to very considerable objection, inasmuch as it deals with a matter with which the House has full power to deal without approaching Her Majesty by way of the Address. The suggestion of the course now proposed did not reach me before the speech of the right hon. Gentleman a few minutes ago. I am not, therefore, in a position to state the course the Government will take in regard to this matter; but I will undertake that they will consider the subject within the next few hours, and I hope to be able to make a statement on it without any unnecessary delay. If the course proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman be persisted in, the result may be that we shall have two debates instead of one on the same question. It is obvious, therefore, that the Government naturally desire to avoid entering into an arrangement which would make such a result possible. I do not want to enter into any long defence of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. I own we had enough of the Irish Question in the last Session of Parliament; but we cannot hope to escape from discussions on that question in the present Session. If the course indicated by the right hon. Gentleman is taken, and some hon. Gentleman below the Gangway proposes an Amendment on the Address in regard to the state of Ireland, we shall be perfectly prepared to enter into the subject in the sense and spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has offered to meet us. The right hon. Gentleman says the paragraph in the Queen's Speech with regard to Ireland is a challenging paragraph. If, however, we had refrained from expressing our confident opinion as to the results of our Irish legislation during the past Session and as to the policy pursued during the Recess, the right hon. Gentleman himself would have been the first person to challenge us for the omission, which he would have described as a most remarkable omission. He would have said—"You are afraid of calling attention to the course you have yourselves pursued; you are unwilling or unable to defend the results of your own policy." Sir, it is nothing of the kind. The paragraph we have put into the Speech we can defend by facts as well as by arguments, and we shall furnish to the House such information as was furnished by the right hon. Gentleman's Government in 1882, when similar legislation had been proposed and carried, as to the results of our legislation and the criminal statistics of Ireland. We are asked whether agrarian crime has diminished. The right hon. Gentleman has entered into an elaborate argument to prove that agrarian crime has not diminished. We are prepared to show that it has diminished, and that the coercive conspiracies of which we speak have sensibly abated in power and influence throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman has again referred to what he calls "Boycotting" and exclusive dealing. "Boycotting" is an instrument which has been aptly described by the right hon. Gentleman himself—that it was injurious to the best interests of the country. We say that what was injurious to the best interests of the country in 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885 is injurious to those interests in 1888. That which was a crime and was sustained by crime in those years is, in our view, a crime, and sustained by crime now. We draw no distinction between the fact that we were out of Office then and that we are in Office now; and we adjure hon. Gentlemen to look at facts as facts, if it be possible to do so, without having regard to which particular Party is in power. Exclusive dealing unaccompanied by crime is not interfered with by the Act of last year, either in Ireland or England. The right hon. Gentleman made a great point of the fact that we are obliged to entrust the administration of the Criminal Law to magistrates rather than to juries and Judges. Well, Sir, this is not, unfortunately, the first time in the history of Ireland that that course has been rendered necessary—the right hon. Gentleman himself has found it necessary. I believe there is no one who more deeply deplores the necessity — the absolute necessity—for the course which has been taken than every Colleague of mine on this Bench—on whom rests the responsibility for the government of the country and the responsibility for the safety of life and property—the responsibility of securing for the humblest person in Ireland, as well as in England, a complete liberty for the discharge of every social duty and perfect freedom in their work and occupation. Some observations were made by the right hon. Gentleman with which I have great sympathy. The right hon. Gentleman said that if we could show that the Irish people were becoming more reconciled to the law, then we should have shown that we have accomplished a great work —then we should have made some approach to winning the hearts of the people of Ireland. Sir, I believe that the steady course which has been pursued, apart from passion, apart from Party feeling, by the Government during the last year and during the present winter has tended—I admit we have not made a great advance—has tended to reconcile the Irish people to the law of the land, because they have felt that the law is being enforced, and that it will be enforced for their protection against wrong-doers, as well as against them if they, on their part, do wrong against others. Who are they who set the Criminal Law in action in England as well as in Ireland and every other country? It is the duty of the Government to set the law in action; and it would be most inefficient, in the interests of the people at large, if they failed to use the measures which Parliament has provided for them and the law which has been placed in their hands for the security of the people at large and for the punishment of those who do wrong. We had to take measures to secure that justice shall be brought home to every person in Ireland; we have taken the measures which we believe are best calculated to attain that end; we have taken them in the full light of day, and we are prepared to answer to Parliament and the country for every act for which we are responsible. I fully admit that the people of Ireland have equal rights with the people of England, and it was to secure that those rights should be retained by the people of Ireland that the legislation of last year was passed, that the legislation of last year has been steadily, fairly, and justly administered by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). The right hon. Gentleman opposite expressed the hope that this would be a more satisfactory Session than the last. He entered into an engagement on the part of his right hon. Friends on the Front Bench opposite, and of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, as well as above the Gangway, that there should be a desire to forward measures without anything like factious opposition, and, in fact, to co-operate with the Government in passing those useful measures which we have described. But he said that Ireland ought to have had a larger share in the proposals of Her Majesty's Government; and at least the pledges we have repeatedly made in Parliament and out of Parliament ought to have been respected, and that we should have endeavoured to reconstruct the Irish Government. The right hon. Gentleman admits that the measures which we propose to lay upon the Table of the House —and which, I am happy to say, are ready to be laid upon the Table—are useful and necessary. Further, the right hon. Gentleman admits that if the Government are able to secure for these measures proper consideration, a useful Session will have been passed. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he was not really laughing at his Friends and at the House when he urged Her Majesty's Government to take steps to reconstruct the Irish Government? At a time like the present, when passion is inflamed and an Irish National League is struggling for existence, I ask him whether, if the Government had made proposals of this kind, he would not have said that these proposals were mere mockery on the part of the Government, and were intended to delude the House? To introduce such proposals at such a time would be to expose them to violence of treatment that ought to be avoided. I admit as fully as the right hon. Gentleman that there is room—great room—for improvement in the machinery of Irish government. When the people of Ireland are, as I hope they will be, reconciled to the law of the land—not to laws passed merely with reference to some particular agrarian differences, but to fundamental laws, that protect and respect the rights and the property of every subject—when the people of Ireland give evidence that they are at last in harmony with the system of law that prevails throughout the civilized world, then I undertake to say that no difficulty will be raised, and no loss of time will be incurred in making proposals for such a reconstruction of the Irish Government as might hold out some prospect of success. The Government are not, however, going to hold out a delusive expectation to Ireland or to the people of this country. We know that no satisfactory progress could be made with the question at the present time, and on that account we, therefore, do not dream of bringing it before Parliament. I may part for the moment with the question of Ireland. The Government are prepared to meet any charges that may be made against the conduct of the Irish administrators. We accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman that he and his Friends have no desire to protract debates beyond the necessities of bringing the issue to a conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman also referred to some other legislative proposals, which we intend to lay before Parliament. He referred—I think in sympathetic terms—to proposals which we contemplate with regard to the collection of tithe-rent, and with reference to the maintenance of that charge as ecclesiastical or national property. We wish to approach the consideration of this question thoroughly in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman did so. It is not to be dealt with in a captious spirit; it is not to be dealt with from the point of view that this is a charge upon land which the occupier of the land has a right to divest himself of. It is to be approached from the point of view of those who desire to remove all unnecessary friction in the maintenance of a charge upon property to which owner and occupier are alike subject. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of many proposals that had been frequently placed before the House with regard to the transfer of land, and said that no measure for dealing with the question would be satisfactory that did not deal with that descent of land. The right hon. Gentleman is under the impression that he has read the highly-technical Bill of last Session; and it is, perhaps, not unnatural that he should have forgotten that that Bill did deal with the descent of land in a manner which went very far indeed to satisfy land reformers, if it did not satisfy the right hon. Gentleman. That question is certainly included in the proposals we intend to submit to Parliament. In reference to local government, the right hon. Gentleman did not in any way exaggerate the complexities and the difficulties of the question. The boundary question involves enormous difficulties, but I am sanguine that we shall be able to approach the question in a spirit and a manner that will commend themselves, and will gain the approval not only of the House, but of the country at large. We have no hard-and-fast line to impose upon Local Authorities. We desire, as far as possible, to consult and to meet local feeling, and the public sentiment of districts. We think that we shall be able to make proposals which will satisfy all the necessities of the case, and accord at the same time with the prevailing desire to maintain ancient landmarks, which is a peculiarity of Englishmen, and which I should be very sorry to oppose. We intend to press this Local Government Bill upon the consideration of the House. It has been the work of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie)—with the assistance of his Colleagues—for many months past. It has received most careful attention, and we hope that it will be received in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has proposed to accept it—as a useful measure of local government for the benefit of the country, without interfering in the least degree with any Party interest or prejudice. Considerable improvement may be made in local government from a popular point of view, and we shall do our best to obtain from the House consent to our proposals. I need not go through the other matters in detail, but the right hon. Gentleman referred to the question of Procedure, and he referred especially to the fact that no communication had been made to the right hon. Gentleman himself as to the proposals which the Government intend to make. There is no great change proposed which would have rendered it necessary, in my judgment, to have communicated the intentions of Her Majesty's Government to the right hon. Gentleman, and, more than that, he has not himself been easily accessible for the last few weeks, so as to have rendered it possible for me to have had communication with him. But I can assure him that we shall not delay to take the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends into our confidence. Our aim is precisely that which the right hon. Gentleman himself has indicated. We do not desire to achieve by new methods of Procedure any Party success or triumph. But we have the honour and credit of the House of Commons at heart, and we desire to secure to both sides of the House full liberty of discussion within reasonable limits, divesting ourselves as far as we may of the power to interfere arbitrarily with that liberty. At the same time we feel that it is essential to the character and reputation of the House that there should be an end of proceedings that do not tend to raise the House in the estimation of the world—proceedings that are not creditable to this Assembly as a body of business men capable of transacting business in a reasonable and an intelligent manner and at reasonable hours. It is essential that the House should have power to put an end to a condition of affairs which was exciting unreasonable comment, and which I may describe as not creditable to such an Assembly. It is essential that the House should have better command over its time, and should be able to end disorder, which, unfortunately, has arisen from time to time in preceding Sessions. In the observations of the right hon. Gentleman we have, I think, obtained one great advantage, and that is a direct assurance that, so far as he is concerned—as Leader of the Opposition—he will do his best to answer for his Friends that the Business of the House shall be conducted with reasonable speed and with reasonable discussion. This would make the Session remarkable for its Business achievements and for the legislation that might be placed upon the Statute Book.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, the fact was that the right hon. Gentleman and his followers were only in the second degree responsible for the government of the country. The real responsibility for the present situation rested with the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), who, if he were to resume his proper position, would completely change the aspect of the Government majority. He (Colonel Nolan) did not intend to enter into the whole of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith). He remembered Mr. Disraeli saying in that House that he did not believe that any arrangement they could make would shorten the natural length of a Session of Parliament; and so, in the same manner, he (Colonel Nolan) believed that even with greater powers of closure than were already possessed by the House they would be able to get through more real work. He would only speak on a single subject, and that was the reference made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to Ireland, and the manner in which that country was treated in the Queen's Speech. He (Colonel Nolan) and his hon. Friends had three grounds of complaint with regard to the conduct of the Government during the Recess and in the last Session of Parliament. First, they complained as to the manner in which the Government had administered the law in Ireland; secondly, that they had not done anything for the country in return for the £7,750,000 which they extracted from it by taxation—that, as a matter of fact, the whole of the money had been absorbed without any benefit being conferred upon Ireland; and, thirdly, they complained that nothing had been done to settle the Land Question in a way that would really benefit the peasantry. The first point had in connection with it the way in which the Resident Magistrates were promoted in Ireland and as to their removability, and he said that while the present system remained in existence no satisfactory result could possibly be expected. Lord Macaulay had said so long as the Judges were removable in England—which was up to the time of James II.—so long no politician was safe. It was a matter of life and death in those days to public men, for as soon as one political Party got into power it was their aim to murder their opponents by course of law. The same noble Lord further said that no better or greater reform had ever been made in this country than that by which the Judges were made irremovable. Now, the state of things which existed in England before that reform took place was precisely similar to that which at the present moment existed in Ireland in regard to the Resident Magistrates, and although their powers did not extend to life and death, yet it did extend to the very next thing—the liberty of the subject, and it rested entirely with them to say whether a politician was to remain a free man or to spend a period of six months, or even more, under accumulated sentences in prison. Although he had listened attentively to the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, he had heard no reference to the principal part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), which dealt with the removability at the pleasure of the Executive of the Resident Magistrates. These gentlemen were, amongst other things, not the very best of lawyers, but probably men of ordinary ability, and competent, no doubt, to get through the usual work at Quarter Sessions. They could not afford to be fair; and he maintained that men in the position which they occupied must do what the Government wished, because they knew that otherwise they could be dismissed. It was a dreadful position in which to place a Resident Magistrate for the Government to say—"If you do not please us we will remove you. You will have no pension, or only a small one, or at the best you may wait till your five years are up, and then you will not be re-appointed."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

COLONEL NOLAN said, that he did not suppose that the majority of the Resident Magistrates would vote against their consciences, and give two or three months' imprisonment to a man whom they believed to be undeserving of it; but, taking an average, he would say it was much easier to get them to declare a man guilty when they knew that otherwise they might lose their position. At first, under the Crimes Act, they gave sentences of two months, which admitted of appeal; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), in a speech at Birmingham, threw out a strong hint that appeals were inconvenient, and that justice would be satisfied with shorter sentences of one month's imprisonment; and then it was that the sentences of which they complained were given. That practice had continued during the Recess; but now that Parliament was assembled, and the subject could be brought before the

House, the Resident Magistrates had gone back to the longer sentences of two, three, and four months. As he had said, the Resident Magistrates were removable; but that was not the case with the Police Magistrates and the County Court Judges, who could only be dismissed for a crime, or the maladministration of justice. Now, the Resident Magistrates declared that they were obliged to give sentence of imprisonment with or without hard labour, and they never sentenced anyone under the Act as a first-class misdemeanant; but the late Lord Mayor of Dublin was sentenced by a Police Magistrate in Dublin, who was irremovable. The latter said that he saw no reason to push things to an extreme, and accordingly he made the prisoner a first-class misdemeanant. There was another case in which a Member of Parliament was brought before an irremovable County Court Judge in Ireland on appeal, and that Judge held that he could make the prisoner a first-class misdemeanant, and, to his credit be it said, he did so. Then there was a third case in which a County Court Judge took a different view from that of the Resident Magistrates, and that gentleman was the Recorder of Galway, who had given it as his personal opinion, and had said he (Colonel Nolan) might state it in the House of Commons, that Mr. Blunt, whom that gentleman had convicted, ought to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant; so that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had now the pleasure of keeping Mr. Blunt undergoing the hardships of imprisonment in opposition to the view of the very Judge who had sentenced him, and had said he ought to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. It had been said that the Act had been very carefully carried into effect in Ireland; but he (Colonel Nolan) maintained that it had been carried out in the harshest possible manner and for Party purposes. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, not on his administration in Ireland, but as a Party manager, and on the effective manner in which he had acted as Whip. For the last 200 years a majority had not been made up in that House by any Government on the principle of locking up their opponents; but at that moment the right hon. Gentleman had 12 Members of the Opposition in prison undergoing various sentences. That might not be a matter of great consequence to the Government so long as the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale supported the Conservative Party; but, were he to turn aside and become neutral, their majority would be at once reduced to 40; whereas, if the 12 Members were free to attend in the House, it would be brought down to the very moderate and what would be hardly a working majority of 28. It was by the means he had referred to that the right hon. Gentleman had converted his weak majority into a working majority, and that, no doubt, accounted for the cheers which greeted him on entering the House, which were greater than those bestowed on the First Lord of the Treasury. Although the majority of independent Conservatives would, no doubt, vote "Aye" or "No" as they were told to do at the doors, yet he believed there were some of them sufficiently independent to support his view, that in all cases where Members of Parliament were imprisoned they should be made first-class misdemeanants, and if that were done one great source of irritation would be removed. It was often said that there was one law for the rich and another for the poor man; but the punishment of imprisonment was harder in the case of an educated man, because not only was the change of diet greater, but there was also the deprivation of books and writing materials. In his opinion it was positive and unnecessary cruelty to keep educated men in prison without books, for the only book they could have under the existing system was a Bible, with so small a print as to make it hardly legible. He would point out to independent Members that they had undertaken quite enough Parliamentary responsibility without supporting the Government in their present mode of treating Irish political prisoners. There was one especially bad case of which he and his hon. Friends complained—namely, that of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington). That hon. Member was the Secretary of the National League. If the Chief Secretary for Ireland had imprisoned him as the chief officer of the League, it would have been, at all events, open and honest; but the Government could not prove that the National League in Dublin was an illegal body, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland had imprisoned the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin by taking advantage of a mere technicality. The hon. Member had been connected some years before with a newspaper which published an account of some meetings that had been suppressed by law; by a mere accident the name of the hon. Member had been registered last year as being connected with the newspaper, and, that technicality being fastened upon by the Government, the hon. Member had been imprisoned for two months—simply because he had allowed his name to appear on a newspaper with which he was totally unconnected. But the hon. Member was really put into prison because he was the head of the National League, and for nothing else. On his second point, that nothing had been done to develop the resources of the country, he did not believe that the Government had honestly accounted for the money raised from Ireland. It had been announced that £50,000 would be given in aid of the roads in Ireland; but he did not think that sum had been expended. He asked what had the Government done with the £7,750,000 received from Irish taxation since they came into Office? They had told the House that they were going to appoint Commissioners to inquire into the question as to how far the resources of Ireland could be developed; but there had been but one Report from the Commissioners, and that had borne no fruit. The greater part of the money derived from Irish taxation was simply wasted in Ireland, and that for no good purpose; so that the money which came from that country did not even relieve the British taxpayer, while the people there were left without harbours, railways, and many similar works of which they stood greatly in need. He did not wish that the Irish Judges should be underpaid; but the expenses of the Courts in Ireland were, in his opinion, extravagant. He should be very brief in dealing with his third point, desiring, as he did, to save the time of the House. The Government in the Queen's Speech held out no promise of further land legislation which would be likely to do much to settle the condition of the country. He (Colonel Nolan) had for a long time said that they should make all the tenants of under £6 a-year small proprietors; but it would be necessary also to divide the grass farms amongst the smaller tenants. If that were done by the Government, they would satisfy the tenantry; but nothing short of it would do so, at any rate in his own county. He hoped the Government would do something towards making the smaller tenantry owners of the farms in question, at the same time giving proper compensation to those who now held them. Having pointed out what he considered to be the shortcomings of the Government, and the deficiencies of the Queen's Speech, he would not detain the House further than to remark that although the Government might shut the mouths of a large number of Irish Members by imprisonment, they could not fairly say that Ireland was prosperous or contented, nor could they in the present circumstances, having regard to the enormous amount of emigration going on, be justified in taking any credit for their administration in Ireland.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, he thought the Government ought to be congratulated on the peaceful prospects of the Session so far. The opening paragraph of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech which referred to our relations with Foreign Powers was, in his opinion, a subject for favourable comment in that House when they considered the large Armies which were now kept up by those Powers. He trusted that the assurance which within the last few days had been offered by Prince Bismarck would have an effect upon the Powers which had possibly contemplated a disturbance of the European peace, and that next Session Her Majesty's Government would be able to say that they remained at peace with them. He thought also that the House would agree that Her Majesty's Speech contained what was a just recognition of the patriotic spirit shown by the Australian Colonies, and that they should be assisted in protecting that great portion of the British Empire. But there was no portion of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech which would afford greater satisfaction to the peaceable subjects of Her Majesty than that which referred to the government of Ireland during the past autumn and winter. The hon. and gallant Member for North Galway

(Colonel Nolan) had bitterly complained of a so-called conspiracy on the part of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to deprive the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) of the co-operation of the most energetic of his Colleagues. But as well might all those who broke the law in this country complain when they were taken up and imprisoned. The truth of the matter was that the hon. Members in question had in several cases ostentatiously committed breaches of the law in order to court imprisonment; others had, however, been very careful to avoid being captured; and he was sure many people had been greatly amused by reading the accounts of the dexterity displayed by them in avoiding imprisonment, and the great surprise manifested by them on coming across the Channel to find that the law was strong enough to take them back in order that they might answer before the judicial tribunals in Ireland for the offences which they had committed. The Government were at least entitled to the warmest thanks of the people of Ulster for the manner in which they had endeavoured impartially to administer the law during the last few months. All the prognostications to the contrary had proved to be utterly false, and the Government had not only administered the law with impartiality, but with success. He could assure the House that the people of Ulster, as well as the loyal and peaceable people in other parts of the country, found no inconvenience from what had been unfairly called the Coercion Act; nor was there any desire shown by the Executive to interfere in any way with the rights and privileges of the peace-loving subjects of Her Majesty. While the hon. and gallant Gentleman had dilated on the alleged wrongs suffered by a half-dozen or a dozen of his Colleagues, the House had not heard from him a single word of condemnation of those outrages and murders which, during the Recess, had stained the soil of Ireland—as, for example, the case where a father had been murdered in sight of his daughter under circumstances discreditable in the highest degree to the National League, from which, unquestionably, the instigation came. On behalf of those for whom he was entitled to speak, he ventured to say that they had no desire to press Her Majesty's Government for any settlement of the Local Government Question in Ireland. They were quite ready to wait for that until Ireland was in a satisfactory condition, and ready to obey the law, as well as administer in a *bonâ fide* way the powers then to be entrusted to them. They did not wish to see any Local Government Bill for Ireland introduced at present which would be used for furthering those Home Rule tactics which were advocated by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. He felt sure the House and the country would be pleased to learn that the development of the resources of Ireland was in contemplation by Her Majesty's Government, and that the endeavour of the Government in this direction would not be allowed to be interfered with by any Party considerations. If hon. Members below the Gangway opposite would co-operate with the Government in the work, they would be doing more to promote the welfare of Ireland than by indulging in tall talk on the Home Rule Question. In offering these few words of congratulation to Her Majesty's Government on the subject of Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, he might be allowed to express his opinion that it would be a source of the greatest gratification throughout the country and Empire that Her Majesty asked the Divine assistance, commending the country and the House to the care of Almighty God, in the deliberations upon which they were entering. He trusted the day was far distant when the Sovereign of this country would forget that she reigned by the grace of God; or the people, that it was by Divine Providence that she reigned over them. Finally, he felt sure that the country would continue to give the Government increasing support in maintaining the integrity of the Empire, and in upholding throughout that Empire the honour of the Crown.

The Earl of CAVAN (Somerset, S.) said, it had been his misfortune since last year to have been attacked by a variety of persons, including the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself, on account of the position which he had taken up, and now occupied, with regard to Irish politics. He had been first attacked for sending a deputation of working men from England to Ireland, and upon that subject he wished to say a few words. He was responsible, no doubt, for sending some of these men; but he wished to say that in sending them he was desirous above all things that they should go with a perfectly clean sheet, with feelings perfectly unprejudiced; that they should on their return give a clear and explicit statement of what they saw in Ireland, both with regard to the payment of rent and the question of Home Rule; and that from the opinions formed by them, and the experience gained in various parts of Ireland, the minds of his constituents might be made up on these important and burning questions. He carefully guarded the conditions on which the members of the deputation should go to Ireland; he desired them to go as free agents; that they should visit Bodyke, Glenbeigh, and other places, and see for themselves the persons who had been evicted, and the processes of eviction which had been going on; that they should converse with them, and gain all the information they could on the spot. He desired them also especially to see the landlords themselves or their agents, so as to hear what could be said on both sides of the question, and then to return to this country and state the result of the inquiries they had made; he desired them further to converse with persons of all classes—those favourable to Home Rule, and those who were unfavourable to it, and that they should ascertain whether they had any concealed or unconcealed views with regard to separation. They were to state on their return exactly what they had seen and heard, and what their impressions were; and he conceived that a fairer programme could not be placed before honest and impartial men. Four of his constituents who were members of the deputation were distinctly of the artizan class and Home Rulers. Two of them had not made up their minds, and were of a superior class. How had these persons been treated? They went to Ireland simply as inquirers, and yet, during the whole of their stay, they were treated there as spies. They were never left by the detectives for a single moment. He asked, what crime had those honest, fair-minded Englishmen committed? The only crime that could be alleged against them was that they were going to inquire into the state of Ireland. They were men who paid their rent in England, who were in favour of the payment of rent, and were honest persons who earned their bread by the sweat of their brow, and would be looked up to in England as in the front rank of artizans; but when they arrived in Ireland their luggage was searched, and they were followed about as if they were the lowest and basest of criminals. It was not astonishing, therefore, that when they returned to England they had a very definite idea of the government of Ireland, and brought with them a very distinct impression, both with regard to coercion and Home Rule. It had been said that they went to Ireland for the purpose of encouraging crime. He denied that utterly. There was not a single word uttered by them during their stay in Ireland which could by any method be turned into an encouragement to crime in any shape; all they did was to encourage the Irish people whom they met to persevere in their struggle in an honest way. Again, it was said that they went to Ireland with preconceived convictions. But he utterly denied that they had any preconceived convictions when they went there. Although these men were unprejudiced when they went to Ireland—and he could tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whom he was glad now to see in the House, that two of the six men who went from his (the Earl of Cavan's) constituency were persons whose minds were not made up on the subject of Home Rule—they not only had some doubts with regard to Home Rule as a whole, but also on certain particulars in reference to the Bill of his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. He would, however, distinctly admit that four of the number were Home Rulers. Of course, they were all Home Rulers now. It would be rather an astonishing thing if, after the treatment they had received, they had not been converted. It was stated in Her Majesty's Speech that in consequence of the operation of the Coercion Act agrarian crime in Ireland had decreased; but he ventured to think that was not the case. The decrease of crime was due to a greater cause—namely, that it had been proved by these deputations to the people of Ireland that there was now in the minds of Englishmen an appreciation of what was really wanted by them.

They had shown the Irish that there was a gleam of hope, and that there was in that gleam a brightness in Ireland which they had never known before, and that they were thus encouraged to persevere in honest ways, because there was no necessity for crime. Such disgraceful transactions as the murder in the Phœnix Park could now no longer be justified on any ground whatsoever, because the Irish could look forward with hope to a greater and a growing sympathy in England between that country and the Irish nation. There was hope, and in that hope lay the cause of the absence of crime and the better behaviour even of the lowest classes. Such disgraceful acts as the Phœnix Park murders were no longer possible, because now the people of Ireland looked forward to greater sympathy from the people of England; and upon that ground rested the hope of a better state of things for Ireland. He had on a former occasion quoted some statistics of Mr. Mulhall, which, at the time, he believed to be accurate, but which had been challenged. He had stated that Mr. Mulhall was, at the time he wrote to him, absent from England, and could not give an answer to his letter; but he had asked his constituents and the country to understand that the figures had been questioned, and to suspend their judgment. Mr. Mulhall had since answered his letter; and if the reply had not reached the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), it had, at any rate, reached *The Times* and other newspapers. Speaking roundly, the statistics quoted were under three headings—first, the number of evictions; secondly, the number of deaths; and, thirdly, the number of persons emigrated from Ireland. With regard to the first heading, Mr. Mulhall pointed out that the number of evictions given by Her Majesty's Government was not the whole number, because the evictions of cottiers was not included in it, and this was a very important point. With regard to the number of deaths, Mr. Mulhall said that the Government statistics could not be relied upon. The figures before him went largely into detail, and he would not, therefore, trouble the House by reading them on that occasion; but if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland wished to refer to them he would be happy to place them at his disposal. He would pass now to another subject of greater interest to hon. Members on that side of the House. It was an accusation constantly made against them that they were either directly or indirectly participating in or encouraging crime; but he wished to say, in the first place, that hon. Gentlemen on those Benches had a very distinct notion of what constituted crime. Crime, as understood in England, was not justified by any Member of that House, no matter on which side he sat; but as to what was called crime under the Coercion Act he had a word to say. With regard to the contravention of the provisions of the Coercion Act, it should be remembered that they were not permitted to discuss the 30 clauses of that measure. Certainly those clauses were before them, but only in the same way that the hangman's rope was before the culprit. He saw it, but he could not then discuss the merits of his sentence. They were obliged to pass 24 clauses. Were they to consider those 24 clauses of the Coercion Act as law in the same sense that they regarded every other Act on the Statute Book? Distinctly not; for what happened with the first six clauses? There were no three consecutive lines of those clauses that were not altered, not by the force of their numerical majority, but by the force of their argument. Was it possible they could regard the other 24 clauses—not a single line of which they were allowed to argue—as of the same moral weight as the first six clauses which were binding on them as loyal citizens? It was a very delicate question as to how far the persons who had been convicted and imprisoned under the Coercion Act came under the last clauses of the Act, which hon. Members were not allowed to discuss, or under the first six clauses, which they were permitted to discuss. But, apart from that argument, he maintained that the offences under the Coercion Act were, to an enormous extent, strictly of a political character. It was impossible for him and his hon. Friends to treat as criminals, in the sight of the law, those guilty of political offences. Lord Spencer, and his right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), when administering the law of Ireland, made a very great distinction between persons convicted of political offences and persons convicted of crime, and those who sat upon the Opposition Benches could not forget the precedent. The Opposition were accused of consorting with criminals, and of paying honour to criminals. If his hon. Friend the late Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) was to be considered a criminal, and he (the Earl of Cavan) was to be condemned for consorting with him as a criminal and for assisting to do honour to a criminal, all he could say was that he rejoiced and glorified in the condemnation. He was not prepared to regard as a criminal a man who sold a newspaper that had been proscribed, except in the light that he was a political criminal. If there was doubt as to the distinction which they on the Opposition side of the House drew between one set of criminals and the other, let him draw the attention of hon. Members to a very remarkable passage in a recent speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley). Speaking the other day in Dublin, and referring to a disgraceful murder which had just taken place in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman said that murder had done more against the cause of Home Rule than all the actions of Lord Salisbury and the Chief Secretary put together. There were no two views with regard to crime as it was understood in England. Crime was condemned by hon. Members below the Gangway as distinctly as it ever had been by those sitting upon the Opposition or upon the Ministerial Benches; but when they came to the consideration of political offences, he feared it was necessary for the two sides of the House to part. Some comments had been made with reference to Gentlemen who were Privy Councillors upholding transactions which were contrary to law. Were there no Privy Councillors sitting on the Government Benches at that moment who were not formerly distinctly on the side of criminals—the criminals who refused to pay church rates some years ago? Of course, there were Members of the Privy Council—hon. Members of that House—by the score, who openly sympathized with those who went to prison rather than pay church rates. Did they not sympathize with crime—with such crime as the non-payment of church rates amounted to? Members of the Opposition at the present day were in precisely the same position with regard to the political offences of which their Friends were accused. He did not propose to enter now into the vexed question of Home Rule or of coercion. His task had been of a more prosaic character. It had been to show that the sympathies of himself and Friends could never be given to those guilty of crime as crime was understood in England. It would be necessary for them to urge that the criminals with whom they associated were criminals coming under the category of political criminals, and not criminals such as criminals were understood to be in England. In that effort they would go forward steadily and perseveringly, long as the day might seem, until a brighter and more glorious day dawned, a day of reconciliation for Ireland, a day when the government of Ireland should be carried on by warm and affectionate hearts which had been reconciled to each other by means other than the power of the bayonet—by the triumph of their great cause.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, that as he listened to the speech of the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), he thought the hon. Gentleman must be very easily satisfied with the government of his country. The hon. Gentleman repeatedly claimed to speak in the name of the people of Ulster. However unpleasant it might be for the hon. Gentleman opposite to be reminded of it, the fact remained that Ulster sent a majority of its Representatives to support the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). Taking that as a standpoint, they could discount a little the encomiums which the hon. Member for South Belfast heaped upon the present government of Ireland. Judging from the Speech from the Throne, the Government, too, seemed perfectly satisfied with the result of their work. They spoke of the decrease of agrarian crime in Ireland. No doubt they based the statement upon the result of their action during the last six months in regard to those whom they chose to call criminals. If his (Mr. Rowlands') memory served him, the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said, in introducing the Crimes Bill, that the case for the measure was not based on statistics of agrarian crime in Ireland. And the operation of the Crimes Bill had not reduced agrarian crime in Ireland. What was it that had reduced agrarian crime in Ireland? Was it the fact that in some cases landowners had begun to see that they had been trying to extort the impossible from their tenants? Was it the fact that at Gweedore the landlords had come to terms with their tenants? Was it the fact that at Bodyke the landlord, after having evicted his tenants, had come to terms with them? Was not that the reason why there had been a decrease in agrarian crime? Then why had the Crimes Act been put in force in the way it had? Why was it so many people were now in prison? Because they had dared to speak to their fellows. The Government said they thought a better result would accrue in Ireland. Could they point to a single instance in which one of the men they had cast into prison had left the gaol impressed with the policy he had previously condemned? Within the last month he (Mr. Rowlands) had conversed with many respectable men in Ireland who had been thrown into prison; and they had assured him that, while they did not like the suffering which the imprisonment and the plank bed entailed, they were prepared to endure it again, if by so doing they could add to the welfare of their countrymen. It had only made them more determined than ever. It was well, therefore, right hon. Gentlemen opposite should hesitate before expressing confidence that their system of government had been so beneficial to the people of Ireland. He now desired to deal with matters closely connected with his own visit to Ireland. When in Ireland, he found himself watched at every turn with the same attention by the authorities as the deputation to which the noble Earl (the Earl of Cavan) had referred. At Loughrea he and his friends went to see the places of interest, and he should think there were a dozen members of the Royal Irish Constabulary busily engaged in watching to see that they did not do anything wrong. He thought at the time it was a great pity the taxpayers of England could not see to what they were required to contribute. During the debate on the Crimes Bill, the House was told there was no intention of putting down meetings of political opponents — that political opponents would have every facility of advocating their views. He tested the point, and his Friend, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, was now in prison because he tested it with him. They went over to Ireland as members of the Home Rule Union; they called a distinctly English meeting, and they gave to the authorities their guarantee that no one but Englishmen should speak at the meeting. What was the object they had in view? To stir the people of Ireland up to crime? No. Far be it from him to have such an object in view. Was it to the interest, even politically, of the Liberal Party that crime should take place in Ireland? They had seen what had taken place on the Clanricarde Estate. They were aware of the misery that Lord Clanricarde had cast over that part of the West of Ireland where he reigned. They called the meeting, and they were served just as others. Let him read to the House the resolution which it was his intention to have proposed at the meeting at Woodford, on Sunday, the 23rd of October, so that they might see how violent it was—how wild the ideas contained in it were. The people had been pounced upon early in the morning by military and police and turned out of their homes, and at the Woodford meeting he wished to move—

> "That this meeting expresses its heartfelt sympathy with the tenants on the estate of Lord Clanricarde in the severe sufferings they have undergone, and trusts that the action of the English people will enable them shortly to obtain that justice to which they are duly entitled."

They asked the people to wait until they constitutionally carried England with them; because when he addressed a big meeting at Galway the chief question the people asked him was—"Can we expect Constitutional reform from England?" He told them he firmly believed the House of Commons would give it them. At the Galway meeting there was not the slightest disturbance. The police were conspicuous by their absence; the meeting was orderly; the people followed him to his hotel and then dispersed. The Government chose to suppress the meeting at Woodford by physical force. They chose to arrest Mr. Blunt and to cast him into prison; but he was persuaded that there was no person in England who thought Mr. Blunt was any more criminal now than he was before he was arrested on the 23rd of October last. The Government had certainly not advanced the cause of good government one iota by their policy. On the contrary, they would have made the estrangement between the two people more bitter than it was previously had it not been for the action of the Opposition. When he went to Ireland he was a Home Ruler; but he was only a theoretical Home Ruler. But now he stood up in his place to advocate Home Rule, because he had seen the evils of the Government of Ireland. Had he not witnessed the treatment to which the Irish people were subjected, he could not have conceived that their present treatment was possible. When the trial was proceeding at Portumna, at the beginning of last month, such was the conduct of the police towards the people outside the Court House, that an English solicitor felt bound to make a protest from the middle of the Court. The result was that better treatment was served out to the people. He did hope the Government would perceive that if they wanted to win the respect of the Irish people, if they wanted to make the difficulties between the two countries less, they must stay their wild career of punishment in Ireland. They might inflict punishment upon many men; but they would not break the spirit of the people, because the people had suffered too much in the past. What England had to do was to meet the Irish people in a spirit of conciliation. He was told that many things had been done to stir up passions amongst the Irish people. Neither Mr. Blunt, nor himself, nor any of the English Gentlemen who were in Ireland about the time of the Woodford meeting, made any strong speeches to stir up passions amongst the people. If he wanted to find an incitement to rebellion, he would turn to the speeches of a right hon. Gentleman opposite. It was a right hon. Gentleman opposite who went to Ulster and said—"Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right." He had not yet heard that the right hon. Gentleman's Colleagues, who were now so strong in the condemnation of the language of others, had condemned the language of their right hon. Colleague. He (Mr. Rowlands) and his Friends were not responsible for any such language during their stay in Ireland. It was not necessary to say more upon the point. He was quite satisfied to let the two peoples meet as they were meeting. He was only too delighted to find Irish people coming amongst us, and that more Englishmen were spending their holidays in Ireland, because the result must be good. The present system of government in Ireland was a failure and a fraud, and before many years were over those who now supported it would have to admit it was one of the most ghastly failures ever inflicted upon a people.

MR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.), speaking of the Queen's Speech from an Irish point of view, said, "Blessed is he that expected naught, for he shall not be disappointed." No one reading that Speech would guess from the contents that in Ireland all law was practically suspended; that any man might for political reasons be sent to gaol after the formality of a mock trial; and that every political meeting held there by the people was liable to a charge of police, with soldiers in the background to assist the latter if necessary. No one reading the Speech would guess that the population of Ireland was being decimated. Such things as these did not seem to give the smallest anxiety to Her Majesty's Government. They were told by the Government that the Crimes Act, as far as it had been tested by a short experience, worked satisfactorily. Now, it had been the object of successive British Governments to make war upon the public opinions of the Irish people and against the sentiments of Irish nationality; but that war had always been waged in vain. And what success, he asked, had been achieved in that respect by the last Coercion Act? Criminals were first being made by the Government for the purpose of punishing them afterwards, and even Englishmen who went over to Ireland on a mission of peace and a work of charity were sent to prison for holding or attending public meetings. But though the Government had thrown into gaol some 10 or 12 Members of that House and a large number of other persons—about 300 individuals—they had failed to suppress public opinion in Ireland. In fact, they had only caused the Irish people to regard the men thus incarcerated as heroes and martyrs, and had made the victims themselves only more resolute than ever in their Nationalist principles. Whether or not this was satisfactory to the Government he did not know, but certainly to his side of the House it was eminently satisfactory; and if it were not for the suffering that the men imprisoned underwent he would gladly advise the Government to go on with these Pyrrhic victories of theirs. Not one accused man among them, when told that he would be discharged if he would promise not to attend a meeting again, had accepted that offer, or had promised not to repeat his so-called offence. It was said that under the Coercion Act agrarian crime had diminished; but he held that if the Irish police, instead of hunting men like the hon. Member for East Finsbury and other English sympathizers of oppressed Irish tenants, had devoted their attention to the detection of real criminals, probably the murdered man Fitzmaurice would have been still living. Then it was next alleged in Her Majesty's Speech that "the power of coercive conspiracies had sensibly abated." If, in that statement, the Plan of Campaign was referred to, he maintained that all the rigours of the Coercion Act had not enabled one single rack-renting landlord to get his rent without granting a reasonable reduction. What other kinds of conspiracies had been abated? No doubt hon. Gentlemen who looked at the case from the standpoint of the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) considered the National League a coercive conspiracy. Hon. Gentlemen who themselves were liable to the direst imputation both as to their loyalty and as to their former desire to obey the law—hon. Gentlemen who talked about lining the ditches of Ulster for the purpose of shooting down Her Majesty's troops, and of kicking Her Majesty's Crown into the Boyne—did not think it at all unworthy to stand up and talk about the National League as a conbination to disintegrate the Empire and to incite to agrarian crime. As a member of that League, he (Mr. Commins) flung the imputation back in the hon. Gentlemen's faces. The members of the National League incited no one to crime, and, so far from desiring the disintegration of the Empire, they endeavoured to secure a union of the sentiments and feelings of the people. He would like to know whether, if that was one of the coercive conspiracies alluded to, the National League had sensibly abated in its power? Why, the National League, as everyone knew, was stronger to-day than ever it was. The National League got accessions day by day, for there was not a person imprisoned, there was not an act of high-handed violence done in the name of law, that did not bring accessions to the ranks of the League. The other day, after the arrest of Mr. Blunt, a meeting of the League in Dublin was crowded by the Professors of Trinity College and by Protestants, men who loved their country more than their Party. Had the power of the League abated? So far from abating, it got stronger every day. They were told that measures tending to the development of the resources of Ireland would be laid before them. He would welcome any measure tending to develop the resources of Ireland and to increase the prosperity of the soil in any way; but he certainly would not welcome any measure that was merely intended as a bribe. In short, Her Majesty's Speech gave them very little encouragement. The Government, or those who were the spokesmen of the Government, not long ago told them that for the future a different policy would be used towards Ireland; that there would be similarity, equality, and simultaneity in all matters of legislation. He saw no trace of anything of the kind in the programme now laid before Parliament. They in Ireland relied upon the fact that the barrier which separated the people of the two countries was being broken down. They who represented the people of Ireland could promise here, as they promised outside the House, that the feelings of goodwill towards Ireland entertained by Englishmen would be thoroughly reciprocated; that not an act of goodwill would pass unrecognized; and that they would persevere to spread harmony between the two peoples until that harmony realized itself in a state of law which allowed Irishmen to manage their own affairs.

Mr. LOCKWOOD (York) said, he had the advantage of hearing the very excellent speech which was made by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Wharton) who moved the Address, and he must say there appeared to be great fitness in the choice displayed by the Government in nominating his hon. and learned Friend to perform the very delicate and difficult task. His hon. and learned Friend referred to the promised reforms, and when he spoke of the Railway Rates Bill he was understood to say he had the advantage of being a railway director. And when it became necessary for him to direct his attention to the promised legislation with regard to local government, he informed the House that he had the pleasure of being a Chairman of Quarter Sessions. He also, in the course of his admirable speech, alluded to the question of tithes, which, he (Mr. Lockwood) gathered, was in some sense to be dealt with by Her Majesty's Government. Had the hon. and learned Gentleman vouchsafed to inform the House of his opinions upon the question no doubt he would have gone further, and have informed the House that he was a lay rector. It struck him (Mr. Lockwood) as being an extremely happy combination, with a view to these promised reforms, that with regard to railway reform they would have the advantage of the experience and interest of railway directors; that local government was to be looked at through the spectacles of a Chairman of Quarter Sessions; and that tithes were to be dealt with in consonance with the personal feelings of lay rectors. His hon. and learned Friend informed the House that a pathetic moment was about to arrive when he would pass before the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), and would declare to him that he was prepared to die in the cause. He hoped that he might be so, and he hoped also that the Members of the Government and others connected with the Government were prepared to sacrifice their official lives—because he trusted their social lives might long be preserved—he hoped many of them were prepared to sacrifice their official lives in acting contrary to all the traditions of the Party to which they belonged, and in really conscientiously carrying out the programme they had placed before the House in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. Of course, hon. Members would be very much better able to judge of the worth of these promises when it became their pleasurable duty to deal with those reforms; but he was bound to say for his own part—and he believed that when he said this he expressed an opinion which was shared by many of those who sat upon the Opposition side of the House—he had very little faith and extremely little hope the reforms promised to them were going to be carried out in that spirit which alone would make them acceptable to the people. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) called upon the House to withhold its approval or disapproval on these social questions until some intelligible information was put before it, and he also expressed the hope that from all quarters of the House there would come to Her Majesty's Government the amplest opportunity for putting before the House their measures. He (Mr. Lockwood) assured hon. Members who sat upon the Opposition side of the House that they would be doing but slight good to their own constituencies, and to those whom they represented, if they, to the slightest extent, lent themselves to anything which might even bear a colour of Obstruction. He hoped that every opportunity would be given to the Government to place their measures before the House, and to show to the House and the country whether they were really in earnest in the promised measures of reform. With respect to the Local Government Bill, they had no information save that which was vouchsafed to them by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Wharton). But he made what appeared to be a somewhat important statement with regard to that Bill. No doubt, it was an inspired statement. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) laughed. The Mover of the Address told them there was to be some such method of representation as this—the Guardians of the Poor were to be elected in the ordinary way, and they were then, as delegates, to elect men to represent the people on the Local Government Board. If the President of the Local Government Board did not adhere to that statement, he (Mr. Lockwood) did not know why the right hon. Gentleman did not express dissent when it was made by the hon. and learned Member for Ripon. Let them take a charitable view of the situation, and suppose the right hon. Gentleman had not made up his mind on the point, and then it would be advantageous to give the right hon. Gentleman some advice. The advice he (Mr. Lockwood) would give the right hon. Gentleman was that no representation would satisfy the people of this country that was not a direct representation, and that the people of this country would not be content to elect Guardians to administer the Poor Law, and to delegate to them powers which they were perfectly capable of exercising and discharging themselves. That was, no doubt, a matter which would receive the very earliest attention of his right hon. Friend. He did not intend to trespass upon the time of the House by making any lengthened observations upon that part of Her Majesty's Speech which dealt with the affairs of Ireland. He gathered from the Speech, however, that the result of the coercive legislation of last Session—

> "So far as it has been tested by short experience, has been satisfactory."

Did the Government mean to allege for a single moment that that legislation had been satisfactory? Did they mean to suggest that it had been satisfactory to the majority of the people of Ireland? They said—

> "Agrarian crime has diminished, and the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated."

Let him deal with the first allegation—namely, that the coercive legislation had been tested by short experience, and had been satisfactory. How had the legislation been tested? Why, in this way. Up to the time of the passing of the present coercive measure, there were large numbers of traders in Ireland who, on account of their being in accord with the great national feeling, were Boycotted by the landowners. But what had occurred since the passing of the Coercion Act? Why, he had had cases brought to his notice in which, since the measure became law, persons in the landowning interest, who never dealt with the tradesmen whom they then never visited, at once became visitors to the shops which up to that time they had shunned—sought to be served in the shops which up to that time they had persistently avoided—and then, because they were retaliated upon by the traders who up to that time had been Boycotted by themselves, they caused the authorities to lay hands on those traders. This was done under the Act of which right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were so proud. People were clapped into gaol for refusing to supply persons who, up to the time of that refusal, had refused to deal with them. Whilst hon. and right hon. Gentlemen were congratulating themselves on the condition of Ireland, there was one matter in connection with that subject on which he did not say they might congratulate themselves, but on which he thought the House and the country might congratulate themselves. He believed that at this moment there existed throughout the length and breadth of Ireland a more kindly feeling amongst the population of that country towards the people of Great Britain—he meant a more kindly feeling on the part of the working classes of Ireland towards the working classes of this country—than had existed for centuries. On that feeling, in the Speech which had been presented to the House on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite had not congratulated themselves, and there they had shown a truly becoming modesty, because they had neither part nor lot in the congratulation which must follow on that state of things. There was a more kindly feeling existing in Ireland now towards the people of this country than had existed for many years past; but that had not been brought about by any act of those now representing Her Majesty's Government. He believed it had been brought about by the promised legislation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and he found that Ireland now appreciated that throughout the length and breadth of this country there was a strong feeling in favour of that legislation, a feeling which, he ventured to think, would find vent whenever this country had an opportunity of declaring its feelings at a General Election. That was a matter for congratulation, no doubt. It was a matter for congratulation which had in no sense been brought about by Her Majesty's Government, but it was a state of things which they, sitting on that (the Opposition) side of the House, might congratulate themselves upon; and he hoped the day was not far distant when they would be able to carry out the promises which they had given to the country in the matter.

MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.) said, he thought that the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Lockwood) was premature in adopting the rather imaginative sketch presented to the House by the hon. and learned Mover of the Address of the future Local Government Bill, about which the hon. and learned Member could not possibly know anything. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Lockwood) had twitted the Mover of the Address with being a lay rector, which proved that he was entirely ignorant of the agitation going on in the country against the tithes. The hon. and learned Member did not appear to be aware of the fact that the agitation was directed against ecclesiastical tithes, and not against lay tithes. Wherever the tithe was payable to a layman, it was paid with great readiness. Though the agitation was undertaken in the interests of agriculture, it would be interesting if anyone representing the Principality of Wales would show them how lay tithes weighed less on the agricultural interest than ecclesiastical tithes. In no way could the suggestion be made good, therefore the hon. and learned Gentleman, when he spoke of "lay rectors," was extremely unfortunate in his reference. He (Mr. Fulton) did not know if the hon. and learned Gentleman was connected with lay tithes; but certainly the agitation was exclusively directed against tithes ecclesiastical. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman declared that he had a special knowledge and acquaintance of the views of the working classes of this country on the question of the affairs of Ireland, and he would have them believe that the working classes were amazingly in favour of the views which he held, in conjunction with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in regard to Ireland. However that might be, he (Mr. Fulton) was glad to think that the hon. and learned Gentleman agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in deprecating Obstruction. They were all glad to hear that in the course of this Session they were not to be favoured with those long and discursive addresses that they had listened to in the course of tiresome and tedious Sittings last Session. They were glad to think that they had had an authoritative declaration on the point from so high an authority as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, supported by so high an authority on the views of the working classes as the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Lockwood). No doubt, since they had last met his hon. and learned Friend had been amongst his constituents, and no doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman had heard from the working men for whom he spoke that they did not approve of Obstruction. Well, he (Mr. Fulton) had also been visiting his constituents during the last few months, and they were almost exclusively composed of the working classes—at any rate, there were 8,000 or 9,000 working men in the constituency. He knew these were all very much opposed to Obstruction, and it was difficult to make them understand the tactics which hon. Gentlemen opposite pursued so much last Session. They were glad to think that at any rate from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for York there would be no obstruction. [MR. LOCKWOOD: There never was.] They were also glad to think that there would be no long and discursive speeches during the Session, and that any assistance which could be legitimately given by the Opposition to the occupants of the Front Ministerial Benches to assist them in making progress with the measures set forth in the Queen's Speech would be tendered. With regard to that part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech referring to Ireland, he (Mr. Fulton) did not desire to detract in the slightest degree from the high eulogium passed upon the Chief Secretary by the Mover of the Address, as to the way in which he had administered the law in Ireland. He thought, however, it was sometimes forgotten in the House and the country that they owed a deep debt of gratitude to the Chief Secretary, not only for the firmness and courage with which he had administered the Crimes Act since it had passed into law, but for the singular acuteness and readiness with which he had at once seen and defeated the object of that very invidious attempt on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to destroy the effect of the Bill that was brought before Parliament. A few general questions had been asked last Session as to whether it was proposed to give a on the point, and then it would be advantageous to give the right hon. Gentleman some advice. The advice he (Mr. Lockwood) would give the right hon. Gentleman was that no representation would satisfy the people of this country that was not a direct representation, and that the people of this country would not be content to elect Guardians to administer the Poor Law, and to delegate to them powers which they were perfectly capable of exercising and discharging themselves. That was, no doubt, a matter which would receive the very earliest attention of his right hon. Friend. He did not intend to trespass upon the time of the House by making any lengthened observations upon that part of Her Majesty's Speech which dealt with the affairs of Ireland. He gathered from the Speech, however, that the result of the coercive legislation of last Session—

> "So far as it has been tested by short experience, has been satisfactory."

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Well, he (Mr. Fulton) had also been visiting his constituents during the last few months, and they were almost exclusively composed of the working classes—at any rate, there were 8,000 or 9,000 working men in the constituency. He knew these were all very much opposed to Obstruction, and it was difficult to make them understand the tactics which hon. Gentlemen opposite pursued so much last Session. They were glad to think that at any rate from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for York there would be no obstruction. [MR. LOCKWOOD: There never was.] They were also glad to think that there would be no long and discursive speeches during the Session, and that any assistance which could be legitimately given by the Opposition to the occupants of the Front Ministerial Benches to assist them in making progress with the measures set forth in the Queen's Speech would be tendered. 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Gentleman, who did not happen to be a lawyer, did not understand the object of the questions. These questions were repeated very frequently, and those who put them at length obtained some promise with regard to having an appeal in every case. He (Mr. Fulton) was not particularly fond of hon. Members from Ireland; but, at the same time, he had always entertained great respect for the legal acumen of the Representatives of that Island, and he must say that the way they had endeavoured to obtain an appeal on the facts in in every case did them credit, though he was glad they were defeated. He did not think the House appreciated the extraordinary position they would have been in had the Irish Members obtained the object they had in view. If the Irish Members had obtained their object, they would have had an appeal on the facts in all cases, and the result would have been that after the first day of October no single person could have been punished until the first week in January of this year. The effect of that would have been that the Act would have been a dead letter until January, the Quarter Sessions then would have been crowded with appeals, and an absolute block of the administration of justice would have resulted. Hon. Members from Ireland did not desire an appeal on questions of law, but on questions of fact, for the purpose simply of destroying the usefulness of the Crimes Act altogether; and the House owed a deep debt of gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman for having appreciated the motives of hon. Members from Ireland, and for having deprived them of the privilege of so destroying the usefulness of the measure. They had heard a great deal during the Recess about the tyrannical conduct of Her Majesty's Government and the monstrous way in which they had administered the Act. One of the facts to which attention was particularly drawn was the outrageous conduct of Captain Stokes in retaining the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) in custody after his appeal was dismissed and his conviction affirmed by the Judge of the County Court. People could get up amongst ignorant audiences who did not understand the legal bearings of such matters as this and claim their sympathies; but he should like to know if anyone would get up in that House and affirm that the conduct of Captain Stokes was not in accordance with law? The terms of the recognizance of persons appealing from a Court of Summary Jurisdiction were that they should prosecute their appeals at the next ensuing Court of Quarter Sessions; and, secondly, that they should abide by the decision of the Court. No lawyer would get up and say that there was any difference in its legal effect between the judgment of a Court of Quarter Sessions affirming a conviction and a verdict of guilty upon an indictment by a jury. It could not be contended that merely because a warrant of commitment had not been drawn up, a criminal was entitled to open the door of his prison and walk away until such time as his warrant had been made out. What was a warrant of commitment for? It was made out for the protection of the gaoler only; it was his defence in the event of an action for false imprisonment; and it was idle and ridiculous to contend that Captain Stokes was not acting strictly in accordance with the law in ordering the detention of the hon. Member for North-East Cork. Nor was there anything whatever illegal in the arrest of hon. Members in this country for summary offences committed in Ireland. Since 1848 arrests could be legally made in either England, Ireland, or Scotland by backed warrants for summary offences committed in either of the three countries. It was idle to say that the offences for which men had suffered in Ireland were political offences. In no country in Europe would it be considered a political offence for a man to incite persons to take part in an unlawful assembly. It was a plain breach of the ordinary law. From information which he had received from Ireland, he desired to express his perfect satisfaction with that portion of the Speech which referred to the improved condition of Ireland.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) said, he thought that if the Government could not produce upon the Front Ministerial Bench a better defence for their policy in Ireland than had been given so far, the country would not entertain a very high opinion of that policy. They had been told that the National League was, at the present moment, struggling for an existence. Why, the fact was that the National League was never so strong in the country before as it was at present. The Government had endeavoured to suppress certain branches of the National League, but they had only succeeded in suppressing them in name. Those branches had in many cases doubled their numbers since the Proclamations were issued suppressing them; and it was, therefore, the height of folly on the part of the Chief Secretary for him to think that the policy of torturing the political opponents of the Tory Party in Ireland was a success. It was nothing of the kind. The Government had for the last six months pursued that policy of torturing political opponents with a vengeance certainly equal to the treatment of Poland by Russia. The administration of the Crimes Act was entrusted to persons who were unfit for the task. If the Government stated to the House that the gentlemen who were administering the measure possessed the legal qualifications necessary to enable them to do it effectually and with justice, they would be stating a thing which, at any rate, the majority of the people of this country would disagree with entirely. Who had they been using the Crimes Act against in Ireland? Had it been against the Moonlighter and the criminal? Not at all; it had been used against the men who had been endeavouring to keep the peace in the country—in fact, if there were disturbers of the public order they were to be found in this country and on the Front Government Bench. Now, in Ireland, they had had experience of Coercion Acts, but never such an experience as that of the past few months. What had they done in the case of Father M'Fadden, of Gweedore? That gentleman was one who was known to have saved the people from starvation in his district in Donegal. They had arrested him, and had refused, in the first instance, to admit him to bail; and, he believed, it had originally been the intention of some of the Executive to cause bloodshed in the streets of Belfast by marching this gentleman through that town, on foot, in the custody of the police. That was the original intention, and if it had been carried out there could be no doubt that the streets of Belfast would have reeked with blood that day. No doubt many of the administrators of the law in Ireland desired a collision between the armed forces of the Crown and the people; but they would not succeed in bringing that collision about. The Irish people knew that the happy time was not far distant when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian would be back in power; and it was the knowledge of that fact which had been sufficient to keep them quiet. They were living in hope. They were no longer despairing of just legislation for the honest-minded people of this country, and they only waited the time when they would be able to send a majority to the House to carry out that just legislation. As to the administration of the Crimes Act, he should like to know how many secret inquiries had been held under the provisions of the measure? The House had been told that the Act was to meet Moonlighting and all kinds of crime in Ireland; but was the country ever so peaceful as it was at the time the Act was passed? The Government hoped, no doubt, that when they met Parliament again Ireland would be deluged with crime—that they might have been able to goad them into crime—but they had not succeeded, and who had the country to thank for that? Why, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House, who had gone over to Ireland to inspire the people with hope. A reception was given the other day in Ireland to the Marquess of Ripon and the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley), and what had it proved but the fitness of the Irish people to govern themselves? Never in the history of demonstrations was there anything more orderly and respectable. Compare it with the Unionist meeting in Dublin. What happened there? Why, the greatest amount of rowdyism, as shown by the expenses the Committee had to pay for the breakages in the hall. That was, no doubt, a very trifling thing; but it made the meeting contrast strangely with the demonstration in honour of the Gentlemen he had named, in connection with which not one penny had to be paid for breakages. The real criminals connected with that condition of affairs in Ireland were the Unionists. They were the people who did not want to see peace in the country. They knew very well that so long as Ireland was disturbed;

so long would they remain in power. He would remind the House of a remarkable circumstance which occurred in one of the Crimes Act Courts in Ireland, where a Resident Magistrate was refusing to adjourn a case, he believed. The counsel for the prisoner stated that if the Crown were represented there, they could succeed in having an adjournment; whereupon Colonel Carew, the Resident Magistrate, candidly stated that he represented the Crown. That seemed to him to be a remarkable admission, because it showed that in all these cases the Resident Magistrates represented the Government and not the majesty of the law. The present policy of torture in Ireland had not subdued, but had only succeeded in making the people more determined to obtain their right. Look at the action of the Government in regard to the release of Mr. O'Brien. Why had they released that Gentleman three days before his time was up, but for the reason that they did not wish to see a demonstration made in his honour? That intention on the part of the Government was defeated, and Mr. O'Brien met with the reception he merited. Then there was the stealing of Mr. O'Brien's clothes—was that worthy of a "strong" Government; was that the act of a "strong" Government; was that the act of a Government that expected to rule Ireland according to the wishes of the British people? He would also point out that after the hon. Member for South Galway's (Mr. Sheehy's) term as an ordinary prisoner expired, he was not treated at once as a first-class misdemeanant. That method of persecuting political opponents was a disgrace to a free country. The recent decision in the Court of Exchequer was a fine slap at the Coercion Party, and as they went along one blow would succeed another until eventually the Government would fall, as much stronger Governments had done. The Government did not represent the British people. They had ceased to represent the majority of the British people, and he believed that if an Election took place at present they would find themselves in a miserable minority. Their career was marked by blunders throughout — blunders were succeeding each other in such rapid succession that ere long they were bound to lead to the destruction of the Administration. The Irish people and their Representatives had defeated stronger Irish Governments than the present. They had defeated that of Mr. Forster, for instance, and as surely as they had defeated that, so would they defeat the present Government. The policy of coercion was doomed to failure. The people of Great Britain were becoming so educated against it, that no doubt they would soon hurl Her Majesty's present Advisers from power and bring back the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. It was time there should be some clear statement from the Government Benches with regard to their policy. Up to now only the lamest defence of their action had been given; and he hoped that before the House adjourned to-night, without waiting for a specific Amendment, they would candidly say all they had to say for a policy which had done more to discredit the administration of the law in Ireland than anything which had occurred in that country in recent years.

Mr. MAHONY (Meath, N.) said, that the Land Bill of the Government had proved far from satisfactory, owing chiefly, possibly entirely, to the fact that the Government refused to take advice from the Representatives of the Irish people, but insisted on following a policy which, they were told, could by no means satisfy the legitimate demands of the Irish tenants. He himself asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, instead of making the reductions of rent depend upon comparison of prices of various years with 1887, to make them depend upon a comparison of the prices of 1886, and he did so for two reasons. He pointed out that it would be impossible for the decisions of the Land Commissioners to be made known until the close of the year 1887, and that would cause a great deal of uncertainty among the Irish tenants. He was told by the then Solicitor General that the Land Commissioners were already preparing the scheduled prices, and that there was no necessity to wait till the close of the year 1887, because a sufficient number of months had elapsed for them to arrive at the prices for the year 1887. What was the result? The Land Commissioners, when they examined the Act of Parliament which they had to administer, decided that they were bound by the provisions of that

Act to wait till the year 1887 was completed, consequently it was close on Christmas before their decisions became known. He must also call attention to the fact that the three Chief Commissioners did not agree on their recent schedule of reduction. Judge O'Hagan did not agree with his colleagues, because he believed that under the Act the Commissioners had a certain amount of discretion; but the other two Commissioners held otherwise, and contended that the reductions in rent were to be identical with the fall in prices. He found in a large number of cases that the result of that hard-and-fast rule was that as regarded rents fixed in 1885 they gave no reductions at all, which meant that the Commissioners considered there had been in these districts no differences in the prices in 1885 and 1887. He was bound to say he did not believe that. More than that, he believed that in some of these districts the prices in 1887 were higher than in 1885; and if the Commissioners had the courage of their opinions they were bound, if they did anything according to the hard-and-fast line, to actually raise the rent in certain districts; and as they did not do that, he believed that the schedule was not an honest one. He maintained by the Land Act of last year it was impossible to do justice to the tenants, because that Act gave the landlord £90 out of the £100. Of the boasted success of the Coercion Act the result had been to intensify the national feeling in Ireland, and English sympathy with that country. Even though a Resident Magistrate might not be dismissed, if failing to do the bidding of the Lord Lieutenant, there were other ways of punishing him, such as removing him and his family to another part of the country at his own expense, as occurred in the case of Mr. Kilkelly, because he had the independence at a Crimes Court in Clare to decline, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Roche, to sentence a man to more than a month's imprisonment. With reference to the difference in treatment while in prison of his hon. Friends (Mr. T. D. Sullivan and Mr. T. C. Harrington) together with Mr. Alderman Hooper, he defied the Chief Secretary to give one particle of reason for that difference, except the one fact that they were tried by different tribunals. The Lord Mayor of Dublin had been tried by a gentleman who held his appointment for life. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] The Chief Divisional Police Magistrate of Dublin was in that position. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR again dissented.] He would be glad to have a definite statement on the subject from the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Mahony) still believed that the Chief Police Magistrate held his office on a perfectly different tenure from that of the Resident Magistrates, and that accounted for his ordering the Lord Mayor to be treated with a certain amount of decency. If their positions were not different, he would like to know how it was that it required only one Police Magistrate to deal with such cases whereas it needed two Resident Magistrates? They were accused of misrepresentation, yet in a leaflet of the National Union, a Tory organization whose office was near the House, words had been inserted into a letter of the parish priest of Glenbeigh which made him state that the tenants were slaves of the Land League, whereas he intended to convey that they were slaves of the landlord. He (Mr. Mahony) characterized that as the most base and the lowest and vilest act of misrepresentation that he had ever come across. He thought it was a pretty clear case of the kind of misrepresentation which they had to meet with in going about England. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed inclined to congratulate themselves on the effect of the Coercion Act in Ireland. What had that effect been? Could the Government point to one single instance in which the tenants, when they had combined together as they had been forced to do by the fact that Parliament had refused to pass laws to remedy their grievances, had had their combination broken up by the Coercion Act? They could not. Many Members of the House were horrified last Session by the cruelties which were perpetrated at Bodyke in the name of the law. Vast sums of money had been spent in protecting the landlords, and what had been the consequence of it all? What had even the landlord gained by this policy? He had gained this—he had obtained worse terms now than he would have got six months ago. The tenants were all reinstated in their homes. What had the Marquess of Ely gained by his policy when he set foot in Ireland for the first time in 10 years? Why, he had given his tenants a larger reduction than they asked for under the Plan of Campaign. What was gained by this policy in Gweedore, where those evictions were carried out last autumn? The landlord had given way and the men were back in their homes—the landlord had agreed to their demands. He (Mr. Mahony) knew something about this district of Gweedore. It had been brought again prominently before the public in a very painful manner. In the whole of Ireland he did not believe there was a man of nobler mind—a man who was more truly devoted to the interests of his people than Father M'Fadden. He lived in one of the poorest districts of Donegal; not one of the men he lived amongst could have taken advantage of the Land Act of 1881 had not Father M'Fadden undertaken to make all the arrangements for the applications and served all the notices himself. What was the reward he had got for trying to induce these people to look to the law for their protection? He had been sentenced to be imprisoned in one of the gaols of the country as a common criminal. He (Mr. Mahony) did not know whether the letter which had been written to *The Pall Mall Gazette*, signed by Mr. Harper Nixon, had anything to do with that. He knew Mr. Harper Nixon's property, and what was it?—a few patches of bog scattered amongst the rocks of the seashore. These patches of bog had been reclaimed by the unfortunate tenantry. The tenantry asked for a reduction of rent owing to the terrible fall in prices and their utter inability to pay. He had refused to accede to their demand, and they had told him that unless he gave them a reduction they would not pay him, and then he had written that letter to the papers. He (Mr. Mahony) could not give correctly the words of the letter, but the effect of it was that Mr. Harper Nixon declared his determination to clear the district of its inhabitants. He declared that he would not accept 99 per cent and costs. It was not because he wanted money. He said he had ample means, and intended to lay by a certain sum of money each year in order to get the land back—the land that he had let in a state of barrenness, and that the tenantry had made worth a certain amount of money by their own industry and labour. This gentleman was going to turn these wretched people adrift on the world, not because he wanted money, but because he wanted to gratify his vengeance. Was it to enable him to gratify his vengeance that the Government were sending up troops to Gweedore? Were they desirous of supporting an infamous deed like that? If that was the work the British Government were going to send British troops to do, he thought the country would scarcely support their action. The Government might be satisfied with the result of their Coercion Act in Ireland. The Irish people were abundantly satisfied with it. They were more than satisfied, because, although there was a dark side of the picture, there was also a very bright one. They had the bright side the other day. A Member of the House of Lords and the late Chief Secretary for Ireland were received with enthusiasm by the Irish people. These Gentlemen came to Ireland bringing a message of peace and good-will to the Irish people, and the Irish people showed how thoroughly and heartily and truly they reciprocated those feelings. Yes; no matter how vigorously, no matter with what "bravery" the Chief Secretary for Ireland might carry out his policy, he could not stop the current of the noble and glorious work that was going on at the present time. It was beyond his power. They might as well try to stop the waves of the ocean. The people had been brought face to face; they had met one other, and the Nationalist and Liberal Parties were doing what the Government never could do, even if they continued their present policy for 10,000 years. They were forming a real union between the English and the Irish people. Suppose the present Government did remain in power for a few short years, and carry out their policy to the uttermost, and crush Ireland under the iron heel of coercion, what then? Could their policy extend a yard beyond the shores of Ireland? No; it was limited by a hard-and-fast line, which the Government could never go beyond. But the policy of the Liberal Party, appealing to the hearts of the Irish people, appealing to them with deep human sympathy, was a thing which was bounded by no ocean and bounded by no shores. It could speed its way even across the wide Atlantic, and reach the Greater Ireland on the Continent of America—it would not only give them a peaceful Ireland to look towards, but a friendly Greater Ireland on the vast Continent of America.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mundella*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 10*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments, and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, *appointed* and *nominated*.

PUBLIC BILLS — *First Reading* — Cathedral Churches * (2); Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services * (3); Law of Distress Amendment * (4); County Courts Consolidation * (5); Copyhold Acts Amendment * (6); Trust Companies * (7).

HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH—THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

PERSONAL STATEMENT.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I have no desire to re-open the debate of last night; but I wish to clear up one or two matters of personal importance to myself. Nothing can be worse to a public man than to be accused of indulging in inaccurate statements without foundation. The noble Marquess yesterday said that my quotation of his remarks did not bear even the most fantastic resemblance——

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): What I said was—"did not bear any but the most fantastic resemblance."

EARL GRANVILLE: Well, that is a serious charge of which I wish to clear myself; and while I do so I wish in the most complete manner to accept any declaration of the noble Marquess as to anything he has said, for I know that even the ablest reporters are not infallible. I am also bound to say that he is more likely to be well-informed as to what Prince Bismarck has said, and also he may be better acquainted with what his Colleague the Chief Secretary for Ireland has said, than I am; but I can only say that I quoted yesterday from reports published, and I believe it has generally been the practice of those who are not in Office to do so when allusion is made to any speech delivered by Ministers. With regard to Prince Bismarck, the noble Marquess was good enough to say that he was able to defend himself. I am perfectly aware of that fact, except on one condition only, and that is that someone must attack him. Now, I never attacked Prince Bismarck, nor had I the slightest intention of doing so; my observations were limited to the noble Marquess himself. I will read what I said—

> "Our negotiators were so modest that they abdicated the care of the negotiations, and placed themselves unreservedly into the hands of the ablest and most powerful diplomatist of Europe. The choice was excellent; but, unfortunately, he announced himself the Plenipotentiary of Russia, and in that capacity advocated and obtained for her every object she desired."

I am bound to say I have no authority but what appears in the message of *The Times* Correspondent from Berlin, the general accuracy of which is confirmed in the next day's message. The Correspondent, in his own words, states that the Chancellor said he almost tried to act as if he had been the fourth Plenipotentiary of Russia; and he then quotes—

> "Nay, I can almost say the third, for I could not look upon Prince Gortchakoff as an advocate of the Russian policy as it was then represented by its real champion, Count Schouvaloff. During the whole Congress there came to my knowledge no Russian wish which I did not advocate and even carry through, in consequence of the trust reposed in me by Lord Beaconsfield."

I think that with this information respecting a remarkable speech, the report of which is uncontradicted, I was perfectly entitled to make the observations I made without being charged with having given a version which only bore a fantastic resemblance to what was said. I now come to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. What I said was—

> "The Chief Secretary with great candour had acknowledged that there had been an alliance between the Conservatives and the

Parnellites. He defended it on the ground that it was casual, and had only lasted a short time."

I will now quote in full from the report in *The Times* a passage from the speech which Mr. Balfour made at Manchester on December 15. He said—

> "The truth is that there is a vital and essential difference between the temporary and casual alliance, the temporary and imperfect co-operation, which occurred in 1885 between the Tory and the Irish Parties and the complete fusion and identification of interests which has now occurred between the Radicals and the same Irish Party."

There may be room for argument one way or the other as to the meaning of that passage; but it certainly justifies my saying that Mr. Balfour at that time had acknowledged that there had been an alliance, although he qualified it by saying that it had been only temporary and casual. The remark I reluctantly made on another point was that a suggestion had come from the Prime Minister that a great majority of the Conservative Party would prefer not to hold conversation with Mr. Gladstone. I have looked back, and I find from *The Times* report that what the noble Marquess said was this—

> "My impression is that the great majority of Conservatives would rather not have a conversation with him (Mr. Gladstone) if they could avoid it."

The report in *The Daily Telegraph* was the same. The report in *The Daily Chronicle* was—

> "My impression is that the majority of the Conservatives would rather not have a conversation with him."

The report in *The Standard* was the same. I leave it to your Lordships to say whether it is correct to state that what I said had only a fantastic resemblance to the original; but I will entirely accept any repudiation by the noble Marquess. I feel, however, I have not been guilty of any offence to your Lordships' House in what I said last evening, and how the noble Marquess can say that the words I had founded on these reports bear only a fantastic resemblance to them passes my imagination.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I am afraid I must adhere to my interpretation of the reference made by the noble Earl to the speech of Prince Bismarck. I have not got the original report of his speech here, as I was not aware the noble Earl intended to refer to the matter; but I do not think the words he has quoted, even from the summary report, contain the meaning which his own language appears to attribute to them. He said that Prince Bismarck advocated and obtained for Russia every single object she desired. But what Prince Bismarck, as I understand, said was that anything brought to his knowledge during the negotiations at the Conference he obtained for Russia. That is quite a different thing.

EARL GRANVILLE: I do not know whether the noble Marquess is stating what he imagines to be the case or is speaking from information he possesses.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I am speaking from what the noble Earl himself said last night and to-night, and I maintain that what he has quoted to-night as Prince Bismarck's statement is not what he said last night, and the difference is material. The impression conveyed by the noble Earl in his speech last night was that Lord Beaconsfield had obtained no object of English policy, but that Prince Bismarck obtained everything Russia desired. That is not supported by any fair construction of the words actually used by Prince Bismarck. I may say the same with respect to other quotations. With respect to the quotation the noble Earl has made from my right hon. Relative the Chief Secretary for Ireland, as to the alliance which was said to have existed between the Conservatives and the Parnellite Party, the noble Earl left out the words "imperfect co-operation." If he will read the whole passage he will see it was something very different from "temporary and casual" alliance on which Mr. Balfour rested his defence. With regard to the quotations which the noble Earl did me the honour to make from my speeches, he does not seem in his explanations to have exhausted the number of quotations. For instance, I see the noble Earl stated that I had said in Lancashire "that nothing but a direct Vote of Censure would turn the Government out of Office." I beg to meet that statement with a most absolute contradiction. Those words were not the words I used, and I defy the noble Earl to find any report in which those words occur. The noble Earl said that I had stated that no legal provision could prevent the practice of Boycotting. I never said such a thing, although I said there were certain forms of Boycotting, such as leaving church upon the entrance of certain persons, which law could not deal with. But what the noble Earl said is absolutely at variance with the fact, and it only showed that the noble Earl relied on his memory when he said that the previous opinion of the Prime Minister was that no legal provision could prevent the practice of "Boycotting." Again, the noble Earl said—

> "The Government of the noble Marquess declined to introduce any repressive measure, but they did not say it was for want of time."

I said again and again it was for want of time; and I cannot conceive where he got the idea that I did not say so. It is true that other grounds were mentioned by myself and by others; but want of time was the ground which we alleged and dwelt on again and again; and if this were a fitting opportunity I could show that we dwelt upon it with very great reason. I now come to the question of the Boycotting of Mr. Gladstone. The noble Earl used in this House a very ambiguous phrase. He said I was guilty of a "suggestion" of pure and simple Boycotting. The word "suggestion" is a word with a very common meaning, and one that is very rare. It is generally used to indicate a mitigated sort of advice put into a man's head; and sometimes it is used, especially in Courts of Law, for indicating a fact. I presume, by the light of the noble Earl's present explanation, that it was in the latter sense he intended to use it. I understood the noble Earl to accuse me of advising the Boycotting of Mr. Gladstone. I can only say that if he did accuse me of any such thing, there is not the most fantastic resemblance to such a suggestion in the speech I actually made. What I said I abide by. I said Mr. Gladstone was guilty of a most unjustifiable act in stating to a correspondent that the Tories in private said that they expect that some measure of Home Rule must be passed. I said it was unjustifiable, first, because it was not true; and, secondly, because it suggested that Mr. Gladstone had means of knowing what the Tories said. To show that Mr. Gladstone had no means of knowing what the Tories said, I mentioned the undoubted fact that on such subjects they would be very sparing in their conversation with him. I believe, as a matter of fact, that the Party, as a whole, would be sparing in conversation with him in the present excited state of feeling. They may be right or wrong. But their views of Mr. Gladstone's conduct are not those which are attached to the errors which an ordinary statesman may make. But let that pass; at all events, upon that subject they certainly would not converse with him. I maintain that that fact supports my contention that he was not justified in attributing to the Tories that they made statements in private inconsistent with their public utterances, and which he could not possibly have known if they had been made.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he must express regret at hearing the last portion of the noble Marquess's statement. He protested with his noble Friend behind him against the doctrine which had been laid down. Whatever might be his own opinions in regard to the Chief Secretary for Ireland's political action, he would not object to holding conversation with that right hon. Gentleman. However strong might be the feelings of public men in respect to public questions, it was on every account extremely desirable that they should not allow their political animosities to pass into the daily relations of life.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I spoke as to a fact I observed with respect to others; I did not utter a word to indicate any opinion of my own on the subject.

MALTA—THE NEW CONSTITUTION—PAPERS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether recent Papers and Correspondence relative to the new Constitution of Malta could be laid on the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, that a Constitution had been recently granted to Malta, and a Royal Commission had been sent out to inquire into the question as to whether the Island should be divided into districts, and, if so, into what districts. A telegram had been received that the Report on the subject had left Malta and would reach them very shortly, and when printed the Report would be laid on the Table as soon as possible. He therefore hoped that the noble Earl would postpone any remarks that he had to make on that subject until the Report had been presented.

ARMY—RESERVE FORCES—TRANSPORT AND FIELD ARTILLERY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS, in rising to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether any steps were being taken to provide transport and field artillery for the Reserve Forces, said, that since he had been a Member of that House he had felt it to be his duty on more than one occasion to call attention to our state of military unpreparedness for war, more especially in connection with the equipment, transport, and artillery for our Reserve Forces. He hoped that the organization of the Army would be well considered by the Government, whatever Party was in Office; but seven years had passed before anything was done to satisfy the national pride. One could not, he thought, help contrasting our state of unpreparedness at home with the condition of matters in that respect on the Continent. Germany could bring into the field at once 2,000,000 of men, fully armed and equipped with all the requisites of war, and within 21 days afterwards they could call out a further reserve of 900,000 men, equally organized, and provided with all the necessaries for war. He believed that France and Russia were also similarly prepared. As regarded their Reserve Forces, it was only last year that any movement was made in their better organization, and then a Vote was taken for only 80 guns, which was exactly one-fifth of the number that the Intelligence Department had stated publicly, with the authority of the Secretary of State, to be the number necessary for the proper arming of our Reserve Forces. Nothing at all had been done with reference to transport. It was rumoured that the Government were directing their attention to the question of transport, and he hoped that they would state what they proposed to do in that matter. In Scotland they were much excited on the subject of national defence, because it had come out that under a plan which had been excogitated in the Intelligence Department in regard to mobilization all the Regular troops were to be taken from Scotland, and that Scotland would have entirely to depend upon the Reserve Forces. He held in his hand a Return containing the replies to a printed form relating to his county (Haddingtonshire), asking the farmers what number of horses they had which would be available for war, and also for drill purposes in time of peace, and likewise the number of carts that would be available for transport. Having obtained that information, he hoped that the Government would do the same thing in the case of all the other counties of Scotland and England. The tenantry of his county were fully alive to the patriotic efforts which ought to be made to meet the wants of the State in those matters. They had in that Return over 300 horses, 80 carts, and 70 drivers. If farmers were expected to come forward readily and offer their horses for that purpose, they ought to be perfectly assured that they would be fully compensated for accidents or injuries sustained in that service by the horses, which were valuable, averaging somewhere about £50 each. Volunteer field artillery would be most useful in time of war. They wanted very little money, but a great deal of organization, to put those men practically and efficiently into the field. They had allowed 27 years to elapse without establishing such an organization—an operation which the existing state of Europe required that they should carry out. He trusted, in conclusion, that Her Majesty's Government would boldly proceed to make whatever preparations were necessary to render the country secure.

LORD TRURO said, he was sure their Lordships would join him in commending the efforts of the noble Earl, who had raised the question in promoting the Volunteer movement; he would, however, remind their Lordships that the Artillery Volunteer Force was not entirely contemporaneous with the rifle force. The Artillery Force sprang into existence a year or more after the Volunteer movement had been consolidated; and the War Office Authorities had naturally had great difficulty in deciding what kind of armament should be provided for the Volunteer Force. He could mention several cases in which regiments had been supplied with guns of varying calibre; and, no doubt, this diversity of armament was to a great extent advantageous, because it caused the regiments to learn the serving of all those different guns. As to the lighter 20-pounder field guns which were to be granted, he had been informed that those guns did not exceed 80 in number, and that the experts had come to the conclusion that the 20-pounder gun was not so valuable as the 12 or 15-pounder gun. He wished to know whether it was true that the authorities had abandoned all idea of increasing the number of 20-pounder guns; and whether, supposing the Volunteer Force were to take the field to-morrow, they would have the service guns required? It would be a lamentable condition of affairs if the Volunteer Force should at the last moment only be provided with the service guns with which they had to meet the enemy.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord HARRIS) said, he had entered into the question of arming the Volunteer Artillery at some length last year, and had explained the ground on which the assistance would be given to our Artillery Volunteers to horse those guns. He might say that during the Recess the corps had been selected to which were to be issued those field batteries of position. The guns were ready and waiting for issue, and orders had been sent out to the Volunteer Corps in question to demand those guns and equipments. The delay, he thought, had principally arisen from the difficulty of finding the requisite store accommodation, which was insisted upon by the War Office. He thought the noble Lord was labouring under a misconception as to the weight of the gun it was proposed to issue to the Volunteer Force. He believe it was intended that 40-pounders should be issued up to the number that they had, and that then 20-pounders would be brought into use. With reference to the lighter or 12-pounder field guns now being introduced into the Regular Army, he thought it obviously necessary that they should have good experience of that gun in the Regular Army before it was used in the Volunteer Artillery. It was not at all comparable with the gun to be issued to the Volunteer Artillery at present. On the subject of regimental transport, he thought the noble Earl took him at his word last year when he stated that he was not aware of any movement in the Volunteer Forces in the direction of forming a field transport service. He had in his mind at the time the fact that there was one experiment going on, and that he did not see any attempt being made in any other part of the country of the same character. They owed a debt of gratitude to the noble Earl for the interest he had taken in the Volunteer movement, and for the spirit of patriotism which he had aroused in the breasts of all Englishmen in support of that movement. But the noble Earl was evidently determined not to rest upon his oars, and was again pushing forward in the direction of field transport and Volunteer Artillery. The attempt made by Colonel Sir William Humphery, commanding the 1st Volunteer Battalion Hampshire Regiment, in 1885 to provide transport for his battalion of 1,100 strong was repeated in 1886, and with such success that the Secretary of State for War had decided to extend the experiment, not indiscriminately, but with due regard to the provisions of the mobilization scheme. A War Office letter was being sent to the general officers commanding districts directing them to select battalions not allotted to the garrisons of fortresses or commercial ports. Ten battalions were to be selected, and a grant of £45 to each, in lieu of forage, capitation, and camp allowance, had been sanctioned by the Treasury. This amount was based on the experience gained by Sir William Humphery's experiment. Beyond the grant named the organization was voluntary, the supply of carts, carters, and horses being lent by neighbouring owners. The establishment, according to the strength of the selected battalion, had been taken from a modification of *The Manual for Regimental Transport (Infantry)*, 1887. There was good reason to anticipate the success of this movement if they might be guided by the impression made on the general officer commanding that district, who personally inspected the transport of the Hampshire Regiment. He reported that—

> "During the march of 14 miles the transport followed close in rear of the battalion in the most orderly and military manner, and there was no straggling or falling out. During the mid-day halt the transport was regularly

> parked and the horses were watered and fed. On arrival at the camping ground the battalion took up its position and the transport filed to the allotted ground for the camp, and formed up most regularly. The camp was pitched very quickly, dinners were cooked, and in an hour the camp was completely formed in all respects, the whole of the equipment and supplies for over 800 men having been moved by the Volunteer regimental transport from the camp near Basingstoke, where the battalion had been under canvas for six days. Had it been necessary the battalion could have marched right away to any part of the country, conveying all its equipment and stores with it, without requiring outside assistance of any sort, beyond a route being laid down and authority to obtain rations and forage *en route*."

The noble Earl had made a reference to the movement taking place in Haddingtonshire. In these favourable circumstances, the Government had thought it wise to be prepared for a future extension of this organization, and would invite Volunteer Corps, according to a list prepared by the Mobilization Committee, to keep a register of suitable transport obtainable under like conditions in the neighbourhood. Her Majesty's Government had been considering the point, which had been suggested last year by the Tactical Society, and during that year His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief had sanctioned the issue of guns of position to the Volunteers, and had expressed his satisfaction with the march-past of one of the Worcester Volunteer Artillery regiments which he had personally inspected during that year. In these circumstances, he trusted that the noble Earl would be satisfied that the Government were not neglecting to take the necessary steps to strengthen the Force in which he took so much interest.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, that the noble Lord had not answered one very important point to which he had referred. It had been given in evidence before the Commission which had sat to consider the subject of our national defences that if an enemy could succeed in avoiding our Fleet in the Channel, and in landing a force of 150,000 or 200,000 upon our coasts, there would be nothing to prevent their marching upon and taking London. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, that steps should be taken for the defence of the country; and, therefore, he wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government, having already done much good work, were prepared to go on in the same line, and to supply the Volunteer Artillery with the proportion of guns which Lord Wolseley and the Intelligence Department had stated were absolutely necessary for the safety of the country? His own impression was that the time had come when the Government of the day should have the courage of their opinions, and should imitate the example set by Lord Palmerston by appealing to the people, and asking for a loan to enable them to provide the country with sufficient ships, to supply our forces with the necessary armaments, and to defend our coaling stations and our home ports. Portsmouth itself was not at this moment properly armed.

LORD HARRIS said, that undoubtedly Her Majesty's Government were prepared to extend the armaments of the Volunteer Artillery if the present experiment proved successful; but he must decline to pledge the Government to further expenditure in this direction until the experiment had proved successful.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS AND OFFICE OF THE GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

Select Committee appointed: The Lords following, with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

D. Richmond.
D. Saint Albans.
D. Bedford.
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.
E. Mount Edgcumbe. (Ld. Steward.)
E. Lathom. (Ld. Chamberlain.)
E. Devon.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Belmore.
E. Harrowby.
E. Bradford.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Camperdown.
E. Granville.
E. Kimberley.
E. Sydney.
E. de Montalt.
V. Hardinge.
V. Eversley.
V. Oxenbridge.
L. Colchester.
L. Ker. (*M. Lothian.*)
L. Kintore.
L. Aveland. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Colville of Culross.

The Committee to meet on *Thursday* next at half past Three o'clock:

Leave given to the Committee to report from time to time.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to provide for making statutes respecting deans and chapters and cathedral churches in England, and for other purposes relating thereto—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of Carlisle; read 1ª. (No. 2.)

TRURO CATHEDRAL FABRIC AND SERVICES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to provide a fund for the repair and services of the cathedral church of Truro—Was *presented* by The Lord Steward; read 1ª. (No. 3.)

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law of distress for rent—Was *presented* by The Lord Herschell; read 1ª. (No. 4.)

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate the County Courts Acts—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1ª. (No. 5.)

COPYHOLD ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Copyhold Acts—Was *presented* by The Lord Hobhouse; read 1ª. (No. 6.)

TRUST COMPANIES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to enable incorporated companies to act as executors, administrators, and trustees; and in other fiduciary capacities—Was *presented* by The Lord Hobhouse; read 1ª. (No. 7.)

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 10*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Writs Issued—*For* Edinburgh Burgh (West Division), *v.* Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, Manor of Northstead; *for* York, West Riding, Southern Part (Doncaster Division), *v.* Walter Shirley Shirley, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

Select Committees—Public Petitions, *appointed* and *nominated;* Town Holdings, *re-appointed.*

Public Bills — *Resolutions in Committee—Ordered—First Reading—*Oaths* [7]; Licensing Laws * [22]; Liquor Traffic (Local Veto) (Ireland) * [25]; Suffragans' Nomination * [35].

*Ordered—First Reading—*Land Law (Ireland) Acts Amendment * [1]; Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister * [2]; Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing) * [3]; Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) * [4]; Agricultural Tenants (Ireland) Relief * [5]; County Government (Ireland) * [6]; Early Closing * [8]; Small Holdings * [9]; Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) * [10]; Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) * [11]; Education (Scotland) Acts Amendment * [12]; School Fees (Non-Paupers) * [13]; Metropolis Local Government * [14]; Municipal Franchise (Ireland) * [15]; Parliamentary Elections * [16]; Libel Law Amendment * [17]; Labourers' (Ireland) Acts Amendment * [18]; Tenure of Houses in Towns (Ireland) * [19]; Justices of the Peace * [20]; Agricultural Labourers' Holidays (Scotland) * [21]; National School Teachers (Ireland) * [23]; Bills of Sale Registration * [24]; Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment * [26]; Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) * [27]; Church Sites (Compulsory Powers Repeal) * [28]; Representation of the People Acts Amendment * [29]; University Education (Ireland) * [30]; Registration of Firms * [31]; Fishery Acts Amendment * [32]; Technical Education (Ireland) * [33]; Glebe Lands Occupation * [34]; Poinding (Scotland) * [36]; Theatres (Metropolis) * [37]; Franchise Extension * [38]; Turbary (Ireland) * [39]; School Board for London (Pensions) * [40]; Small Debts (Scotland) * [41]; Slavery Law Consolidation * [42]; Piers and Harbours (Ireland) * [43]; Fairs and Markets (Ireland) * [44]; Parliamentary Elections (Meetings in Schools) * [45]; Port and Harbour Authorities (Ireland) * [46]; Building Societies Act (1874) Amendment * [47]; Churches, &c. (Ireland) (Sites) * [48]; Railway and Canal Companies Charges * [49]; Belfast Government * [50]; Friendly Societies (Transmission of Money) * [51]; Charities (Rent-Charges) * [52]; Technical Education * [53]; School Board Elections (Scotland) * [54]; Accumulations * [55]; Deacons (Church of England) * [56]; Whipping * [57]; Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment * [58]; Parliamentary and Municipal Elections (Registration) * [59]; Trees (Ireland) * [60]; Intermediate Education (Wales) * [61]; Agricultural Holdings * [62]; Limited Owners (Scotland) * [63]; Charities (Ireland) Administration * [64]; Jurors' Detention * [65]; Soldiers' and Sailors' Disabilities Removal * [66]; Solicitors' Annual Certificate (Duty Repeal) * [67]; Parochial Boards (Scotland) * [68]; Reproductive Loan Fund (Ireland) Acts Amendment * [69]; Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) * [70]; Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) * [71]; Railway Companies (Carriage of Fish) * [72]; Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment (No. 2) * [73]; Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) * [74]; Herring Fishery (Scotland) * [75]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday * [76]; Vaccination * [77]; School Board for London Election * [78]; Advertisement Rating * [79]; Industrial Agricultural Education * [80]; Architects' Registration * [81]; Dwelling Houses (Sanitary Inspection) * [82]; Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) * [83]; Railway Regulation * [84]; Public Houses, Hours of Closing (Scotland) * [85]; Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act (1878) Amendment * [86]; Poor Rates Metropolis * [87]; Metropolitan Board of Works (Local Management, &c.) * [88]; Saving Life at Sea * [89];

Public Trustee * [90]; Parish Vestries Reform * [91]; Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) * [92].

QUESTIONS.

—o—

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—INCREASE OF THE SALT TAX.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can give the House any information about the increase of the Salt Tax?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): On the 24th of December the Viceroy reported to the Secretary of State the urgent necessity of strengthening the Revenues of India, with a view to meeting increased charges under the heads of "Army in Upper Burmah," "Frontier Defences," and "Exchange." The Government of India was unanimous in urging that, in addition to the other measures which it was proposed to take, the Salt Tax should be raised. This proposal received the most serious attention of the Secretary of State in Council, with a view especially to devise some other means of meeting the increased expenditure than by raising the Salt Duty. But the Council was unanimous in agreeing with the Government of India on the absolute necessity, in the financial circumstances, of raising the duty; and the Secretary of State was compelled reluctantly to assent to the proposals of the Government of India on the 17th of January. The Salt Duty has accordingly been raised from two rupees throughout India to two rupees eight annas per maund; while in Burmah it has been raised from three annas to one rupee. So far as we have information from India, the financial measures taken have been favourably received.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER asked, whether the Leader of the House could give some assurance that by the earlier introduction of the Indian Budget, or by some other means, some early discussion of this subject might take place?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, that a Notice of an Amendment to the Address had been given which would raise this question, and the opportunity for discussion which the hon. Baronet desired would thus be obtained.

SPAIN—THE MADRID CONFERENCE.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government are able to give the House any information as to the date at which the Madrid Conference will meet, the Powers that will be represented at it, and the special objects for which it is summoned?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): No, Sir; those matters are not yet settled.

ATTENDANCE IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is a fact that an Order in Council or a Treasury Minute will shortly be issued extending the time of attendance to seven hours in all Government Departments from the beginning of the next financial year?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's Hanover Square): No, Sir. There is no intention of issuing any general Order in Council or Treasury Minute on the subject. I am strongly in favour of extending the time of attendance to seven hours; and I have been able to introduce such an extension in some Offices with very beneficial results. I have sent a Circular of inquiry on the subject to all Public Departments; but I recognize that the introduction of any such extension must be gradual, when and where favourable opportunities present themselves.

SCOTLAND—DESTITUTION IN LEWIS.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether any official Report upon the destitution prevailing in Lewis has been received by the Secretary for Scotland; and, whether it will be laid upon the Table of this House?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, Papers would immediately be laid upon the Table.

LAW AND POLICE—STREET ROBBERIES IN ST. LUKE'S.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the increase of street robberies in the parish of St. Luke's; and, whether he will take steps to afford the necessary protection of the parishioners?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner of Police that complaints have recently been received by him on this matter, and they are now being inquired into. I have no doubt that the Commissioner will do all that is necessary for the proper protection of the public.

COUNTY BOUNDARIES—REPORT OF THE COMMISSION.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, When the Report of the Commission on County Boundaries will be issued, and what opportunities will be given for its discussion?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is not in my power to say when the Report of the Commissioners will be issued. The inquiry is one of a very complicated character, and I cannot anticipate an early Report. It is not possible to make any engagement as to its discussion in the meantime; but I can undertake that no alterations in county boundaries will be made without giving the House an opportunity of discussing them.

IMMIGRATION OF FOREIGN PAUPERS INTO ENGLAND—LEGISLATION.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, If the Government proposes to introduce a Bill, during the Session, to prevent the immigration of foreign paupers into England?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) (who replied) said: The Government have had this matter under consideration, and they have come to the conclusion that before legislation is attempted further information on the subject is required. A Motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the laws existing in foreign countries as to the immigration of destitute aliens, and also as to the effect of such immigration into the United Kingdom, was on the Paper last Session, in the name of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Bow Division of the Tower Hamlets (Captain Colomb). If he will place a Motion for a Select Committee on the Paper again, the Government will assent to it.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Afghan boundary, as set out in conformity with the terms of the Convention of last year, marks territory the possession of which is guaranteed to the Ameer by the Government of this country?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The demarcation of that boundary did not extend the engagements of Her Majesty's Government. The Agreements with the Ameer of Afghanistan have been laid upon the Table of this House.

LOCAL BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

SIR WILLIAM EWART (Belfast, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill to provide for the establishment of Local Bankruptcy Courts in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. Friend, I may say that it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill of the kind he alludes to; but, on the whole, I think it will be more convenient to introduce it in the House of Lords.

POST OFFICE—RE-DIRECTION OF LETTERS.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the Postmaster General, If his attention has been called to a letter from Mr. Felix Joseph, which appeared in *The Times* of 19th November, 1887; and, if so, whether, in the public interest, he will consider the advisability of rescinding an Order which prevents the re-direction by Postmasters of letters addressed to hotels when visitors have removed to some other address in the same town?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I saw the letter in *The Times* to which the hon. Member refers. I should first explain that official re-direction is in no way obligatory on the Post Office, although, in the large majority of cases, it is undertaken for a reasonable time. There is no such actual prohibition as the hon. Member refers to; but it has been found that in the case of hotels—especially in large places—a general compliance would involve very considerable labour, and even then might, in many cases, not be satisfactory. It is a matter, therefore, in which Postmasters have been allowed to exercise a discretion; but I am engaged in further considering whether any change of practice can be conveniently introduced.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—NOTICE OF POLICE ORDERS.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will lay upon the Table of this House a Copy of the Police Orders, dated Friday, 20th July, 1886, with the following heading:—

> "Metropolitan Police Office. Meeting in Hyde Park. Reform League. The following notice has been issued by the Chief Commissioner," and signed "Richard Mayne, the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): There was a public notice issued on the 17th of July, 1866. If this is what the hon. Member referred to, I shall have no objection to laying it upon the Table of the House. I am not aware of any other Order of that date.

MR. HOWELL said, he would repeat the Question on Monday. There must have been a mistake of the printer.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — CASE OF CONSTABLE BLOY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Constable Bloy, of the Metropolitan Police, who, upon the 25th ultimo, charged a young woman at the West Ham Police Court, before Mr. Ernest Baggallay, with being drunk and disorderly, when the learned magistrate stated that he could not rely on the constable's evidence, and dismissed the charge; whether, by direction of Sir Charles Warren, a memorandum was subsequently read out to the constables of the district over which Mr. Baggallay has jurisdiction exonerating Bloy; whether Bloy has now been removed from West Ham; and, if so, why, and upon what duty is he employed; and, whether he proposes to take any steps with reference to the issue of the said memorandum?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this matter. Such a memorandum was read to Bloy and the other constables of the division who were connected with the case. It expressed the result of an inquiry which the Commissioner held in consequence of the observations that fell from the magistrate, in order to determine what action he ought to take as regards Bloy. In that inquiry evidence was taken from three police-constables who had not been called before the magistrate. I am informed that Police-constable Bloy has been temporarily transferred from Plaistow, and is employed on police duties. I have been in correspondence with the learned magistrate on the subject of the issue of this memorandum, and I have tendered to him explanations which have been, I trust, satisfactory to him.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Why has the constable been transferred to Poplar, and how long is he likely to remain there?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am unable to answer the latter part of the Question. My information merely is that he is employed in another district on duty appertaining to his office of constable.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Is he transferred temporarily?

MR. MATTHEWS: Temporarily.

An hon. MEMBER: Why?

[No reply.]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—ALLEGED AGREEMENTS WITH EUROPEAN POWERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs, Whether any engagement, contingent or otherwise, was entered into by Her Majesty's Government with Italy or with any other Foreign Power last year which has not been made known to the House; and, if so, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any Despatches relating to or entering into such engagement or engagements?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): In answer to the hon. Member's Question, I have to say that no engagement pledging the material action of this country has been entered into by Her Majesty's Government which is not known to this House.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the right hon. Gentleman explain the difference between "action" and "material action?"

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Well, an engagement of material action implies military responsibility.

AFFIRMATIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, at the November-December sittings of the Mayor's Court, London, one C. B. Snelling repeatedly affirmed as a juryman under the direction of the learned Recorder, although Mr. Snelling had formally brought to the notice of Sir Thomas Chambers the fact that he (Mr. Snelling) was a person without religious belief; and, whether there is any legal authority for permitting a person without religious belief to affirm as a juryman?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In consequence of the Question of the hon. Member I have made inquiries and ascertained that a gentleman named Snelling did affirm on the 28th, 29th, and 30th of November, and the 4th of December; that so far from formally bringing to the notice of the Recorder the fact that he (Mr. Snelling) had no religious belief, he simply claimed to affirm, and at least four times made the ordinary affirmation stating that "the taking of an oath was, according to his religious belief, unlawful." With regard to the last part of the hon. Member's Question, I have already stated in this House that there is no legal authority for permitting a person without religious belief to affirm as a juryman.

ARMY—ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN—INSANITARY CONDITION.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can state the number of deaths in all ranks which have occurred in the barracks at Dublin during the past year, and what proportion of them is supposed to be attributable to the insanitary conditions existing there; if he will also state what measures have been taken since April 18th last, in order to remedy the insanitary conditions then admitted to exist in those barracks; if the barracks at Dover are now in a satisfactory condition; and, if he will cause immediate and searching inquiry to be made as to every case of typhoid fever that may occur in these and in all other barracks?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): 39 deaths occured in all the Dublin barracks during the year 1887 among the warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the garrison. No officer died during that period. It is impossible to say how many of these deaths were attributable to causes intrinsic to the barracks. Four were due to enteric disease and eight to pneumonia. In consequence of the prevalence of enteric fever in the Royal Barracks, I called upon Sir Charles Cameron, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dublin, and Dr. Grimshaw, Registrar General of Ireland—both quite unconnected with the Army—to make a minute inspection of the barracks, and to report on the causes of the continued unhealthiness and on the possible remedies. Previously to their Report, and since April 18, numerous small sanitary services were carried out in the barracks. But their Report was received towards the end of last year, and contained no less than 14 recommendations, which it is difficult to describe in detail. Under many of the heads the requisite measures have been taken, or are in hand. But there are two of grave importance as to which no final action has yet been taken. One is the erection of a new hospital for the isolation of infectious cases. We are trying to set aside another hospital for this purpose. The other is the demolition of a large portion of the barracks, on the ground that some of the old buildings are too much crowded together. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to provide other accommodation in Dublin at this time of the year for the troops, who would thereby be turned out of the Royal Barracks, and the new barracks now being commenced cannot be ready for some time. We are, however, trying to make such arrangements as will enable the most unhealthy part of the Royal Barracks to be vacated as soon as possible. I can assure the House that we are keenly alive to the importance of preventing any recurrence of these cases, and I shall not hesitate to take whatever steps may be necessary to accomplish this object. As regards Dover, I caused an inspection to be made by an Inspector of the Local Government Board. A considerable expenditure has been incurred in carrying out his recommendations, and the sanitary condition of these barracks is believed to be satisfactory.

THE CHARITY COMMISSION—THE COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the hon. Member for Mid Cumberland, as one of the Charity Commissioners, Whether the recent appointment of an Assistant Charity Commissioner involves any increase in the total sum to be voted for the salary of that Commission during the year 1888-9 ?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in reply, said, the appointment referred to did not involve any increase in the total sum voted for the salaries of the Charity Commission. The appointment had been made in the place of Mr. Hare, who had retired after more than 34 years' service, and the salary during this year would be less than that of the retiring Assistant Commissioner by £300.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FAILURE OF MESSRS. GREENWAY, SMITH, AND GREENWAY, THE WARWICK BANK.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the failure of Messrs. Greenway, Smith, and Greenway, Bankers, of Warwick and Leamington, on the 6th of September last; whether he is aware that it appears from the public examitions and the accounts in bankruptcy that the Bank had been carried on for many years without any capital; that about £300,000 deposited in the Bank by upwards of 1,000 customers has been lost; that upwards of £100,000 of this amount was appropriated and spent by Messrs. Greenway personally after they knew that the Bank was insolvent; that a further sum of upwards of £100,000 was advanced without security to a cousin of Messrs. Greenway, and that the only substantial available asset appears to be about £40,000 owing by customers upon overdrawn accounts; whether he is aware that it also appears from such examinations that extensive removal of property from the residences of two of the partners took place after the stoppage of the Bank; that immediately after the stoppage the partners took from the till £195 in cash for their private expenditure, and that on the day before the stoppage large sums were received by the Bank from customers, although on the same day the Bank clerks and their friends were allowed to draw out the amounts standing to their credit; whether he is aware that much distress has been caused by the failure; whether any steps have been taken to bring the conduct of the Messrs. Greenway before a Court of Justice; whether, in December last, the Official Receiver reported to the Board of Trade that the answers given by the bankrupts at their public examination, and information obtained from other sources, had disclosed offences under the Bankruptcy Act; whether the Board of Trade will at once call upon the Official Receiver to send in a full Report, together with Reports from his solicitors; and, whether the Board of Trade will cause an independent investigation to be made into all the circumstances relating to the failure?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied): I have been requested to answer this Question. A full investigation into all the circumstances has been made, under instructions from the Board of Trade. The Official Receiver has been requested to submit his Report on the case; and until the Board of Trade has decided on the course to be adopted it is desirable, in the public interest, that the answer to the Question of the hon. Member should be postponed.

THE TOWN HOLDINGS COMMITTEE—RE-APPOINTMENT.

MR. H. L. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will assent to the re-appointment of the Town Holdings Committee, according to its own recommendation, to conclude its inquiries and present its final Report?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had no objection to the re-appointment of the Committee

HARBOURS AND RAILWAYS IN IRELAND—REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Reports of the Royal Commissioners on Harbours and on Railways in Ireland will be laid upon the Table?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, the Reports would be presented at once, and there would be no unnecessary delay in getting them printed.

H.I.H. THE CROWN PRINCE OF GERMANY.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I wish, Sir, to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have been unable to give him Notice; but which I hope he will be able to answer, considering the great interest that attaches to the Question. It is, Whether he can give the House any further information of a re-assuring character with regard to the state of health of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Germany?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I am sorry I cannot give the House any further information as to the condition of His Imperial Highness than that given to the other House yesterday by the Prime Minister—namely, that the operation of tracheotomy was successfully performed upon His Imperial Highness, and that the illustrious patient is going on as well as can possibly be expected. Of course, it would be most agreeable if one could say anything that would re-assure this House and the world in general upon the subject. We all wish that a life so precious to his country and the world should be preserved.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February.]—[See page 64.]

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he had no desire to depart from the tone that had characterized all the speeches made up to that time in the course of the debate; and if it was true that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was to follow him, his object in moving the adjournment had been fully answered. He must be allowed to express the hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would respond as fully and promptly as possible to the appeal made to Her Majesty's Government last evening by his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury fully admitted in reply to his right hon. Friend that it was only natural and proper that a debate should arise out of the paragraph of the Queen's Speech which dealt with the policy of the Government in Ireland; but, further than that, his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian showed clearly that before that debate was entered upon the House should have in its possession all the specific information necessary to sustain that paragraph of the Speech. Instead of that the House had, up to the present time, had no assurance that the Government would furnish the information which his right hon. Friend had asked for. In the Speech from the Throne the Government claimed that the measures which were passed last year for the benefit of Ireland had been carefully carried into effect. There was naturally a difference of opinion as to whether they had been "carefully" carried into effect. But then the Government went on to claim, as a result of that legislation and of their administration of it, so far as could be tested by a short experience, that agrarian crime had been diminished and the power of coercive conspiracies had sensibly abated. What those who sat with him wanted to know was how the Government had so worked the Crimes Act as to produce a diminution of agrarian crime, and whether the Government would give the House some plain facts and figures to sustain the contention that the working of the Act had proved satisfactory? He desired information showing to what extent "Boycotting" had abated, and how the Act had abated the power of coercive conspiracy; and also would the right hon. Gentleman give the House figures to show, for instance, the number of evicted farms for which new tenants had been provided, or a Return of the preliminary inquiries that had taken place under Clause 1 of the Crimes Act? All those questions were of the utmost interest to the House as bearing upon the paragraph in the Queen's Speech, and throwing light on the administration of the Crimes Act by the Government during the autumn and winter. His right hon. Friend had felt it necessary to ask—"What was the agrarian crime for which so many people had been imprisoned under the Crimes Act, approximating, he believed, to 350?" Was it an agrarian crime to attend a public meeting to express sympathy with an oppressed tenantry? Was it also an agrarian crime to sell certain newspapers, or to report the speeches of certain persons in newspapers? The First Lord had admitted that the Government had not made a great advance in their efforts to reconcile the Irish people with the law; and while they would all rejoice to find that there had been the diminution of crime which was claimed by the Government, they were not disposed to consider that the diminution would be the result of the administration of the Crimes Act by the Government. They were rather of opinion that the diminution had been not in consequence, but in spite of, the Act, and of the way in which it had been administered. He was of opinion that that legislation, and the action which had followed it, had tended to alienate and exasperate the Irish people, and that the diminution in crime was due not only to the self-control of the Irish people, but to the sympathy and encouragement received from the English people, and the patient reliance on Constitutional measures for the redress of their grievances and obtaining their just rights. They looked to the right hon. Gentleman to lay on the Table of the House the information asked for, and he trusted they would not be disappointed in that respect. Passing to the matters of domestic legislation promised in the Queen's Speech, he should say, if he were disposed to be critical, that most of them were old friends and acquaintances who had figured in Queen's Speeches for the last 10 or 15 years. We might almost say—

> "Funeral baked meats coldly furnished forth
> the marriage tables."

From the new alliance of Tories and Liberal Unionists something better was expected; but if the measures were useful, as he thought most of them were, Members on that (the Opposition) side would all be glad to co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in passing them as promptly as possible. But with regard to Local Government, of which we used to hear every year during Lord Beaconsfield's Administration, he believed the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ritchie) was too shrewd to take the advice of the Mover of the Address. Movers of Addresses were generally supposed to know something of the mind of the Government. [Mr. Ritchie dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head. Well, if not, they were at least told what to avoid. It was, however, a very extraordinary thing that the Mover of the Address should suggest that the Local Government Bill should provide government by Local Boards delegated by the Boards of Guardians. The country had suffered from lack of good local government in education, sanitation, and in a hundred directions. He would therefore recommend that his right hon. Friend, for his own credit as well as for the success of the measure, would do well to keep clear of such suggestions as had been made on this subject by the Mover of the Address. There were two subjects on which he, personally, and almost all on that (the Opposition) side of the House felt great interest; they were non-Party questions; they were questions of great importance; and if there was to be legislation with respect to them it were well that it should be done quickly, and it would be the duty of his Friends on that side to help Her Majesty's Government. These two questions were before Parliament last Session. One of them was the Railway Rates Bill, a very large and important measure, and one which touched great interests. Much more was involved in it than appeared in the Queen's Speech. To prevent "undue preferences in the rates charged by Railway Companies on foreign and domestic produce" was only a single branch of the subject. It did not meddle with moving domestic produce inland, or heavy bulks to the sea. The carriage of fish, for instance, was a matter of the greatest importance, not only to the fishing industry, but to the food of the poor. The question of the control of the canal traffic ought also to be dealt with, if it was true that the hand of the Railway Companies, in the case of almost every important canal, suppressed, or injured, or delayed traffic. If he might make a suggestion to Her Majesty's Government, he would say that a Bill of this kind ought to be introduced in the House of Commons. It failed last year because it was introduced in the House of Lords, where it suffered serious mutilation. He was very much surprised that should have been the case, seeing that the Government commanded a majority in that House, and, he believed, on this question; but the way they surrendered the vital parts of the Bill was a matter of astonishment, not only to Members of the Opposition, but to their own Friends on the other side of the House. In 1886 the Government of the day managed, though in Office but a few months, to press the Bill through the second reading and to the stage of going into Committee. The country was in earnest in demanding the settlement of the question; but he did not believe it could be settled upstairs, where Gentlemen would be face to face with the railway interest. If the matter were to be satisfactorily dealt with this Session the Bill must be introduced in the House of Commons, and pressed through all its stages with all the force of the Government. There was another Bill which also failed last year, the Bill for Technical Education, with regard to which the Chanceller of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had misled his audience at Manchester. The right hon. Gentleman said—"Will you allow Irish obstruction to prevent your children from receiving a technical education?" But Irish obstruction had nothing to do with it; the obstruction of the Bill came exclusively from Members on the right hon. Gentleman's own side.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My remarks were to the effect that we should make no progress with legislation at all while Ireland blocked the way.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that they did make progress. They passed a Technical Education Bill for Scotland last year, and they passed a Merchandise Marks Bill, for which the Government took great credit, and it never cost the Government one hour of its time, and it was passed by the aid of the Irish Members. No section of the Members of the House gave more useful assistance in the passing of the Merchandise Marks Bill than Irish Members who sat below the Gangway. It was not fair to appeal to a large audience in such a way as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done. There were three reasons for the failure of the Bill last year. In the first place, it was very inadequate; in the second place, it was hampered by provisions, which the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale implored the Government to abandon; and, in the third place, it was opposed by a number of Gentlemen on the Conservative side who, in the interest of the voluntary school system, as against that of board schools, obstructed the Bill at every stage. He sincerely trusted that they would pass an adequate measure this year, not merely for the purpose of equipping our artizans with the knowledge underlying industrial pursuits, but that every child in this country might be as well equipped for life as the children of other countries, where the State had been more prompt to do its duty. He trusted the Motion of the hon. Member for the Wells Division of Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget) for agricultural education, and that the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) would be successful, and that the advantage of technical education would not be confined to only one class of Her Majesty's subjects. He made this appeal on the ground taken up by the Seconder of the Address as to the sufferings of the unemployed. We should do as much as we could to meet the temporary demand of the unemployed; but let us take more care in future to develop the capacity of our children and give them the power of self-help. A circular had been sent to him by his hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) showing the result of his inquiries in Berlin during the last autumn, and he trusted the House would take into consideration the statement it contained. He (Mr. Mundella) had himself preached the doctrines so long that it was time there were new preachers to impress on the country its duty to the children. In a country so wealthy it was a shame that there should be thousands of people wanting bread, because they had not the courage and resources to go to the finest and most magnificent Colonies possessed by any nation in the world. He should be very thankful if he had succeeded, in these two points, in inducing the Government to give the Returns asked for, and in impressing upon them the duty of doing what they could to improve the education of our people.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Mundella) began his speech with a very unnecessarily modest declaration that his object in rising would have been adequately satisfied if he could induce me to follow him; but I confess that even though that appeal—couched as it was in the most amiable language—might have been insufficient to induce me to prolong this stage of the debate on the Address had my noble Friend the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (the Marquess of Londonderry) been able, in the House of Lords, to give to the country some account from a Member of the Irish Executive of the effect in Ireland which we consider has resulted from the operation of the Crimes Act. I am not familiar with the proceedings of the other House, nor do I entirely understand why that debate so unexpectedly collapsed. Possibly some of the noble Lords who are so eager to criticize the action of the Government in Ireland on platforms find the House of Lords a less agreeable place in which to air their views. They have an objection—not confined, I observe, to noble Lords—to speak in a place where they can be answered. However that may be, owing to the rapid collapse of the debate to which I have referred, my noble Friend was unable to give any statistics of facts to the House of Lords and the country which the country has a right to expect. Therefore, I will attempt to deal with that part of the subject. I shall not travel beyond the limits laid down in the speeches that were delivered from the Front Opposition Bench yesterday. I may remark that those limits appeared to be very much more restricted than I should have anticipated when I recollect the extent and the character of the criticisms that have been passed on the Government by right hon. Gentlemen during the Recess. I could hardly believe my ears when I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) treating in so new a spirit the Irish problem. Where is the impassioned orator, or, perhaps, I ought to say, the impassioned telegraphist, who sent the famous message, "Remember Michelstown?" [Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] Where is the Gentleman who used all the resources of his admirable rhetoric to inflame the public mind against the action of policemen in the execution of their duty?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): There is not a syllable of foundation for the allegation of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, I do not wish to contradict the right hon. Gentleman; but I leave it to those who have present in their minds the speech he made at Nottingham.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Quote it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I leave it to them whether the interpretation I have put upon it is an unfair one. [*Cries of* "Quote!"] I am giving to the House the impression left on my mind by that speech, and I have a perfect right to do so. If the right hon. Gentleman is under the impression that I am afraid to bring that speech under the notice of the House, and to justify by quoting that speech the criticism I have made upon it, the right hon. Gentleman is very much mistaken. Where is this impassioned orator on the Irish Question? He has sunk, I presume only for the moment, into a candid critic anxious only for statistical information which may justify the allegations put into the mouth of Her Gracious Majesty by the present Advisers of the Crown. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I will not complain of this change of tone which he has adopted. Far from it. I am, no doubt, the person who benefits most. But if the right hon. Gentleman were to deliver two speeches on the subject—one of the character of the speech which he delivered last night, and the other of the character of the speech delivered at Nottingham—I confess I should have wished the speech delivered last night had been the one which he delivered at Nottingham, and that the one which he delivered at Nottingham had been delivered in a place where the statements could have been met, and where, at all events, he would have spoken to an audience more capable of critically weighing the sentiments which proceeded from the right hon. Gentleman. Before I proceed to give to the House some statistics and facts with regard to the condition of Ireland, I should like to say a word about another speech delivered last night—a speech delivered in an empty House, but delivered from the Bench opposite—by the noble Earl (the Earl of Cavan), who was a Colleague of the right hon. Gentleman, who is an Irishman by birth, if not by interests, and who, I presume, speaks with the authority and sanction of his Colleagues. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was not in the House when that speech was delivered. I should like to call his attention to some of the doctrines laid down by the noble Earl. The noble Earl told us that six of the clauses of the Criminal Law Procedure Act of last Session had been criticized and amended in this House. He stated that 24 clauses had not been so criticized and amended in the House, and he drew this remarkable conclusion from that fact, that hon. Members were not bound to regard the 24 clauses as law in the same sense as they were bound to regard the six clauses as law. Is that doctrine promulgated from the Front Opposition Bench accepted by the late Colleagues of the noble Earl? Are these doctrines to be preached from that Bench to the Representatives of Ireland and the people of Ireland? Is that view to be taken not only by the noble Earl, but by those who sit behind him, as to the binding character of Acts of Parliament passed by both Houses and receiving the Royal Assent? It appears, according to this new doctrine, that we have a right to look back and see how much a question was debated, who took part in it, and who voted on it. When the result of that examination is to show that the measure is not canvassed, criticized, discussed, and amended to the exact amount that is pleasing to any special member of the community, then, in the noble Earl's language, that Act of Parliament is not binding in the same sense in which other and more fortunate Acts of Parliament are binding. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian last night in his speech, in effect, wanted to know whether we were in a position to say that the Irish people had more affection and regard for the law—so I understood him—not merely whether there was more specific obedience to the law, but whether the law was regarded with more affection and respect by the Irish people. He truly said—and I agree with him—that the Irish problem can never be regarded as completely solved until Irishmen regard the law in Ireland with the same respect and affection as Englishmen regard the law in England and Scotchmen in Scotland. But I want to know how Irishmen can learn to respect the law when a doctrine such as that laid down by the noble Earl is promulgated. The noble Earl made another assertion upon which I should like to have some light from a Member of the Opposition who may speak in this debate. He said that there was now but one opinion both above and below the Gangway on the Opposition side as to crime prevailing in Ireland; and that the Irish Members and the English Members who support the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian were entirely in accord in their views of crime. Is that doctrine accepted by the right hon. Gentleman? Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway have never made any secret that they regard it as legitimate to incite tenants to resist, by violence if necessary, the officers of the law. That is the doctrine which they have preached consistently for many years, and which they preach up to the present moment. If there be but one opinion above and below the Gangway as to crime—as the noble Earl told us—that doctrine is also the doctrine above the Gangway. I should like to know whether this is so? I do not assume that it is necessarily so because the noble Earl said it; but I should like to have from some responsible speaker a distinct repudiation of tactics still pursued, still avowed, and never repudiated by their most faithful allies below the Gangway. There are two other points relating not to the speech of the noble Earl, but to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), on which I must touch before I come to the figures which I am going to give to the House. One refers to the observations which he made with regard to the Resident Magistrates. I heard those observations with very profound regret, and with no inconsiderable surprise. He criticized what he called the Coercion Act—the Criminal Law Amendment Act—as carrying jurisdiction to men of lower stamp than would otherwise have had it in a great number of cases, and said that in the great majority of cases the men who were appointed depended upon the Executive Government for the appointment to their places, and for the retention of their offices. It is perfectly true that the Resident Magistrates in Ireland are dependent upon the Executive for appointment to their places; but the Executive Government, to which the vast majority owe their places, is not the Executive Government now in power, but the Executive Government over which the right hon. Gentleman presided. About 60, I believe, out of the 73 Resident Magistrates were either appointed by Lord Spencer, or were kept in office by Lord Spencer in 1882, when he revised the list of Resident Magistrates with full powers from a kind Treasury to superannuate on full and easy terms or pensions anybody whom he thought unfit for the place. These are the men who administer the office—men appointed by the right hon. Gentleman, and not only appointed by him, but praised by Lord Spencer after a certain banquet given to Lord Spencer for administering the Crimes Act in the same manner as I am now told I deserve the scaffold for administering it. After that banquet Lord Spencer gave praise where much of the praise was due, and said that if he had succeeded and in so far as he had succeeded in restoring law and order in Ireland, it had been done, among others, by the very magistrates who are now subjected to hostile criticism by hon. Gentlemen opposite. But, after all, is it so shocking and unfamiliar a thing to English practice that the Criminal Law should be administered by men appointed by the Executive and who can be dismissed by the Executive? I am not speaking of a subject with which I am familiar; but am I wrong when I remind the House that, as I believe, the whole of the summary jurisdiction of London, containing a population larger than Ireland, is administered by magistrates who may be dismissed by the Government? If it is not inconsistent with Constitutional usage that the summary criminal jurisdiction of London should be so administered, I want to know why it is so shocking a thing to the right hon. Gentleman that we should carry on the same system in Ireland — in that, recollect, following only the example invariably set us by every preceding Government when they found it necessary to supplement the ordinary criminal procedure in that country by one more efficacious for carrying out the purposes for which criminal procedure exists? I come now to the second point of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, to which I must allude before going further. It relates to what he said on the subject of Boycotting. I think the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman on that subject show, I will not say a strange ignorance of the condition of Ireland, but a strange obliviousness of it; for the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly acquainted two or three years ago with exactly what Boycotting meant and how it affected society where it prevailed. He appears now to have forgotten his old doctrine on that subject, and with the old views he has given up the old name. What used to figure as "Boycotting" now figures, I think, entirely as "exclusive dealing." We have trotted out before us our old friend the Dublin parson who quarrelled with his curate on the subject of Home Rule and dismissed him, and who is actually held up to us as a man who engaged in the same kind of conspiracy as the people whom we prosecute for Boycotting in Ireland. Can anything be more absurd or grotesque? Perhaps the House would like me to give them an example of the kind of

Boycotting we have prosecuted in Ireland. Here is a very recent case. It is a case that happened this present month. On the 4th of February an old woman named Connell, 80 years of age, and partly palsied, unfortunately for herself, was the mother of a man who took an evicted farm, and for this crime of maternity she had been rigidly "Boycotted." She was nearly starved. She lay three days on her bed at Christmas-time dying of starvation, and she was only saved by a certain Mrs. Maroney—a name tolerably familiar in that part of the country—who came to her assistance. This woman—Hannah Connell—came to the police office herself—a thing I may say in passing which would hardly have happened 12 months ago—and swore in direct evidence that having been refused provisions she went to the barracks because—as she said—she was in dread of the people. Before going to the barracks she had herself entered the shop of one of the defendants and asked for bread, and she was refused bread. With the protection of two policemen she again went to four shops to try and purchase provisions; she was again refused in every case. She asked for sixpennyworth of bread, 1 lb. of sugar, and 1 oz. of tea; she was refused everything. She also stated that at one time one of the defendants, named Flannagan, who used to supply her with bread, said that now that the people said she was "Boycotted" she could get no more provisions there. There now, Sir, that is the kind of case to which the right hon. Gentleman finds a parallel in that of the Dublin parson who dismissed his curate. Nothing, I venture to say, can be more utterly absurd than to compare those sporadic manifestations of hatred and ill-feeling which may occasionally break out in this country, and may occasionally in Ireland produce the phenomenon which the right hon. Gentleman calls exclusive dealing, with the organized system of terrorism and intimidation which prevails under the name of "Boycotting" in Ireland. I quite admit that every case of "Boycotting" is a case of exclusive dealing; I absolutely deny that every case of exclusive dealing is a case of "Boycotting." "Boycotting" is an art—practically it has reached that stage in Ireland—it is an art with a specific technical meaning. You might as well say that if a man wounds another in a drunken brawl, and thereby commits an assault, he is guilty of the same offence as if he were joining in an armed, drilled, and organized rebellion, and committed the same injury on some individual in the course of that rebellion. They are both cases of assault, but is the second a case of assault only? If the right hon. Gentleman will only inquire further into the condition of Ireland, or would only revive his recollections of what he must have been familiar with when he was responsible for the government, and the condition of things in that country, he will see that the very widest distinction exists, and must exist, between the casual acts of cruelty to which I have alluded and which he rightly condemned, and the organized system of intimidation used by an association which desires to rival the law, both in respect of the power of holding Courts, and the power of inflicting punishment. Now, Sir, I have completed all I have to say in criticism of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman and of the noble Earl (the Earl of Cavan) who followed him shortly afterwards in debate, and I come to the statistics that were asked for by the right hon. Gentleman—a request which was repeated by the right hon. Gentleman who resumed the debate this evening (Mr. Mundella). I may say that I think the right hon. Gentleman is disposed to attach a very exaggerated value to statistics. I never concealed my opinion on that point. I gave it to the House last year when I was introducing the Coercion Act, and I am sorry if I have failed to impress it upon hon. Members, for the further acquaintance I have made with the subject only strengthens that opinion, and I confess that the short treatment which the right hon. Gentleman made of such statistics as he had yesterday went far to confirm my view that whoever, at all events, can deduce any trustworthy conclusions from statistics, the right hon. Gentleman is not necessarily to be counted among the number. He used this argument—and it was an argument which was repeated, rather unfortunately as I thought, by the right hon. Gentleman near him. He said—"How could we expect that agrarian crime, which did not stand very high last year, could have diminished, when we learnt that 350 persons had been sentenced or tried under the recent

Coercion Act?" I may say that in Ireland sentencing and trying are the same thing; and that, apparently, is also the view that the right hon. Gentleman holds. Well, I do not know that statistics prove or disprove many things, but there is no doubt they can disprove that, because the number of persons proceeded against was 659, and the number of persons discharged or acquitted is no less than 229. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Gentleman cheers that, I think. So that it will be observed that when he said that 350 persons had been "tried or sentenced," that little word "or" makes a very great difference. But that is not the only curious conclusion that can be drawn from the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. He seemed to think that because this comparatively large number of persons had been proceeded against, agrarian crimes, therefore, really must be as rife after the Criminal Law Amendment Act has been passed as it was before. But the most cursory examination of the statistics laid by the right hon. Gentleman upon the Table of the House in the time of Lord Spencer would have convinced him that that mode of argument is a most fallacious one—the most fallacious one in the world; because I notice that while the number of persons proceeded against in Lord Spencer's first year—1882—for agrarian offences was in the proportion of 3½ proceeded against to every case of agrarian crime, under this Government during the corresponding period the proportion is only 2¾ to 1; so that actually Lord Spencer proceeded against more persons—in comparison with the number of agrarian offences—than we have in our time. That is a fact which I thought would have led the right hon. Gentleman to see that his mode of argument was extremely fallacious. But there is another point in connection with his statistics, of which I am sorry again to have to remind the House, because, although I insisted upon it several times last Session, I have been unfortunate enough, apparently, not to impress the mind of the right hon. Gentleman with the importance of it. The method of collecting agrarian statistics in Ireland is, undoubtedly, arbitrary, and in my opinion highly absurd. As I have pointed out in a Memorandum which I formerly laid on the Table of the House, there have been cases in which you would have to proceed against 82 persons in order to deal with two agrarian offences. Now, in order to impress that rather startling fact on the mind of the House, let me say that I believe if there was resistance to the law—say at Bodyke—on the same day in 20 houses, and if that resistance to the police was carried out by 20 persons in each case, then 400 persons might be, or perhaps ought to be, made amenable. Those 400 cases would count as one. Therefore, I think the House will agree that I was not going beyond the mark when I said that the right hon. Gentleman—especially from the manner in which he treats statistics—is about to attach a very exaggerated value to them. There is another point with respect to the collection of statistics. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think that whenever we proceeded under the Crimes Act it was against agrarian crime. That is a mistake. Boycotting is not an agrarian crime. Incitement to resistance is not an agrarian crime. Yet these are two of the worst offences against which it is our duty to proceed under the Crimes Act. If you tell me that these statistics are collected on a very absurd system, I do not propose to differ from you. But I did not invent it. I found it in operation, and the Gentlemen to whom we owe it are hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite. And if you ask me further why, holding the view that this method of collecting statistics is absurd, I have not done something to change it, I say that if I had done that, the very little value that these statistics now possess would have been entirely lost, because their sole value now consists in enabling you roughly to compare in certain respects one period with another. If you give that up the whole utility of the system would vanish. I propose to lay on the Table of the House statistics of exactly the same character as were presented by Lord Spencer in 1883, and I propose, in addition, to present certain statistics which deal with Boycotting. Let me give the House some results of these statistics, such as they are, to be taken with all the qualifications which I have suggested—qualifications which I think are extremely important—namely, that the amount of crime in Ireland does not depend necessarily upon the feeling of discontent or local causes in any particular part of the country. It is probable—it is undoubtedly true—that it is, or that it may be, the interest of the National League to encourage crime, or not discourage it. At another time it may be their interest—it is their interest —to diminish it as much as possible. Until you know the exact motive which weighed with those who control that all-powerful organization—until you can discount the exact action which they have had upon crime in Ireland—until you can do that with certainty, you can draw no conclusions from criminal statistics, agrarian or otherwise, which will enable you to judge the condition of the country. And if anybody thinks that accusation is rather hard upon either the National League or any other body of influence in Ireland, I think I may again remind you of the speech of the noble Earl (the Earl of Cavan), to which I have already alluded, in which he made this astonishing assertion. He said that the English Members who went over to Ireland had showed them that there was no necessity now for crime—mark that —and that such disgraceful transactions as the murders in the Phœnix Park could now no longer be justified on any ground whatever. The amount of non-agrarian crime in 1886 was 2,195; in 1887 it was 1,837. These figures included threatening letters, and, if you exclude threatening letters, the amount of crime in 1886 was 1,963, and in 1887 it was 1,663. Agrarian crime in 1886, including threatening letters, was 1,056; in 1887 it was 883. Excluding threatening letters, for 1886 it was 632, and for 1887 it was 591. I may say that, owing to one of the causes which I specified earlier in my remarks, crime was very low during one or two months last winter; and that remark applies to the next set of statistics I give, which are of agrarian offences for the six months ending 31st January, 1887, compared with the agrarian offences for the six months ending the 31st January, 1888. The total number of agrarian offences for the first of these periods was 455, and for the latter period 364, showing a decrease of 20 per cent on all offences. The decrease is less if you exclude threatening letters. The agrarian offences, deducting threatening letters, for the six months ending with January, 1887, was 285; and for the six months ending with January, 1888, was 248, being a decrease of 13 per cent. If you now take the six months succeeding the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and compare it with the six months preceding, the results come out as follows:—I count February to July, 1887, and August to January, 1888. For the first period the numbers are 495, and for the second period 364. If you exclude threatening letters the numbers are 323 and 248. This shows a decrease in the second period of 26 per cent on all offences, and of 23 per cent after deducting threatening letters. I think that the House will feel that that diminution is one which—though I should like it to be more considerable—is extremely material, and it is one which I am convinced hon. Members in almost every part of House will extremely rejoice to hear announced. Now I come to Boycotting. It will be recollected that when I had the honour to introduce the Criminal Law Amendment Bill to the House the subject on which I relied more than anything else to justify that measure was the condition of terrorism and intimidation chiefly consequent on and sustained by the practice of Boycotting which prevailed in a large part of Ireland; and therefore, as I can show that this Act has produced most striking effects with regard to Boycotting, I think everybody will feel—if no other justification were forthcoming—that justification is amply sufficient. The number of persons wholly Boycotted on the 31st of July last year was 870; the number of persons wholly Boycotted now is 208. The number of persons partially Boycotted on the 31st of July was 3,965—practically 4,000. The number of persons partially Boycotted on the 31st of January was 1,867—showing a decrease of 52½ per cent of persons partially Boycotted, and a decrease of 57 per cent of persons totally Boycotted. These figures show a decrease in the total number of persons Boycotted of 76 per cent. That is a result which, I think the House will agree with me, is of a most eminently satisfactory description, and especially satisfactory when we come to analyze the figures in the county of Clare and the county of Kerry. These two counties are the only two counties in Ireland over the whole of which we have suppressed the National League, and in these two counties the decrease of Boycotting is greater than in the rest of Ireland. I shall lay on the Table of the House the statistics from which I have drawn these figures. I think I have shown that I have no reason to be afraid of statistics; but I confess that it is not upon statistics that I found the conclusion at which I have most assuredly arrived—that an immense improvement has taken place in the condition of Ireland. I have testimony come to me to the same effect from every part of the country, and from every class of the community. So far as I know, there is no man who has travelled in Ireland with some desire to acquaint himself with the condition of the country and with adequate knowledge of its condition a year ago who will not tell you that the condition of Ireland has in every respect greatly improved. I have before this quoted the charges of the Judges. Perhaps the House will allow me to quote one extract from the charge of a Judge delivered in one of the most disturbed counties in Ireland. This is what Judge Curran says—

> "I have been informed by those entrusted with the peace of the county that there is a decided and marked improvement since last Session. Moonlighting, gentlemen, as you knew already some time since, is fast becoming a matter of history in the dark and blood-red history of Kerry, and Boycotting is becoming less general and less effective, because people are beginning to see that the strong arm of the law will protect those who stand up firmly against any such system."

There is a similar quotation from the address of Judge Murphy, who said, at Cork Winter Assizes, that he was glad to be able to say that a vast change had come over the state of things in Kerry, due, above all, to the knowledge that came home to persons engaged in these organizations that they would be detected, tried, and punished for their offences in places where juries were not afraid to discharge their duties. What these two Judges said with a sense of official responsibility upon them, every man who has spoken to me upon the subject has repeated in different language, with different circumstances, and with different details—whatever his class may be, and from whatever part of Ireland he has come. I cannot help regarding this result as eminently satisfactory. I confess that I was one of those who did not hesitate to give some amount of credence to those prophets of ill-omen who said that one of the first results of the so-called Coercion Act would be to cause a great outburst of crime all over Ireland. I thought it extremely possible that that result might happen. That result has not occurred. We have done something. We have succeeded more or less in the struggle in which we have been engaged. We are not the first who have been engaged in that struggle. In happier days the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and other right hon. Gentlemen who sit on that Bench, were engaged, with the support of the then Opposition, in carrying on the same struggle against crime in Ireland. But though the struggle is old, some of the difficulties that we have had to contend with are new. Never before has any Government engaged in this struggle had arrayed against it the whole force of the legitimate Opposition —of the so-called legitimate Opposition. We are accustomed to the spectacle of hon. Gentlemen who come to this House from certain parts of Ireland doing all they can to defeat the course of law and to bring the law into contempt. But we have not been accustomed until this year—[Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!]—we have not been accustomed to find them rank among their most valuable allies Gentlemen returned for English and Scottish constituencies. There is nothing new, unhappily, in Irish experience in finding the whole Press described as Nationalist indulging in mendacious vituperation against those who are responsible for the government of the country. It is new in the history of Irish administration that these attacks and this course of conduct should find an echo—a feeble, imitative echo—upon this side of St. George's Channel. But, Mr. Speaker, though upon those on this side of the House and upon the Unionist Party rests the whole burden of maintaining law and order in Ireland, we may, at all events, congratulate ourselves that we have not been unsuccessful, and that the laborious days and weary nights we spent last Session in amending the Criminal Procedure Acts and the Land Act have not been without their fruits in the history of Ireland during the last six months. We have done something to vindicate and restore the authority of the law. We have done something to dimish the sufferings caused by the system of tyranny and oppression practised by the National League. We have done something to restore the confidence of the individual in the protection of the strong arm of the law, without which no country—not even Ireland under a Home Rule Bill—can possibly expect to enjoy any of the blessings, the fruits, and the privileges of civilization.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I shall certainly not imitate the example of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in turning this important debate into channels for mere personal recrimination. I think the House will be able to judge from the temper of the opening remarks of the right hon. Gentleman of the tact and the temper with which he is administering the Coercion Act in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman implies by what he says that we are afraid to say in this House what we say on platforms in the country, and he has come to that conclusion because we did not last night spring to our feet and proceed with our indictment against the Government. But, Sir, the reason for that was perfectly plain. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had asked for information—for facts and figures, by which our statements might be tested, judged, and verified. The right hon. Gentleman—for reasons of which I do not complain—gave us no such statement last night; but until that statement was made it would have been futile for us to take part in the debate. There is another reason which surely the right hon. Gentleman must be aware of, and that is that it is perfectly understood in the House that the great questions connected with the administration of the Coercion Act should be debated at a later stage in connection with a Motion to be brought forward from below the Gangway. I will not attempt to follow the right hon. Gentleman in his criticism of the speech of the noble Earl the Member for South Somerset (the Earl of Cavan) because I had not myself the good fortune to hear my noble Friend's speech. But if the right hon. Gentleman's impression of that speech is not more accurate than his impression of the speech of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) at Nottingham, I do not think I need trouble the House nor myself with his criticisms. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland said that we hear nothing more in this House of the cry, "Remember Mitchelstown." Do not let the right hon. Gentleman be too sure of that. The right hon. Gentleman fell into a vein with which we were very familiar last Session, when he spoke of a number of the Resident Magistrates—60 out of 73—having been appointed by Lord Spencer. I should have thought that last year we had had enough of these recriminations. I should have thought, at any rate, that we had had enough of these attempts to test a new situation, a new departure in Irish policy, what you yourselves admit to be a new departure, though you lament it, by what happened in 1881, 1882, and 1883. I, at all events, had nothing to do with that. I shall proceed to examine the right hon. Gentleman's method of dealing with my right hon. Friend's assertion about Resident Magistrates; and I am really amazed that the right hon. Gentleman should boldly get up in this House and assure us—apparently with the approval of many hon. Gentlemen behind him—that the pesition of Resident Magistrate in Ireland is substantially analogous to that of a London Stipendiary Magistrate. There are notoriously important differences in the condition upon which these two sets of gentlemen hold their offices. But that is not the point on which I wish to insist at this moment. The point on which I wish to insist—because it is vital to a judgment of the Coercion Act and the way in which it has been administered—is that you entrust to the Resident Magistrates in Ireland jurisdiction over a class of cases of the utmost delicacy and nicety which you would on no account dream of trusting to a London Stipendiary Magistrate. I ask the right hon. Gentleman did he mean to convey to the House that the London Stipendiary has within his jurisdiction cases of conspiracy, cases of seditious libel, and that he has cases of this kind where the person charged has not the right of demanding a jury? Those make serious points of difference between the position of Resident Magistrates in Ireland acting under the Crimes Act and London Stipendiaries. Sir, one need not be a lawyer to understand that there is no class of cases so delicate, so important, and requiring such nicety and precision of legal training, as cases turning upon the effect of words spoken and cases of acts turning upon intention as giving their character to those acts. Our position last year was, and at present is, that it is most detrimental to fair administration of the law to trust cases of that kind to gentlemen who are in a position practically and notoriously of dependence, and immediate dependence, upon the Executive Government. One of the conditions was that in these Crimes Courts one of the two magistrates sitting should be a person of whose legal competency the Lord Chancellor was satisfied. [An hon. MEMBER: The Lord Lieutenant.] I was under the impression that we moved an Amendment to transfer the decision about competency to the Lord Chancellor. But that makes no difference. Whether it is the Lord Lieutenant or the Lord Chancellor, there has been a remarkable difference in the procedure of the present Government and the procedure under the Government of Earl Spencer, because I understand that Earl Spencer made out a special list of magistrates of whose legal competency he was satisfied, and wherever a Crimes Court was constituted one of those gentlemen of necessity had a place on it.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): If I may interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, there is no difference between the Act of 1882 and the Act of 1887 in that particular. Of the 30 special magistrates specified as being legally qualified, 20 were so qualified by Earl Spencer, and three of the others are barristers.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: The right hon. Gentleman does not say that it has been essential that in every Court constituted under the Crimes Act one of the two magistrates sitting should come from this list.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; that is so.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I find I am right. It is the Lord Chancellor who is to be satisfied of the legal competency. I will now make a few remarks on the right hon. Gentleman's demonstration of the paragraph in the Queen's Speech asserting that coercive conspiracies have abated, and that agrarian crime has diminished in consequence of the legislative measures of last Session. I wish to examine how far he has made that good. The right hon. Gentleman has, no doubt, shown—and he will not suspect me of feeling anything but entire satisfaction—that there has been a diminution of agrarian offences in the six months from July, 1887—the six months since the Crimes Act was passed. There has been a sensible, though not a very enormous, diminution in agrarian offences. But I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that we ventured to predict—when the Land Act was before this House last Session—that one effect of certain provisions in that Act would be to give you a period of about six months of comparative calm—the period during which the notices would be running their course. Well, the facts quite bear out the prediction we then ventured upon. The right hon. Gentleman has shown—what is also extremely satisfactory—that there has been a decline in the number of Boycottings. The decline there, no doubt, is very much more considerable than the decline in agrarian offences. We have our own theory as to the reasons which will account for that decline in Boycotting. We do not attribute it—and the right hon. Gentleman has given us no reason for attributing it—to the operation of the Crimes Act. The present Prime Minister in 1885 made what I thought then, and what I always thought, a most judicious series of remarks on Boycotting. He said—

> "It is one of those sets of acts in a community with which Acts of Parliament can do little, and which will die out of themselves owing to the operation of general causes if you give them sufficient time."

Our explanation of the decrease in Boycotting—of which we are thoroughly glad—our explanation is that Lord Salisbury was right; that the causes which led to Boycotting have been wearing themselves out; and that one of those causes is the very circumstance on which the right hon. Gentleman so strangely dwelt at the close of his speech. The right hon. Gentleman claimed for himself and his Friends that they alone are the Party of order. Our contention is that the decline in Boycotting and the decline in agrarian offences is due to the fact of there being an entirely changed state of feeling in Ireland, and that that changed state of feeling, and that wider and deeper sense of responsibility, are due to the fact that Liberal Members of Parliament and others from England have gone over there. I have been in Ireland myself for a short time lately. I did not come into contact, no doubt, with the same classes of officials and others as those who furnished the right hon. Gentleman with his information; but I saw persons of different positions with different means of gathering information, and I was assured on every hand that the sense of alliance—of alliance, not of coalition—with an English Party has had the most remarkable effect in awakening responsibility all over the country. The right hon. Gentleman has left out the answers to important questions which were put to him by my right hon. Friend who opened the debate this evening (Mr. Mundella). He has not told us whether, and, if so, what amount of what is called derelict land has been rescued for the occupation of its owners in consequence of the Crimes Act. The number of these derelict farms was one of the greatest evils and one of the worst features in the social condition of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has shirked that question. He has not attempted to show that coercive conspiracies, as he chooses to call them, or lawful combinations, as we choose to think them—he has not shown in any detail that these combinations have been weakened in their operation by any single proceeding taken under the Crimes Act. Those two points are all-important. The question before the House at this moment is — What has been the effect of the Crimes Act and the Land Act in restoring something like social order in Ireland? The payment of rent is, as everybody knows, one of the most important factors in the social condition of Ireland; but the right hon. Gentleman has not shown in the least degree that the orderly payment of rent has been furthered, either by the apprehension caused by the Crimes Act, or by any proceedings taken under that Act. The right hon. Gentleman has entirely failed to show—which he was bound to show—a connection between a certain very partial and very limited decline in the broader and coarser features of disorder—a connection between them and the Crimes Act or the way in which it has been administered. I must fall back again on the very frank and manly admission of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House last night (Mr. W. H. Smith), who said plainly—"I admit that we have made no great advance." [Mr. W. H. SMITH dissented.] I see the right hon. Gentleman shakes his head, but I thought I heard him say it, and I certainly wrote the words down.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): In reply to the observation of the right hon. Gentleman, what I said was that no great advance had been made in producing obedience to the law and sympathy with the law. I admitted that no great advance had been made in those respects.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: To admit that, after all, Sir, is to admit our whole case. We want, and we have the right to call upon you, and we shall continue at a later stage of the debate to call upon you, to give good justification for such a measure as the Crimes Act. Unless a measure of that extraordinary and exceptional kind is a very great success in attaining the objects which you set before yourselves in persuading the House to pass it, it has not justified its existence, and you have not justified your policy. I do not wish to diminish the importance of the two or three figures given to us by the right hon. Gentleman to-night; but you have set that small gain against the enormous loss, first of all, of the time of Parliament last Session, and, secondly, the loss of the chance of procuring a better state of things in Ireland. The Government have practically wasted last Session in forcing this costly and—as I maintain it still shows itself—this comparatively useless instrument. They have thrown Ireland into turmoil. [*Laughter.*] Gentlemen laugh. I do not mean to say for a moment that it is the action of the Government alone that throws Ireland into turmoil. What I say is, that the way in which the Crimes Act has been administered has aggravated and made still more dangerous all that was already dangerous in the social condition of Ireland; and it has put further off than ever the day—which the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues, I believe, are as anxious to reach as we are—when the Irish people will extend to law that respect and obedience which we are accustomed to pay to it in England. Your policy has increased the turmoil in Ireland, and has deepened and widened popular resentment in Ireland against the very institutions and the very system of government which it is your professed ambition to cherish and preserve.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he was unable to agree with some of the observations which had fallen from hon. Members on the other side of the House, that the legislation of last Session in regard to Ireland had been satisfactory. He thoroughly and entirely agreed in this—that the measure passed last Session at the cost of so much labour, and of, perhaps, intentional misrepresentation, had produced very serious results. He did not believe for a moment that any benefit whatever had resulted to Ireland from that measure. No doubt, the state of things in Ireland had greatly improved, but that improvement was in no degree owing to the Crimes Act. To take a few months' Returns at a year ago, and compare them with similar Returns now, was altogether delusive, because it was just at that time that the Irish people had become alive to the fact that a large body of the people of this country were determined to do justice to Ireland. From that moment there had been a steady progress towards peace and friendship. He believed that that improvement would continue; and the only thing which had retarded, instead of accelerating it, and prevented it from becoming more rapid and certain, was the mischievous effects of the measure introduced by the Government last year. He did not quite understand upon what principle the House was told that the result of the legislation of last year had been satisfactory. There had been no good result whatever from the Coercion Act. What was the result? Her Majesty's Government said that it had been the gradual pacification of Ireland? That was a matter upon which there was a considerable difference of opinion. There were, however, some matters on which they might agree. It could not be denied that the result had been to put into prison some of Ireland's most trusted sons, and to stir up against one Party an amount of bitter feeling that did not previously exist. That which was previously tyranny had now become worse than tyranny—a tyranny not only of a cruel, but of a most contemptible kind. It was bad enough to oppress a people; but in the 19th century the system of tyranny had degenerated into simple and petty spite—a system which condescended, for the purpose of gratifying itself, not merely to inflict the punishment of imprisonment, but to acts of personal annoyance and insult in reference to persons of position and character. He thought the 19th century was too late for a Nero, whose weapon was a slop-pail, and who revelled in the stealing of clothes. Her Majesty's Government had established a system entirely novel, and in the course of a short time it would be most unsatisfactory. The only point he desired to lay down with force and energy was this. There was one object they were not seeking to attain—namely, good government and the pacification of Ireland; they were endeavouring to govern by force. Her Majesty's Government prided themselves on having established law and order to such an extent that they had driven beneath the surface those signs of lawlessness which they said existed still. They had compelled the people of Ireland to be orderly; but they had compelled them against their will. He maintained that that was not good government. It was impossible for Her Majesty's Ministers to do it; they had not done it yet, and if they did it it would not be good government. There was one great object which hon. Members on that side of the House would continue to fight for. They were convinced that no legislation for Ireland would be satisfactory until the country had been made quiet and happy, and until the law would be accepted not only without resistance, but with affection and sympathy. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government admitted that no progress had been made in winning the sympathy of the Irish people with the law and the Government under which they lived. The statistics of the Chief Secretary were good for nothing, and could prove nothing until it could be shown that the people of Ireland had been cemented in firmer bonds than before, and that the feeling of sympathy and affection between the two countries, which had been so long strained, had been re-established. No doubt, the sympathy of the Irish people for this country was increasing; but it was in spite of the coercive legislation of last year. Their confidence in the justice of this country was increasing, not in consequence of anything Her Majesty's Government had done, but in spite of it.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he earnestly protested against the assertion that coercive measures were more congenial to the Conservative Party than to their opponents; but the Government had been put into power for the purpose, first, of maintaining the Union, and, secondly, of restoring law and order, and those two purposes had, to a large extent, been fulfilled. No one had suffered from the Coercion Act except those who had wilfully transgressed the law, or the dupes of those who ought to have known better. His main reason for rising, however, was not to refer to the Irish Question, but to the question of agriculture, which was far more important to the large majority of people. Although the paragraph in the Queen's Speech on this subject was not so full as he could have wished, still he rejoiced at the notice taken of it; because, when taken up by the strongest Government the country had seen for years, there was a chance of something practical being done. Wheat, they might say, was no longer cultivable at a profit, and the same might be said of oats. And though barley was a trifle better as regarded price, the difference was very small. Then there was the meat supply of the country, in which the home producer was handicapped in many ways by foreign imports. But of that he did not complain. He hoped, however, as the Government were apparently so successful in their negotiations on the sugar question that they would approach the Argentine Republic, and get them to put an end to the system of bounties, amounting to about £100,000 a-year, which they had inaugurated to enable producers to send meat to this country. The condition of the agricultural interest could not be overlooked when they remembered that tens of thousands of men were driven from the agricultural districts to towns and villages in search of employment, and thus helped to swell the ranks of the unemployed. Only one interest connected with agriculture had made much improvement, and that was the dairy interest. But even there they were handicapped by foreign competition, which he would not complain of if our people had the same advantages as foreigners to carry on the trade successfully. In his own part of the country they had actually had to go to America and Canada to obtain competent instructors to teach the people the art and science of dairying. Was it not rather hard and absurd that they had no training college, no school, where such instruction could be imparted to those willing to learn? They were told they had the Science and Art Department at South Kensington; but it must not be forgotten that only £5,000 was spent by that Department on agricultural instruction. He hoped something would be done to relieve the agricultural interest from the heavy burdens of local taxation. If some of these burdens could be thrown upon the Consolidated Fund, that would not only be justice to the agricultural interest, but a benefit to the nation at large. He hailed with satisfaction the assurance that the question of railway rates was to be dealt with. Unless facilities of the best description were afforded to the agricultural interest, they could not compete with the foreigner. Technical education he would not enter upon, further than to express the hope that attention would be given to it amongst other things. They ought to have a distinct Government Department to take surveillance of those matters, and which would bring to the front many things buried in Consular Reports. They did not want necessarily a large expenditure in their favour, but they did want what appeared to be absolutely necessary—assistance from the Government to enable them to help themselves. If given in that way, much good would follow, which would be of advantage to the ratepayers in the long run. For these reasons, he brought before the House the passages enumerated in the Queen's Speech, in the hope that they would not be lost sight of this Session, and that the great agricultural interests might not be neglected.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was fond of imputing mendacity to his opponents; but that evening the right hon. Gentleman had himself furnished a good example of the flippant mendacity which usually characterized his statements.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That remark is very improper, and altogether un-Parliamentary. I must ask the hon. Member to withdraw it.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I withdraw it; and I am sorry that so early in the Session——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must be aware that the expression he used is quite un-Parliamentary.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON said, he had withdrawn it. As an Irish Member residing in one of the disturbed districts of the country, as far as he could see and judge, there was no change in the attitude of the people towards persons who were alleged to have been Boycotted. Certainly, no change had been brought about by the vicious action of the Police Authorities. What was the fact? In a notable case which recently came before a Law Court on appeal—the case of a blacksmith for refusing to shoe the horse of the widow Curtin—it was well known to the police, although they alleged that the widow was systematically Boycotted, that the smith used to go to her house at night and shoe the horse for her. Yet that very man was entrapped, brought before the Court, and illegally convicted. The prosecution was undertaken against the will of the Curtin family; but they themselves were threatened with proceedings if they hesitated to support the action of the police. Surely that was scarcely the way to make life easy for that unfortunate family. He would mention another case—that of Justin M'Carthy, whose proceedings had attracted considerable notoriety, and who, in a description which he gave of the wonderful village of Inniscall, asserted that to his own knowledge there were 350 persons Boycotted. He (Mr. Harrington) believed that that was about the extent of the entire population. But what were the facts in regard to M'Carthy's own case and his allegations? Not long ago Justin M'Carthy wrote a letter to a local newspaper in the county of Kerry, stating that so far as he was personally concerned he had never been Boycotted at all. Therefore his case must be taken out of the 350, and probably, if all the rest were inquired into, they would prove equally destitute of foundation, and in that way it would not be difficult to substantiate the figures of the Chief Secretary in reference to the diminution of Boycotting. If it suited the purpose of the Executive Government for the time being to say that crime and intimidation existed in Ireland, the figures were ready at hand to support their assertion. Judge Curran had been quoted in the course of the present debate. Now, on the very day that Judge Curran made an announcement of the peaceful state of Kerry—on that very day there was pending a trial which must have been within the learned Judge's cognizance—the trial of the murderers of an old man who was shot in the leg and bled to death; also the trial of a young man for taking rushes from his father's farm—there having been a dispute between his father and his uncle. There was another case in reference to an attack upon a very popular and estimable gentleman, which attack had been prompted by this very Justin M'Carthy, who at this moment avowed that, so far as he was personally concerned, he had never been Boycotted at all. He (Mr. Harrington) thought these facts would show how the figures to suit the purpose of the authorities were manipulated, in regard to the use which had been made of the Crimes Act and the results of the legislation of last year. The Act prescribed that the jurisdiction under the Act should be exercised by persons of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant was to satisfy himself. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that in the notable Mitchelstown trial, Captain Seagrave, when put on that table and asked whether he was one of the magistrates in regard to whose qualifications the Lord Lieutenant had satisfied himself, laughed at the idea and said that it was neither probable nor possible. As a matter of fact, whatever ordeal Captain Seagrave had been subjected to, he would have failed to pass. Indeed, he had failed in every examination he had undergone; but he, nevertheless, succeeded in getting an appointment as Resident Magistrate. It suited Her Majesty's Government to get a tool so pliant to their will. The Government wanted partizans—violent partizans—who would rush any person into Court, effectually shut up his mouth, and then commit him to gaol. This was the work that such magistrates as Captain Seagrave were well fitted to perform, and that gentleman was a good example of that sort of Judge which Her Majesty's Government wanted for the administration of the Crimes Act in Ireland. In some cases an appeal had been allowed after a conviction; and if, when the appeal was heard, the conviction was affirmed, the convicting magistrate could rush into Court there and then, take the prisoner by the collar, and rush him into gaol. He (Mr. Harrington) maintained that this was illegal, that the accused person was in the hands of the Judge who heard the appeal, and that until the Judge affirmed the original conviction, the Resident Magistrate who heard the original case had no right to be present, and had no legal power to arrest the defendant. It was contrary to every principle of justice and humanity that any man who was really a party to the appeal should have authority at once to lay his hand vindictively upon the shoulder of the defendant and carry him off to gaol. At the last Petty Sessions in the county of Kerry two young men were convicted of the extraordinary offence of uttering what was called a compromise between a "boo" and a laugh against the police, and they were sentenced to one month's imprisonment. The moment the sentence was pronounced, Sergeant Lock, of the Constabulary, laid hands upon these two young men and vindictively carried them off to gaol, although the conviction was appealed against. He (Mr. Harrington) had carefully watched the administration of the Crimes Act in Ireland, and he was able to assert, without much fear of contradiction, that the action of the Executive was prompted by a desire to give annoyance, and to create ill-feeling and irritation in the minds of those who happened to be accused, and to bring in conflict with them every individual who might be supposed to have a feeling of enmity against them. The Chief Secretary had read a number of figures in reference to Boycotting. Those figures would be found to be most elastic and altogether visionary. He (Mr. Harrington) believed that virtually there had been no change in what was known as Boycotting and exclusive dealing, although he was prepared to admit that the action of the Executive, as in the case of Mrs. Maroney in Ennis, public feeling had been outraged and inflamed against those whom the Government pretended to protect. It was difficult to understand the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in regard to statistics. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman deprecated the use of all figures, and then he proceeded to make use of them. In the next place, he deprecated the use of all facts, manipulating both figures and facts with singular dexterity, and calling upon the Irish Members, who had neither figures nor facts before them, to reply at once to the deductions he had drawn. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in reference to the poor women, Connell and Mrs. Maroney, was most elastic. The allegation was that Connell was lying ill in bed for three days, reduced to a dangerous condition by starvation, because a system of Boycotting prevailed which prevented her from being supplied with food, and waiting until she was strong enough to go to the police and lay her grievance before them. Now, this poor woman, whose case was stated with so much pathos, turned out to be a servant of Mrs. Maroney, whose case was scouted out of Court only the other day. It turned out that this woman sent persons to rival shopkeepers, who did not get the police custom, for goods with the sole object of entrapping them and annoying them, because she considered that she herself was Boycotted. The statement that Connell had been starving for three days was not the fact, because it was proved that she was a servant of Mrs. Maroney, and had been employed for this vindictive purpose. After the passing of the Crimes Act, and before its immediate application to Ireland, the Resident Magistrates were called up to Dublin. Did they all go there? Certainly not. It was not necessary that some of them should go; and as to the rest, they went to Dublin, not to obtain information as to the Act, but to be schooled as to the duties they were expected to perform. One of these magistrates flippantly told him—he would not mention the name — "A month is now the nearest thing. That is the latest tip from the Castle." With regard to the point that Boycotting and intimidation not coming under the head of agrarian crime, could the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary seriously maintain that with 659 cases of prosecution under the Act they were not to be taken into account as showing that the state of crime had not sensibly decreased? The right hon. Gentleman had manipulated his figures in an extraordinary way. Out of more than 600 cases, he said that 200 ought to be removed, because the accused were not convicted. Surely it was the prosecutions which showed the number of crimes in respect of which they were brought, and not the convictions. If there had been 600 crimes committed and no one had been prosecuted at all, there would have been 600 crimes all the same. This was the way in which the Chief Secretary had manipulated his figures in the course of his speech. He (Mr. Harrington) desired to refer incidentally to the Inniscall case. The facts of that case were as follows:—On a Sunday evening, about 7 o'clock, the house of Dr. O'Kane, living in the village of Inniscall, was attacked. Six or seven men entered it. They struggled with Dr. O'Kane at the door, and fired a revolver. The bullet missed Dr. O'Kane, but hit his son, who was left for dead by the attacking party, in the belief that they had killed the doctor. The whole family fought with a pertinacity which reflected the highest credit upon them. But there was not one word in the speech of the Chief Secretary in reference to that case; not one word of praise for the courage and vigour with which the attacked persons defended themselves on that occasion. What was the result? A couple of local arrests had been made—the persons arrested being the servants of the Justin M'Carthy already referred to. The accused persons were admitted to bail, although fully identified, and charged with the serious crime of Moonlighting. It leaked out in Castleisland that some cousins of M'Carthy had hired cars and conveyed the men who committed the outrage a distance of 30 miles. The facts were placed before the authorities; but they were very slow to move, and it was only after a lapse of three weeks that any steps were taken towards making an arrest. Instead of being sent to gaol and confronted with those who could identify them, the men accused of Moonlighting and outrage were released upon a bail of about £25. The men themselves had been identified. The case was still dragging on from day to day, and he asserted with confidence that it was the intention of the authorities to burke it. If hon. Members really desired to secure peace and individual liberty in Ireland, he asked them to assist the Irish Members by their votes in forcing such a case as this upon the attention of the Government. He would refer to another case, that of a man named Callaghan, who was a witness on one occasion, and whom he had only had an opportunity of seeing once. He was brought into the county of Kerry, to Tralee Gaol, to see if he could identify a man accused of the murder of Mr. Herbert. He had already made a statement in regard to the case, and he made it on evidence supplied to him by the gaoler and other persons who were present. The protest he had made was directed against the conduct of one of the magistrates, who, when the man was brought out for identification, walked along the line of prisoners, who had been brought out, and suddenly, on reaching a particular individual, stepped off the gravel path on to the grass, whereupon the informer immediately came up and put his hand on the shoulder of the man who had thus been pointed out with the remark—"That is the man." The prisoner was a man named Casey; but, unless the evidence of the informer was amply corroborated, it was highly improper to put him upon his trial on such evidence. Unfortunately—and it showed what the condition of the country was—this man Callaghan was still in the pay of Her Majesty's Government. He (Mr. Harrington) saw that the Solicitor General for Ireland was in his place, and was evidently paying attention to the debate. He claimed the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman to this matter, because the hon. and learned Gentleman was new to Office. Was he aware that in the time of his Predecessor both the Attorney and Solicitor General fought the Crimes Bill throughout, and they were now being sent to the disturbed districts of Ireland to administer it? Only at the last Assizes at Cork a man named Harold, accused of murder, was discharged by proclamation. He had been asked to account for certain marks on his person, and so unsatisfactory was the account he gave of them that he was kept in prison for a month, and in the end he was discharged by having recourse to a very unusual proceeding—namely, the issue of a Proclamation by the Lord Lieutenant, which rendered it impossible for the man to be tried for the same offence. The general belief in the country was that because he had employed as his solicitor a man who was first cousin to the Crown Prosecutor —a proceeding that would scarcely be tolerated in the administration of the Criminal Law in England, nor would it be sanctioned that two such men should work together, one prosecuting for the Crown and the other defending the prisoner. In such cases a prisoner, whatever his offence may have been, would escape, and he knew that he would escape. The Irish Members did not shirk the political consequences of their own acts. He did not think Her Majesty's Government, with any credit to themselves, could throw in the teeth of the Irish Representatives the fact that they had shirked any of the consequences which were likely to arise from a conflict with the law. At the time the Crimes Bill was introduced how many combinations for carrying out the Plan of Campaign existed in Ireland? Upon one estate of 700 tenants 500 adopted it, and the remaining 200, who stood aloof, were set down in the Returns of the Chief Secretary as having been partially Boycotted. But the Plan of Campaign had been eminently successful, notwithstanding the Crimes Act, and the tenants who adopted it had carried on the fight, not only with advantage to themselves, but for those who refused to join them. He asserted with confidence that no reliance whatever was to be placed upon the figures of the Chief Secretary. The Chief Secretary had been challenged by the right hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) to show that a single acre of land in Ireland had been taken or grabbed. If he could show that, the Crimes Act might be regarded to that extent as a success. So far the Act had only been put in force against illegal assemblies, against newspaper men, and against newspapers. Did hon. Members realize the disgraceful working of the Act in the case of Mr. O'Rooke, of Tralee? He was a poor man, although he occupied the position of Town Commissioner in Tralee. His wife was recently dead; he had a large family, and he was prosecuted for selling a copy of *United Ireland* and exhibiting a placard of that paper outside his shop. He had been told by the police that he was not to sell that paper. His reply was—"Why not? It is published under the walls of Dublin Castle; and if it is lawful to print it, why should it be unlawful to sell it?" He did remove the placard, but he sold copies of *United Ireland,* and this unfortunate man was sent for a month to gaol in consequence, on evidence which has now been proved to be altogether inadequate to sustain a conviction. In the case of the Lord Mayor, the Lord Chief Baron said the mere fact that a paragraph having appeared in a paper, announcing a meeting of the National League had been held, was sufficient proof of the meeting having been held; but that ruling was on an appeal quashed in another place, and a man who had been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment was released one week before the original sentence of a month had expired. But in the case of O'Rooke, he was not released, but he was sent to prison, with his helpless family unprotected and unprovided for. Would any man who had witnessed the callousness with which the Government had proceeded against O'Rooke, think one whit the more or one whit the less of them for their action in the matter? As a matter of fact, the public had flocked to his shop since his conviction, and the sale of the papers he was selling had been doubled. This was the reward he was receiving for having infringed the law; and it would to some extent be a compensation to him for the suffering he had had to undergo. He (Mr. Harrington) did not think that one moment ought, if possible, to elapse between the extraordinary statements the Chief Secretary had made to the House, and the contradiction that could be given to them. The Chief Secretary had already had some experience of the danger of making these bold statements. He had come down to the House armed, as he said, with facts, but they turned out to be fables, and the right hon. Gentleman had to eat humble pie. The right hon. Gentleman had caused amusement by describing the tactics by which some hon. Members had sought to escape arrest. He (Mr. Harrington) was prepared to speak in that House in the same spirit he had manifested elsewhere; and he was prepared to say that if his Colleagues were willing to allow him to do it, so strongly did he feel upon this question that an editor ought to be privileged to publish what he considered necessary of public news, that he would at once resign his seat in that House and go back to Kerry prepared to take his seat in the office of his little paper with the intention of fighting the matter out with Her Majesty's Government. They believed, and he spoke with some little experience of the feeling in this country, that, as the continual dropping of water wears away the stone, they would work their way through the prejudice which undoubtedly surrounded the Irish Question in England, and that the immediate settlement of that question would be ere long demanded by the English people.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, that he should not be doing his duty to the agricultural labourers and farmers in South Essex and other parts of the country, if he did not refer to the passage in Her Majesty's Speech in which the agricultural interest was mentioned. He knew that it was expected by them that the Government now in power, and which represented the country Party, would do something for them. They did not expect any special legislation, or anything like reversal of the equinoxes, but they did expect that the Government would take into consideration three things, and he trusted that no inducement would cause them to swerve in dealing with them effectually. The first was the question of railway rates, by which the home producer was paralyzed, and a bonus given the foreigner; the second was the question of tithe rent-charge, and in this case a revision was hoped for; and the third was that of local taxation and the equalization of taxation on real and personal property, as by the present system the interest of the farmers and labourers was being crushed out of existence. He did not wish to detain the House by saying more upon these subjects at that moment; but he hoped the House would not suppose that because hon. Members, representing the agricultural interest, did not push the matter, that they would not do so hereafter to the very end.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, there was one part of the Queen's Speech to which no allusion had yet been made—that referring to legislation for Scotland. As he read those words, he could not help asking himself what would happen if a Scottish Minister, responsible to a Scottish Legislative Assembly, had brought forward this beggarly bill of fare as sufficient legislative work for one year of that Assembly. In the first place, he could not conceive the possibility of any Scottish Ministry responsible to a Scottish Assembly bringing forward such paltry and *jejune* measures, while questions of the utmost importance and urgency were neglected; and if they were capable of such an act, they would speedily suffer the penalty in immediate exclusion from Office. The questions they were promised legislation upon were the Scottish Universities, the consolidation of the police burgh laws, and some allusion of an unintelligible character to the reduction of the cost of Private Bill legislation. But what were the questions which were grievous and urgent to Scotland at the present moment? First and foremost was the most deplorable condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. In some portions of Scotland extreme destitution prevailed, and in some parts even famine seemed to be threatened. That destitution and that famine were due to the policy which that House and Parliament had adopted in enabling the landlords in Scotland to deprive the people of the land which was necessary for the purpose of sustaining themselves and their families, and devoting it to the purposes of sport and the cultivation of deer. The disastrous results of that policy were now painfully felt throughout the whole of Scotland, and not only so, but the desperation to which those unhappy people had been reduced by the neglect of the Imperial Parliament had resulted in some breaches of the law, followed by trials in Edinburgh, and by sentences of which he would say nothing more than that they had sent a thrill of horror throughout the people of Scotland. When the law was broken it must be vindicated, but what a deplorable commentary on the work of that House. There were no people in any part of the

British Islands who were more willing to obey the law than the people in the Highlands of Scotland. If they had a fault, it was that their deference and obedience to lawful authority amounted to a superstition. But although it was melancholy, it was an undoubted fact that if the crofters did not break the law, no attention whatever would be paid to their grievances, and they would be left to starve and perish without any assistance from Parliament. Looking at the past conduct of that House with reference to the crofters, he observed that not a single step had ever been taken, either in the way of inquiry into their condition, or of introducing remedies for their relief, unless it had been forced upon the House by the continuance of illegal acts in the Highlands, and by the necessity of sending troops and ships away to that part of the country. This was a matter affecting the lives, he might say, of a very large number of their fellow-subjects in Scotland; and throughout the length and breadth of that country there was no topic that excited more profound interest, no people who drew more sympathy, and no conduct which excited more indignation, than the way in which the crofters had been treated, and remedies denied to their most urgent necessities. But of this pressing and clamant case there was not a word in the Speech from the Throne. Another class of Scotsmen who were at present suffering most severely were the tenant farmers. They were in the unhappy position, which farmers in England were not, of being mostly bound by leases for a considerable term of years, which they could not break without the consent of their landlords. Their capital was melting away, and this most important class was gradually being squeezed out of existence. What had Her Majesty's Government to say to the farmers? Not a word—not a notice. In another part of Scotland great suffering existed at present in consequence of the enormous sums which were exacted by landowners in the name of mining royalties for the right of working the mines. The serious pressure of those royalties on the mining industry of Scotland was at present driving the miners there more and more in the direction of Socialism. The districts which were inhabited by miners were the only parts of Scotland where at present what was commonly known as Socialism could be said to have any real existence. All these were matters of urgent necessity, and no Scotsman could for a moment look to the impotent and helpless position of the representation of Scotland in that Parliament without arriving at the conclusion that, however necessary Home Rule might be for Ireland, it was equally necessary for Scotland. If the Government must touch education in Scotland at all, what could have induced them to introduce a Universities Bill? That was the part of Scottish education that was least pressing and urgent. Their elementary education was not so good as it was. It had improved in quantity, but it had fallen off in quality, in consequence of an English Parliament insisting upon applying to Scotland the Code—that principle of payment by what they were pleased to call results, which he considered no results at all. The application of the Code to Scotland was deteriorating and injuring Scottish education; but the grievous *hiatus* in Scottish education at present was in their secondary education, and especially in their technical education. The Government certainly last year gave them a Technical Education Act, and if they were thankful for that Bill, they should be thankful for small mercies indeed. Technical education required money. In Scotland it required nothing but money, but that was an Act which gave them no money. It said to the people of Scotland—"Be ye clothed and be ye fed;" but it took good care not to provide either the food or the clothing. Therefore, from that Bill nothing could be expected, nor, indeed, could they have an adequate or proper treatment of secondary education, unless they were prepared to deal with those ecclesiastical endowments which were now applied for the support of a single religious denomination. All those questions hung together, and for legislation upon them the people of Scotland were ripe. The harvest was ready, but the harvestman was not there. The Imperial Parliament was too much engrossed with a multiplicity of affairs to be able to attend to such a small part of the United Kingdom as Scotland. He had just returned from a visit to his constituents, where he had had an opportunity of seeing something of those who had for many years taken a deep interest in educational reform, and he had found everywhere among them the gravest alarm at the suggestion that the present Government was to undertake to deal with the Scottish Universities, because, if they might judge from their experience of the past, what that House would be invited to do was not to legislate on the subject, but to draw a blank Bill, signed by the Imperial Parliament, and endorsed by a certain number of Gentlemen called Royal Commissioners, who were to insert in the Bill substantially whatever they thought fit. He had too deep a regard for the welfare of the Scottish Universities to desire to see any experiments of that kind made at their expense. For his own part, he had no confidence in the Government as educational reformers, and he could only look forward with misgiving to any Royal Commission appointed by them. He thought that the greatest blessing they could confer upon the Scottish Universities was to let them alone, and leave them to be dealt with by some other Government that had enjoyed the confidence of the people of Scotland, and who would be able to deal with the subject in a satisfactory manner to the people. With regard to the other subjects in the speech, he thought that the chief sin of the Government was more that of omission; and they would be utterly and entirely mistaken if they imagined that the miserable and meagre bill of fare they had put forward would satisfy the people of Scotland, or would win for them any credit. He considered that last year they had great reason to complain of the manner in which the Government treated Scottish Members. They were fortunate in securing several Wednesdays at the Ballot. All these Wednesdays the Government took away from them. It might be said that this was an evil which they shared in common with England. But there was this profound difference—that the English Members were engaged in a task which, to the majority of them, seemed agreeable; while the Scottish Members were forced to stand and see a measure passed which was abhorrent to their feelings. But that was not the worst of it. The Government, having taken away all their Wednesdays, proceeded to block their Bills. It would be interesting to know whether they were that Session also going to play the part of the dog in the manger and refuse to legislate for Scotland, and at the same time prevent Scottish Members from doing so. With regard to the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier, if that delimitation had been accomplished by an arrangement between the Ameer of Afghanistan and Russia, the circumstance would have deserved unqualified satisfaction; but the delimitation had been accomplished between Russia on the one side and England on the other. If Russia should violate that frontier, one of two things must happen: either we must submit to a very grave and serious loss of *prestige*—he might almost say of honour—which could not fail to have disastrous consequences throughout the East, or else we should have to engage in war whenever Russia wished it. The result, therefore, of this delimitation was that we should not be able to choose where we should meet the attack, for we had placed it in the power of Russia to compel us to go to war, with a base of operations not on this, but on the other side of Afghanistan. In short, he held that we had laid a trap for ourselves.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he could assure hon. Gentlemen opposite that the question of royalties was one of enormous interest to the mining community. He could take any Member of that House to scores and hundreds of miners in his own constituency who were getting out coal at a less price per ton than was being paid to the landowners in the shape of royalty, and those men would find but cold comfort in the hope held out to them in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech of brighter prospects. He had listened with attention to the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who seconded the Address (Colonel Duncan), and had been exceedingly pleased to hear him say that we were to have a turn of the tide in our commercial affairs. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had referred to a visit he had made to the North of England, and told the House of the value which the miners placed on the legislation of the last Session; but the hon. and gallant Gentleman might, in his opinion, also have told the House that there were miners in the North of England now earning 8*s.* to 10*s.* a week, out of which they had to maintain themselves and their families, and who probably, on the average, throughout the year did not earn more than 16*s.* a week. He feared the hon. and gallant Gentleman had not seen in the parts he was referring to any signs of the turn of the tide; and he would ask if there was any evidence of the tide turning in the deputation which waited on the Prime Minister the other day, and which was headed by Lord Herschell. And, again, was it shown that any improvement had taken place by the last Returns of Pauperism in England and Wales? They had been told that the number of Paupers in the month of November who were receiving relief was greater than at any former period during the last 12 years of our history; and in the Metropolis there were 100,000 paupers receiving outdoor relief. He thought these people also would find small comfort in the passage of Her Majesty's Speech which said that the prospect of the future was more hopeful. Those prospects he could assure that House would not satisfy hungry men, and unless the Government were prepared to take some steps to hasten reform and improve the condition of the working classes, they would find the latter going over almost in a body to Socialism. That calamity could only be avoided by the Government taking time by the forelock, and acting upon the suggestions of men who were thoroughly in touch with the people; for then, and then only, could they hope to keep the agitation of the unemployed in this country within anything like Constitutional limits. This might be done by the Government accepting the suggestions of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down with reference to mining royalties. It might also be done by their giving their support to the agitation in the country against granting a renewal of the coal and wine duties. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had earned considerable favour by the manly answer which he gave to the deputation which waited upon him when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he (Mr. Fenwick) was sure that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would assist the miners by preventing the renewal of the coal and wine duties, he would earn the gratitude of the mining community. That community consisted of more than 500,000 persons who were engaged in one of the staple industries of the country, and he strongly supported the appeal of the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) that the Government should give their serious attention to the question of royalties, and also to the enormous charge levied for carrying coal to the docks for shipment to London and elsewhere. In some cases, coal owners were compelled to pay for way-leaves something like the rate of £30 per acre, which was much more than the value of the fee simple of the land, and they were also burdened with the condition that they must put the land again into the same state as they found it. It was because he believed that these were reforms which would tend considerably to brighten the prospects of the present year that he urged on the Government the desirability of giving attention to them. He believed that, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) gave Notice of his intention to raise the question of Royalty Rents by direct Resolution last Session, so it was his intention to bring it forward again; and he (Mr. Fenwick) trusted the Government would afford the hon. Member all facilities for the discussion of the question, and would aid him all they could in bringing about a satisfactory solution.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) said, he thought the debate on the Address this Session, with the single exception of the speech of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), had been characterized by great monotony, and by a somewhat sombre and subdued tone. Whether that was in consequence of anticipation of more lively matters to come later on he was unable to say; but he was afraid the few observations he had to intrude upon the House would not tend to enliven the debate, for the subject he was about to refer to was one of intense gloom, and might have the effect of making the discussion even more lugubrious than it had hitherto been. He desired to express his satisfaction that in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech it had been found compatible to make some candid reference to the present condition of agriculture; because, whatever allegations hon. Members representing agricultural constituencies had hitherto felt it to be their duty to make, they had been usually met with the same official coldness, and with the general implication that their assertions were not borne out by facts. But now they had in this very important official document the distinct assertion that no improvement corresponding to the alleged improvement in commerce was observable in the condition of agriculture. That would be, he hoped, noted by the country at large, especially by those who were struggling against great odds in connection with this much depressed and neglected industry. But, while glad to find that the condition of agriculture was recognized as being bad in official quarters, when he turned to the suggestion of remedies he could not say that he was equally satisfied. Her Majesty's gracious words said—"I commend the interests of this great industry to your attentive care," which seemed to him very like the old formula, in which the Spanish Inquisition used to hand over obstinate heretics to the custody of the temporal power. He did not think that much hope was held out—certainly not by the measures which the Speech went on to foreshadow. With regard to the cheapening of the transfer of land, he thought the measure in contemplation would confer a substantial boon on the unfortunate landlords, who were most anxious at this moment to get rid of their land as fast as possible; but he believed it would be most cruel and impolitic to try to give the impression throughout the country that there was anything desirable in, at this moment, becoming a landed proprietor. In many cases the land at this moment would not pay the necessary expenses of rates and taxes. It was impossible to pay the tithes on a great deal of the land that existed, and many thousands of acres lay absolutely uncultivated. He did not know what economic system—whether it was called "Free Trade" or "Protection" or what—could justify the fact that at this moment there were upwards of 25,000 acres of arable farm land in the country lying absolutely uncultivated, and not yielding a penny to anyone. To that very large proportion of uncultivated land, the county he represented contributed upwards of 1,700 acres. The county of Essex contributed upwards of 3,000 acres, and so on; and he did not think that the public at large—certainly not many hon. Gentlemen in that House who represented urban constituencies—realized the amount of distress which was inflicted on the rural communities by the fact of this land being absolutely uncultivated. Again, he was sorry to say that the nature of the cultivation had been changing in a manner very injurious to home industries. They found, in the first place, that a great deal of arable land was being converted into pasture; and he believed that many hon. Members were not aware of what a diminution of employment that single process involved. They would allow him to remind them that for every 100 acres of arable land employment could be found for about four men. For the same number of acres of land laid down to grass, employment was not furnished for even one man. Now, they had often been told to try other crops, and to try exceptional methods of farming, and the part of the world he represented, and the adjoining county of Kent, had been exceptionally fortunate in such experiments. By cultivating hops in Kent and the Weald of Sussex, they had not only enabled farmers and landowners to meet their engagements, but had also given more employment in proportion than any other branch of agricultural industry. It was not generally known what a vast amount of employment this hop industry furnished, not only to the immediate localities, but to the country at large. He was saying a moment ago that while 100 acres of arable land furnished employment to four men, 100 acres of land laid down to grass did not furnish employment for one. Well, but the same quantity—100 acres—of land cultivated in hops found employment for from 35 to 50 men, and also healthy recreation for vast numbers of miserable Irish peasants and poor from the East End of London, who looked to this as one of their most substantial means of subsistence. In the county of Kent alone 4,000 acres of this hop land had been thrown out of cultivation. In the several counties in which the hop industry had been followed, a total of over 6,400 acres, which had been devoted to the hop industry, had been allowed to go out of cultivation. The enormous loss which that entailed could hardly be estimated. It entailed loss, not only to those actually engaged in the cultivation—the pickers, the labourers, and so on—but it entailed indirect loss on every man in the community. It entailed loss to the provision merchants, the wood dealers, the manure merchants, the implement makers, the bankers, and indeed almost everybody; and it was becoming a most lamentable and serious thing that while Representatives of these hop constituencies pointed out that this evil was increasing, no adequate remedy was suggested by any Government that happened to be in power. The suggestions which were made in the Gracious Speech—the proposal for cheapening the transfer of land, for modifying the tithe rentcharge, for the promotion of technical education—were, no doubt, excellent proposals in their way; but they were not final, and did not go to the root of the question which they ought to deal with. There was another suggestion made in the Gracious Speech—another foreshadowing of a measure which, he thought, did involve something of more importance. The speech said—

> "Proposals are being considered for preventing undue preference in the rates charged by Railway Companies on foreign and domestic produce."

Well, it was notorious that for many years past the agricultural interest had suffered very severely from the undue preference given by the Railway Companies to the foreigner; but he should just like to ask Her Majesty's Government—who, he was sorry to see, were not represented on this important occasion—to consider whether the introduction of a measure for actually benefiting British farmers by preventing Railway Companies from charging them and the foreign producers what they liked was not an actual concession to those principles of protection to British industry which he had been sent there to advocate? He trusted that that would be found to be the case, because if the measure which proposed to deal with railway rates was a measure which left the foreigner unattacked in the position he at present occupied, and only added fresh difficulty and imposed fresh obligations on the Railway Companies without hitting the foreigner at all, he could only say that the measure would have no effect whatever in mitigating the distress from which the agricultural industry was at present suffering, or silencing the clamour which was steadily coming up from those engaged in that industry. He thought it was the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick) who said that all that was required in connection with a question of this sort—and the hon. Member was speaking more particularly with regard to the mining industry—was for the Government to take the opinion of men thoroughly acquainted with the subject. His (Mr. Brookfield's) experience was that when an hon. Member said that, he usually referred to his own opinion, and expected the Government to take that. No doubt there were many honourable Members who would be glad to see their individual views accepted as being conclusive. But what he wished the Government would do, and that the Prime Minister would do, was to actually recognize the change which was coming over the public feeling with regard to fiscal policy—the great change which had taken place, within so short a space of time as the last few months. Why, he believed that the Government suffered more certainly in these democratic days by not realizing the actual changes that were going on around them, than from almost any other cause. Of course, it was a part of the duty of the Government to distinguish between self-interested clamour and the designs of personal ambition and actual grievances which had their basis in solid fact. But he believed that men in the position of Lord Salisbury and others were greatly handicapped in this respect—living in an artificial atmosphere, and not being really in touch with public opinion as it changed from time to time; and if that were the case with the noble Marquess, who had occasionally to ask, when he was going to a particular district, what was the state of public feeling in that neighbourhood, and then made a speech more or less in accordance with the answer he received, it was still more the case with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), who was not even allowed by his family and friends to see a newspaper unless it expressed the most unqualified approval of his actions. It was attributed to the late Lord Palmerston that when he wanted to know the actual state of public feeling on this or that question, he did not ask his private secretaries or his friends, or people of that sort, but used to consult "the man in the white hat on the top of the omnibus;" and that was the kind of individual, or his modern equivalent in the underground railway, who ought to be consulted on the question to which he (Mr. Brookfield) was referring. Now, this kind of person—the average every-day elector, who did not concern himself much with Party intrigues or foreign policy or other questions of that sort, but really desired to make a reasonable living and do his duty more or less to the state of life to which he was called—was very apt to consider some of the facts which they were endeavouring to lay before the public at the present moment from a standpoint of his own. He was coming to the conclusion that the root of our distress was not to be found in the mere fact that we went in, more or less, for a Free Trade policy, but in the fact that the Government of the day continually turned a deaf ear to all suggestions for any modification or improvement whatever in that system; and he (Mr. Brookfield) believed that that could not long continue. Had he known that he would have had the honour of addressing the House that evening, he should have brought with him some statistics which he had been preparing on this subject. He was well aware that it was very easy to prove absolutely anything by statistics; but he did not think it was easy to disprove some of the broad facts that they were able to urge at this moment. There was the broad fact that in our foreign transactions there was a hostile balance against us every year of about £100,000,000. When they asked the Free Trader how he accounted for that balance, he at once annihilated them with theories, but did not account for the actual loss. They were supposed to be consoled for the fact that their exports were so infinitely lower than their imports by the argument that these things were always adjusted by some natural scientific principle. But he failed to see—and he believed the public at large were beginning to fail to see—how it could be for the benefit of this country—whether the process were thoroughly scientific or not—that so much money should go out of the country annually, and that our trading transactions were not conducted on equal terms. If we imported so much of one kind of commodity, and sent abroad so much money in return, it might be perfectly true that the entire community was no loser by the transaction; but it did appear to him that if the whole transaction took place at home, this country would benefit by it; for, while the commodity would remain at home, the money would at the same time remain for home circulation. He never knew any Free Trader who could get rid of that difficulty without spluttering into new ones. He complained that the aims of all "earnest and thinking men"—as they called themselves—and all the aims of the Legislature seemed to be directed to the advantage and maintenance of the foreign producer, and entirely against the interest of the home producer. He believed that the most alarming feature at the present moment, side by side with the steady diminution of employment which was furnished by the land going out of cultivation so rapidly, was the undeniable fact that the population was increasing at a most abnormal rate, and that the consumption was increasing in a proportionate degree. He supposed that it would be in vain to expect in a debate of this kind —which he believed they were most of them agreed it was desirable to make a short debate—any important exposition of policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government with regard to British industry and the question which he and his Friends were endeavouring to raise. But he and his Friends had accepted the invitation which the Prime Minister had given them, and were about to formulate their views and wishes in the shape of a Bill which would, no doubt, duly be laid upon the Table. He believed it was a great deal easier to criticize novel proposals of this kind in general terms than actually to upset the theories which they might advance. All the theories which those who advocated Protection put forward were, after all, those which, as Lord Salisbury once said, were adopted by the rest of the civilized world, with the exception of ourselves. They were theories which, in other countries, were gaining ground every day. He (Mr. Brookfield) considered that, as regarded this House, Her Majesty's Government had no cause to fear the action of the little knot of hon. Members who corresponded in importance, perhaps, to the Quaker community outside the House, and they had the advantage of the recent defection of the right hon. Gentleman who represented the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who, for some reason of his own, had recently turned his coat completely inside out on this subject. But they might reasonably fear the great growth of public opinion outside Parliament. He trusted very largely to the broad political fact that the democracy at large, as a democracy, invariably gravitated towards Protection; and he thought they were more likely to see and to appreciate the argument that England must be for the English, and that money should be spent at home—that Englishmen should be employed at home instead of foreigners—than to fall in with the theories, however plausible, of those who were perpetually posing as the friends of the consumers, ignoring the fact that they were generally producers at the same time. He would not go into the matter as it bore upon the Irish Question, though no doubt the two subjects were closely connected. As he had said before, a Bill was to be introduced on the question, and they would in due course make their position and proposals known; and he did not think that the Government would find that there was anything unreasonable in the views that they were taking of these matters, and that when all other means had been tried to resuscitate agriculture from the condition referred to in the Gracious Speech, some advisers, either in this Parliament or in some future Parliament, would be glad to have recourse to that simple remedy—protection for home industries.

MR. W. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) said, he did not propose to interpose for any length of time in this debate, nor to quarrel with the destructive criticism which had been applied to the Speech from the Throne by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Brookfield); but he did not think that it would be consistent with his duty, regarding his position towards the constituency he represented, if he did not venture to offer one or two observations as to an omission from Her Majesty's Speech which appeared to him to be deserving of notice. This omission became more startling and apparent when placed in contrast with some of the promises of legislation which were contained in the Gracious Speech. He might say, first of all, that he strongly complained that there was no reference in the Speech to the country the largest constituency in which he had the honour to represent in that House. It could not be unknown to Her Majesty that there were claims put forward by Wales for the recognition of the wants which she had in various directions. Some of those wants could not be of such a nature as to provoke the hostility of any Government that was really desirous of securing the well-being of every part of Her Majesty's Dominions. For instance, he might specify in that regard the subject of intermediate education. He did not now desire to say anything with regard to the attitude the Conservative Party had taken up in times past in regard to the education of the great mass of the people of this country. He wished to give them credit for the best possible intentions for the furtherance of education now that they saw resistance was hopeless; but he was at a loss to account for the fact that amongst the measures they had promised to introduce they had not included a measure for intermediate education in Wales. So far as he knew, there could be no conflict as to the reasonableness of the desire of the country to advance in education. So far as he knew, there had been no demands put forward by Wales as to which any arguments had been adduced which could properly cause it to be described as unfair, unreasonable, or too exacting; and he, therefore, did complain here that Her Majesty's Government, whilst moving in matters useful in themselves, but of vastly inferior importance, had not risen to the height of acknowledging the demand put forward for such a measure by that nationality to be just and reasonable. Was it because they wished to keep up a suggestion that Wales had no nationality of its own, and that Wales had no right to any legislation which did not take in England as well? The speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Rye (Mr. Brookfield) seemed to contain the germ of that Home Rule sentiment which had been enunciated on the Liberal side; for after advocating Protection, which must lead to taxing the food of the people, he claimed "England for the English." He (Mr. W. Bowen Rowlands) did not desire to restrict the claim of Wales for consideration within its own limits entirely; but he maintained that the elements of nationality belonged in a pre-eminent degree to Wales, and that it was idle and mischievous, therefore, with these vital forces at work, proving her claim to individual nationality, to attempt to ignore Wales as Governments had endeavoured to do in days gone by. In the Speech from the Throne, there was no special reference to Welsh agricultural interests; but that might be because, in one paragraph, Her Majesty expressed regret that there was no improvement in the condition of agriculture generally. He regretted to find that neither in reference to Wales nor any other part of the United Kingdom was there a hint that the Government were prepared to bring in any measure in the direction of remedial legislation concerning agriculture. One grievance which was as intolerable in Wales as it was in Ireland was that the rents payable were much too high for the farmers to pay in the present condition of the agricultural industry. He should have thought that some scheme such as that of a Land Court, which had met with great success in Ireland, might not unfairly have been included in the sketch of prospective measures with which the Gracious Speech from the Throne had favoured them. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Rye (Mr. Brookfield) that while the expression of regret for the depressed condition of agriculture did credit to the humane feelings of Her Majesty's Government, it would have assumed a more practical form if it had been accompanied by a suggestion for a remedy. The only suggestion that had been made in the debate from the opposite side was a return to the discredited system of Protection—a system which he thought the good feeling and political good sense of the country would never allow any Government, however retrograde it might be, to have recourse to again. But there were many other subjects which called for notice with regard to the country which he complained had been so ignored in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. There was, for instance, the burning question of the relation between Church and State; as well as that phase of it which more particularly affected the method of collection and the mode of application of the tithe rent-charge. He observed that the Speech promised a legislative proposal for modifying the procedure by which the tithe rent-charge was collected, putting it altogether, as it seemed to him, on a false issue. What the Government proposed to do was to deaden the public appreciation of the evils of tithe by rendering its collection more easy—by charging it upon the landlord in the first instance. They evidently thought that by that means public feeling would not be so readily excited, and public observation would not be so much stimulated towards the real grievance, which in Wales, was not so much the method of collection as the mode of application—namely, its devotion, as the majority of the people thought unfairly, to the support of one religious institution, and that not by any means an institution to which the majority belonged. The part of the country which he represented would have been extremely glad if, instead of the measure, or if, together with a measure for preventing undue preference in the rates charged by railway companies, there had been something to abolish any undue preference in the matter of religious establishments and religious institutions generally. Apart from those questions affecting his own country in particular, there were omissions in the Speech which he regretted to find. He had no doubt that on some of the points many hon. Members sitting on the opposite Benches would agree with him. It might be truly said that it was impossible to mention in the Speech from the Throne every desirable object, much less every possible object, of prospective legislation; but there were some matters as to which public opinion appeared to be ripe, and the evils of which appeared to be such as to demand attention from the Legislature. He thought that some means ought to be found of altering our procedure, so as to afford the right of criminal appeal. He did not propose to occupy the time of the House by referring to the state of public feeling in regard to the question of criminal appeal; but he should have been glad to have found some indication in the Speech from the Throne that the anomalies in the Criminal

Law were soon about to occupy the attention of the Government and of the country. There were other matters alluded to in the Speech which, no doubt, were matters of great satisfaction. He rejoiced, he supposed with all Members of the House, that measures tending to develop the resources of Ireland, and to facilitate an increase in the number of the proprietors of the soil, were likely to occupy the attention of the Government. But he thought that in order to carry such proposals out, there should be some departure from the old policy of Coercion, because the result of appealing under successive Administrations to Coercion Acts had not been to increase the number of the proprietors of the soil, but to sensibly diminish the number of inhabitants of the country—to the extent of one-third of the total number. He should have hoped to see some indication in the method of treating Ireland had it not been ostentatiously proclaimed in the preceding paragraph of the Speech that the measures passed last Session had proved beneficial to Ireland. His object, however, in rising was not so much to make any general observations upon the policy of the Government, or upon the measures alluded to in the Speech from the Throne, as to perform what he conceived to be his duty—namely, to complain that, although matters which legitimately should excite the attention of any responsible Government had arisen in the country of which he was a native and which he had the honour to represent, the Government had not recognized the situation, or thought fit to mention those matters in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech.

MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he was very glad to find that in the Speech of Her Gracious Majesty the question of agriculture occupied a prominent position. The position of agriculture was a most important subject for the House to pay attention to; and he hoped that before the Session was over considerable attention would be given to it. The points touched upon in the Speech—tithes, railway rates, and so on—were all matters which he hoped would be thoroughly gone into. The tithe question was one that demanded earnest and immediate attention. The matter had long been a vexed and grievous one as between the tithepayer and the tithe receiver; and he wanted to see all the present friction laid aside once for all. He desired to see the tithe-owners' property respected; but, at the same time, he did not want the land to be unduly taxed in regard to tithe. His own idea was that it was always intended that tithe should represent some relative proportion to the capability of the soil to pay a smaller or a larger amount. At the present moment there were large tracts of land where the tithe was considerably in excess of the rent. He could not think it was ever the intention of the donors of tithe, however good their intentions might have been, that such an anomaly as that should be established. He feared it would be a very difficult question to straighten out; but he trusted the Government would not be afraid of thoroughly going into it just because it was a difficult one. The more difficult the question the more zest he hoped the Government would throw into it. There were many other difficult questions connected with agriculture that would want a great deal of courage to tackle in an efficient and thorough manner. Take, for instance, the railway question. There were a great many people who were very much interested as shareholders in the profits of railways; but agriculturists thought it was very hard that foreign produce should be carried long distances, past their very farms, at a cheaper rate than the produce they grow was conveyed comparatively short distances—say from Essex to London. His hon. Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Brookfield) had referred to the advisability of opening up that great question which was known to-day under the name of fiscal reform. Although he (Mr. C. W. Gray) might not go so far as his hon. Friend, he unhesitatingly said that if no remedy could be found for the present agricultural depression without a recourse to fiscal reform, then, by all means, let us have fiscal reform. He did not know that there was any reason why we should be afraid of fiscal reform. At the same time, he hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would understand that if they could produce any remedy for what he could not help describing as the present agricultural ruin—any remedy which would be efficient to reinstate agriculture in the position which it ought to occupy without touching upon fiscal reform—he should be only too delighted, as an agriculturist, to support them in their efforts. But he was afraid that the remedies which they would suggest would be more in the nature of the suggestion which was thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), when he advised farmers to grow black currants and to produce jam. That was a remedy which would certainly never be found to be sufficient to get agriculture out of the rut into which it had fallen. Agriculturists had been told again and again by their advisers—and the number of advisers farmers had was astonishing—that the troubles in which they found themselves were owing to their own want of practical knowledge of their business. He knew there were farmers who were lazy, and farmers who had insufficient capital; there were others who never thoroughly understood their business; but he asserted that it was unfair to suggest that the general agricultural depression was owing to deficiency on the part of the agriculturists. British farmers knew their business as well as any other class of the community knew theirs; but British farmers did not know how to get a profit out of an article which cost more to produce than it could be sold for in the market. If any hon. Gentleman could tell them how they were to get a profit out of growing wheat at 30*s.* a-quarter, they would be glad to hear all he had to say upon the subject. Perhaps he might be allowed to say a word or two about the terrible question of fiscal reform. He should like to know why it was that when the time arrived for discussing that question they should not do so. If they really had Free Trade to-day, it would be almost impossible to re-open a question of this sort; but he maintained that they had not got Free Trade. As a farmer, he knew that if he had a quantity of barley lying in his barn intended for brewing purposes, that barley, before it was made into beer, would be subjected to a duty of about 80 per cent on its original value. He could hardly think he was living in a free country when such was the case. He could run through a list of articles that were also subjected to a similar tariff; but it would take up too much of the time of the House for him to do so. [*Cries of* "Name them!"] There was tea, for instance. Tea paid a duty of 6*d.* a-pound. He maintained that tea had become almost a necessity on the poor man's table; and he could not understand why an article of that sort should be subjected to a taxation of 6*d.* a-pound at our ports, and why, if he suggested placing a small duty upon some article of luxury—lace, silk, or something of that sort—he should be told that he might as well try to resuscitate Queen Anne. Hon. Members might depend upon it that, although it was an undoubted fact that Queen Anne was dead, they would hear a great deal more about the fiscal reform movement. They would hear most about it from the working classes themselves; and he was convinced that if the working classes came forward in their thousands, and were to say they would rather that the 6*d.* which was now levied on a pound of tea should be levied on some other article, no Government would turn a deaf ear to the wish. The change he should like to see accomplished in connection with the duty which was now levied upon beer would be something in this nature—the 6*s.* 3*d.* a-barrel which was now levied on beer might well be reduced, and then something might be placed on the foreign barley at our ports. As his hon. Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Brookfield) could tell them, there was no class of agricultural industry which was more beneficial to the working classes than the hop cultivation. £20 an acre might be spent in cultivating hops. That £20 was circulated amongst the poor people from the time hops first came up to the time they were picked. It used to be a great boon to the poor people of our large cities to go down to the hop districts in the hop season and earn a few pounds to help them through the coming winter. Why should not the beer duty be reduced, and a duty placed on the foreign hops, so as to give a stimulus to hop cultivation in England? Hop cultivation was going out very speedily now, and they would find many other branches of agriculture would soon go out of existence unless something was done to prevent their extinction. Could there be a more serious question than the disappearance of arable cultivation? He hoped no hon. Member would think that it did not make any difference whether the land was under the plough or whether it was laid down to grass. He assured hon. Members that directly they laid down the poorer descriptions of arable land to grass, they took a great deal of capital and labour away from the agricultural business. The poor clay lands which had been growing wheat, and which were now constantly laid down to grass, were so unsuitable to grass, that when laid down in that way they did not produce nearly so much for the people as they used to produce when they were under arable cultivation. He found that everyone professed to take great interest in the question of the food supply of the people. So did he. He thought it was one of the greatest political subjects that anyone could turn his attention to; and it was because he thought the food supply of the people was such an important question that he asked hon. Members to look the matter fairly in the face. He asked them not to approach it with more Party political bias than was absolutely necessary. He prayed them never to be so wrapped up in their affection for the miscalled Free Trade as not to be able to pay attention to this subject, if something in the way of fiscal reform was suggested as a remedy. He wanted thorough light to be thrown on every corner and side of this question, and that thorough light he hoped would be the light of truth. The English taxpayers would, without a grunt, contribute £500,000 or so for an iron-clad. We contribute £30,000,000 sterling every year for our Army and Navy—perhaps we might not like it, but still we did it without much grumbling. He maintained that it was just as important, in order that we might hold our position as a country, that we should attend to the Home Commissariat Department, as that we should attend to the Army and Navy of which we were so proud. What would be the position of a citadel the walls of which had been strengthened, where large guns had been mounted, and where the guns were manned with such soldiers as Old England could produce, if, when the enemy was surrounding it, it was found that someone had forgotten all about the Commissariat? Such would be our position if this question were not looked fairly in the face. Then they would know what a dear loaf was. Men like his hon. Friend the Member for Rye (Mr. Brookfield) and himself were often twitted with trying to raise the price of the poor man's loaf. He (Mr. C. W. Gray) was quite sure that that was neither his wish, nor the wish of his hon. Friend; but he maintained that if the arable land of England continued to go out of arable cultivation at the rate it was now going out, when there came a rumour of war, the poor man would know what a dear loaf was, and that was just what he and those who thought with him wanted to avoid. It would be much better that we should produce as much as possible of the food supply of our people here at home, and then by all means make up the deficiency from abroad; but we could not produce the greatest amount of home food if we continued to show that neglect of agricultural ruin that had been shown in the past. We might produce schemes of peasant proprietary and allotments, and wish them all "God speed;" but they would never make the wealthy farmer with £10,000 at his back, or the poor farmer with £10, undertake the cultivation of the soil, when they knew that the only result would be that in course of time their capital would be gone. They must show to the men whom they wanted to place on the soil some chance of their being able to get a business profit for their labour and their capital. In order to do that, something in the nature of a drastic remedy must be forthcoming. He sincerely trusted that every hon. Member who had ever stood upon a public platform and appealed to the feelings of the working classes by talking about cheap food, or employment for the working classes, would do all he could to suggest any reasonable remedy for the present ruinous state of things. In case of England being at war with any large Continental Power, she ought, at any rate, to be in a position to supply herself with food for as long a time as possible from her own fields.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said, he must congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the firmness they had shown in resisting those who, under very plausible names, sought to re-introduce the principle of Protection into this country. An hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken of the agricultural interest being on the brink of ruin; but in spite of all they heard on that subject he (Mr. Coghill) ventured to think that that was not the case. If they took the case of the counties of Devonshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire, amongst others, he did not think that anything like agricultural ruin would be found there. He regretted that no allusion was made to the unemployed in the country. There was in England a large number of men out of employment, or only earning very small wages, and that was a subject which he thought might have attracted the attention of Her Majesty's Government. He was of opinion, also, that the scale of treatment in the workhouses ought to be improved; they did not want them to be made too comfortable and become an inducement to people to go into them; but if a man received a night's lodging in the casual ward he ought not to be made to do labour before he went out in the morning, because that was often the cause of his being too late to get work on the day. With regard to the workhouses of the Metropolis, he thought the system was defective. For instance, a poor woman looking out for a night's lodging might be sent from one workhouse to another, and after that be told that she was chargeable on another part of London; she would probably be worn out before she got a lodging; and it was under these circumstances that many persons actually died in the streets. He considered, therefore, that it would be a great advantage to have officers to point out to persons needing relief places where they could obtain it; we should not have those sights which he had mentioned recurring in the streets of London. There was an allusion in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to a Bill dealing with railways; but he would point out that that Bill was only to deal with preferential rates, though he hoped it would also apply to all the enormous rates now being charged by the Railway Companies on goods which were the cause of trade being driven away from many places throughout the country. It was the same in the case of agricultural produce, a great deal of which was prevented from coming to market solely owing to the excessive cost of railway carriage. He also thought that the Railway Companies required to be overhauled for the way in which they treated passengers; they were tricky in their conditions and arbitrary and high-handed with regard to their passengers. Take the case of return tickets alone — one Company issued them for a day, another for seven days, and another, say, for a month; then another Company would put it on the ticket that it was only available from one station named to another station named, and not for intermediate stations—a statement that was absolutely wrong, because the contrary had been decided in the Courts of Law, and the system was only carried on to impose upon those who were ignorant of the fact. He objected to the large number of appeals which were permitted under our legal system. Suitors were taken from Court to Court, and there was no termination to their suits; they began in Judge's Chambers; they went afterwards to the Divisional Court, then to the Court of Appeal, and then to the House of Lords. It certainly seemed to him strange that they should have a Supreme Court of Judicature, and that there should also be a Court superior to it. It was difficult to understand the meaning of the term "supreme," if it was not thought it had nothing superior to it; and he was of opinion that it would be to the interest of the suitors if that Superior Court could be removed—that was to say, that the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords should come to an end—an arrangement which would not result, as some supposed, in any loss of judicial ability, inasmuch as the Judges now sitting in the House of Lords would then sit in the Court of Appeal. Under the present system it was quite possible that a suitor might get a decision in his favour in one of the Divisions of the Supreme Court, which might be reversed on appeal, and again given in his favour by the House of Lords. It seemed to him that suitors should be treated with equal favour; whereas, under our judicial system, if a man were rich enough he could go on wearing out his antagonist until he got him up to the House of Lords. With regard to the subject of transferring the Irish Government from Dublin Castle, he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would see their way to removing the form of centralized government which now existed; and he thought there was no doubt that much of the dissatisfaction in Ireland sprang from the abuses of the present system. He should be glad to see, as had been suggested by an hon. Member the other day, the substitution of more Irish Secretaries to do the business of Ireland. It seemed hard to expect the Irish people to be loyal to their Sovereigns, while, instead of allowing them to pay their allegiance to the Sovereign, they had set before them a miserable dummy. He knew that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway congratulated themselves a good deal on the adherence to their cause of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan); but he (Mr. Coghill) thought they should not congratulate themselves too much, because the right hon. Baronet had now held his present opinions for nearly six months, and it was now getting time for him to change them. He wished briefly to refer to one or two expressions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who said the other day in Dublin that nothing had been done under the Crimes Act which could not have been done under previously existing Statutes. Surely that was an acquittal of the Government on the course they had pursued. They had here the confession of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government had done nothing but what they could have done without the Crimes Act; and if that was so, where was the great hardship of that Act? They had been told that the Crimes Act might be used for the collection of rent; but the confession of the right hon. Gentleman made it quite clear that the Act had not been used for that or any of the purposes suggested during the last Session. The right hon. Gentleman also said, at a meeting at Templecombe in the autumn, that he had a full, absolute, and plenary right to dash his head against a wall if he chose to do so; but that remark showed the right hon. Gentleman's ignorance of the law, because if he did that he would be tried for attempting to commit suicide. Then they had been told by the right hon. Gentleman that they were "to put their trust in the old pilot;" but when, on a stormy night, they were asked to cross a sea that happened to be the Irish Sea, with an old pilot who had already suffered shipwreck on that sea, he had no hesitation in saying that if the request were made to him he should at once refuse. Finally, he must congratulate the Government on the way in which they had carried out the Crimes Act, and the improvement which had taken place in Ireland. They had brought home law to the lawless; the programme sketched out in Her Majesty's Speech was full of promise; and his hope was that in August they might find that the blossom of promise had been turned into the rich and ripe fruit of much-needed and useful legislation.

MR. HOARE (Norwich) said, he should like, as one representing the capital of a very large agricultural district, to express his great appreciation of the measures which it had been announced would come before the House during the present Session, many of which, he believed, would be of the greatest advantage to the agricultural interest. He regretted very much that at the present time the agricultural interest was in a very depressed condition; but, as he had said, he looked for some relief to the promised measures, particularly the Tithe Bill, the Local Government Bill, the Transfer of Land Bill, and the Railway Rates Bill. Some hon. Gentlemen had thought it necessary to speak at some length with regard to changes which they wished to see made in their fiscal system; but, for his part, he thought that if they waited for those fiscal changes they would have to wait a very long time indeed; and he was one of those who considered it best to confine themselves to legislation which could be concluded rather than lean upon hopes which might not be fulfilled. He thought now that they had the promise of an education measure, they might express a hope that the education of those in the country districts would be more thought of in the future than in the past. They had lately read a Report with reference to education in dairy matters, and there could be no doubt that it was necessary now for them to do all they could for the education of children and young persons in the country districts. He, therefore, trusted that the House would be willing to give support to the necessary educational proposals, especially in the matter of dairy produce; for every Englishman must feel that something more could be done in that direction. His own county was not a dairy county; but he thought that if there was more education there of the kind mentioned, and the Government would give some assistance, it would be greatly to the advantage of Norfolk; for that reason he hoped it would be in the power of the Government to further experiments in agriculture. He had the honour for two years of being President of the Agricultural Chamber for Norfolk, and he was proud to think that his Chamber had endeavoured to meet this difficulty, and had made some experiments which, he believed, would be of the greatest advantage to the country at large. They had had the advantage of the assistance of a gentleman well known in that House, and whose absence at the present time they could not but regret—Mr. Clare Sewell Read; and he believed that their humble experiments, when they became more widely known, would prove of value to agriculturists in other districts than Norfolk. Having regard to the measures that had occupied the time of Parliament, the farmers, he thought, might well have felt hopeless and regret that the House had not had time to realize the true position of an interest which was of the greatest importance to the country. Last year the House had been able to do a great deal of good by passing the Labourers' Allotments Bill, of which considerable use had been made in the country; and it was no wonder that the tenant farmers should complain and express a hope that the time of this House would be devoted to the consideration of their needs. They hoped the time was not far distant when there would be a distinct Agricultural Department presided over by a Minister of Agriculture. When such an Office was established they might hope that greater facilities would be afforded for bringing agricultural questions and grievances before that House for discussion. Speaking not as a tenant farmer, but as one who regarded agriculture as the most important trade of the country, he wished to do all in his power to further the interests of that trade; and he hoped the tenant farmers of this country would before long be in a position to say that Parliament had, in response to Her Majesty's wishes, done what was necessary to meet their wants and interests.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he had heard with interest the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who seconded the Motion for the Address (Colonel Duncan). That speech was a remarkable one, not that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had anything new to tell the House, but because it contained sentiments which sounded strangely as coming from his side of the House. The hon. and gallant Member had urged them to do all in their power to make the world a little happier and brighter; he had said also—"Let us bow our heads before the majesty of uncomplaining poverty." Those words were almost the language of Victor Hugo—but it was Victor Hugo in very strange company. The parallel would be complete if they could imagine him sitting side by side with the authors of the French political proscription of 1852, aiding and abetting them, and seconding a Vote of Confidence in their policy. Having followed the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman with the closest interest and attention, he thought he was right in saying that there was not, throughout the whole of it, a single reference to Ireland. The speech was more remarkable for what was omitted than what it contained; and he could have wished that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had illustrated the principles which he expounded by a reference to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. Seeing that the actions of the Administration must have been present to the minds of all who listened to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, it appeared to him that his speech was a scathing satire, whether deliberate or intentional he (Mr. Pickersgill) knew not, upon the Government of which he was a nominal supporter. The hon. and gallant Gentleman distinguished between sympathy and emotion; and he (Mr. Pickersgill) thanked him for a definition so well-founded and so accurately expressed. It was not yet too late. The hon. and gallant Member told them yesterday that they ought to set up the Second Table of the Law. There were many Irish Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House who felt it a duty to recognize the obligation. They would help the hon. and gallant Member to set up the Second Table of the Law; but would he help them to take the initial step at taking down the Coercion Bill for which he was partly responsible? The hon. and gallant Member had expressed the desire to make the world a little brighter and a little happier than he found it. Was the hon. and gallant Member aware of how much misery the Government which he supported was the cause? Was he aware that to-day in England and in Ireland there was many a bread-winner in a felon's cell, and that the wives and children of such bread-winners were either relegated to the tender mercies of the poor-house, or, at the best, meagrely supported by charity? Why, these bread-winners were in prison either for purely artificial offences, or, at the most—and this applied particularly to the Metropolis—for offences which would never have been committed if the Government had acted with ordinary tact and ordinary judgment. He (Mr. Pickersgill) had shown that there was an irreconcilable difference between the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Finsbury and a Government whom he nominally supported. He could not hope that the hon. and gallant Member, with all his power, would leaven the stolid mass of the Conservative Party; but he was glad that the voice which had been so often raised from the Opposition side of the House had found an echo on the opposite Benches, even though the voice might be the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He (Mr. Pickersgill) believed the great problem of our time—and the hon. and gallant Gentleman seemed to agree with him—was how to deal with the growing mass of poverty and misery in our midst. Unless they could solve that problem with reasonable satisfaction, he believed that it would destroy this Empire, even as it had destroyed great nations before us.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he would not attempt to follow the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Pickersgill). He was only one of the solid mass. [Several hon. MEMBERS: He said a "stolid" mass!] He (Mr. Bartley) thought the hon. Member meant "solid," as the Unionist Party certainly was. From the hon. Member's point of view, he thought the case was hopeless, because the leaven would not reach them, in the hon. Member's sense. It seemed, according to the hon. Member, that the only possible way of their reforming was that they should agree that the hon. Member and his Friends were the sole agents of everything that was right, and of those who had considered the welfare of the masses in times gone by. He thought there were Members on that—the Conservative—side of the House who had in the past, and he was sure they would in the future, do their utmost to promote that great step which was so urgently needed in the direction of alleviating the sufferings of the masses. He had had a good deal to do with the poor, and he knew very well the district the hon. Gentleman represented; and he had no doubt whatever that, with wise legislation, a good deal might be done. The real thing they had to teach the people was that they must not depend upon legislation, but must depend chiefly upon their own exertions. He was extremely glad that the debate that evening had not been entirely Irish, because he regarded the Gracious Speech from the Throne this year as really an English Speech. They had had Ireland long enough. [*Loud ironical cheers from the Opposition.*] Yes; they had had Ireland long enough. They believed that there were such places as England and Scotland as well; and when they considered that even London, insignificant as that might be, contained a larger population than Ireland, he did say that the time had come, as Her Majesty's Government had recognized, for considering the great questions of these two great countries. He was sorry that some of the discussion that evening had gone upon the various questions of agriculture, bearing on its relations to so-called fiscal policy. He was not one of those who believed that it was possible to relieve agriculture in the way that had been suggested by one or two hon. Gentlemen. To his mind it seemed, from one of the speeches that evening, that all that would happen, if we were to do what was proposed in order to make England supply herself with food—whether it be called Protection or Free Trade—would be that the masses of the people would always have to live in a state of semi-starvation from the high price of bread, in order to protect them from the possible danger of a more complete starvation on some occasion that might never arise. We must depend for our great supply of wheat from abroad. The only remedy, it seemed to him, for agriculture at the present moment would be that referred to by the hon. Member for Norwich (Mr. Hoare)—namely, increasing the education of the agricultural population, and making them understand better than they did the real way to bring about the development of agriculture. There should be improved technical training among the agriculturists and the proper development of district markets. They saw in the Gracious Speech from the Throne that they were to have a County Government Bill. Now, he believed that that was an absolutely necessary step. He trusted Her Majesty's Government intended to base the reform of Local Government on the solid basis of popular representation. He was sure of this—that no other representation would form a satisfactory or permanent solution. He did not know whether in practice this reform of Local Government would be more economical than the present system; but nobody could see how affairs were going, and what the tendency of modern opinion was, without realizing clearly that the only possible solution would be to put the Local Bodies in counties in a popular position, as was done in the case of Municipal Authorities. He believed it would be found that Her Majesty's Government had framed their Bill upon that idea. There was also in the Speech a reference to Local and Imperial finance. Now, he believed that there was a great deal to be done in connection with local finance. He had drawn attention to this matter last Session; and he was sure of this—that no question was more considered in the Provinces than the enormous growth of our local indebtedness. He was sure that local burdens bore very heavily indeed upon our agricultural population; but while that was so, he hoped sincerely that the Government did not propose to relieve local taxation simply by giving grants from the Imperial taxation. He was sure that that system would not be likely to tend to a more economical arrangement of County Government; and he was convinced that every shilling which was taken out of the Imperial Exchequer in aid of local rates was one of the most costly means of relieving those rates, and would lead ultimately to greater expense and less efficiency in the administration of the funds. He believed that any scheme for promoting the welfare of a district should not be paid for out of Imperial taxation, but should be paid for chiefly out of the local revenue, which at the present moment was very large. No doubt, the burdens would grow; but it would not be so perceptible under a judicious system. He knew there were several other questions dealt with in the Graciouis Speech from the Throne on which to would be desirable to dilate; but it was not his intention at the present moment to refer to them. He would not now refer to the Irish Question, simply because they were to have another debate upon that on the Amendments. He believed that the Speech from the Throne was intended to be the beginning of a Session of useful legislation to promote the well-being of the people, and that not upon Party lines, but upon lasting lines, which would tend to make England and Scotland, as well as Ireland, more prosperous in every way.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Parnell,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Parnell, Bill to amend the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 1.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Heneage, Bill to alter and amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Charles Cameron, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Robert Reid, and Mr. T. W. Russell.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 2.]

PUBLIC HOUSES (IRELAND) (SATURDAY CLOSING) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to close Public Houses at an earlier hour on Saturdays in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Lea.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 3.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Esslemont, Bill to amend the Law relating to the payment of the Expenses of Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections in Scotland; and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Esslemont, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Hunter, and Mr. M'Ewan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 4.]

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS (IRELAND) RELIEF BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Blane, Bill for the Relief of Agricultural Tenants in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Blane, Mr. Biggar, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Chance, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 5.]

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Carew, Bill for the better government of Counties in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 6.]

OATHS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House that leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law as to Oaths.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir John Simon, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Courtney Kenny, Mr. Burt, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Richard, Colonel Eyre, and Mr. Jesse Collings.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 7.]

EARLY CLOSING BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to provide for the earlier closing of Shops, and to make further provision with respect to trading on Sunday, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. John Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Whitley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 8.]

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill to facilitate the creation of Small Holdings of land, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Burt, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Newnes, Mr. Flower, and Mr. Pitt-Lewis.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 9.]

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Harris, Bill to amend the Law relating to the election and constitution of Boards of Guardians in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Harris, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. Thomas Gill, Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 10.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.

On Motion of Baron Dimsdale, Bill to extend the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, *ordered* to be brought in by Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Woodall, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Stansfeld, and Dr. Cameron.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 11.]

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Caine, Bill to amend the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Acts relating to the payment of school fees for children of poor parents, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Caine, Mr. Sutherland, and Mr. Thorburn.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 12.]

SCHOOL FEES (NON-PAUPERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Llewellyn, Bill to amend the Law relating to the payment of School Fees of Non-Pauper Children, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Quilter.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 13.]

METROPOLIS LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Isaacs, Bill for the better Local Government of the Metropolis and other matters connected therewith, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Kimber, Major-General Goldsworthy, Mr. Baumann, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Hunt, Sir Guyer Hunter, and Colonel Duncan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 14.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry Campbell, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Municipal Franchise in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Henry Campbell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Carew, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Gray, and Sir Thomas Esmonde.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 15.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howell, Bill to consolidate, simplify, and amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Howell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Fenwick, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Bowen Rowlands.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 16.]

LIBEL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Algernon Borthwick, Bill to amend the Law of Libel, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Jennings, Dr. Cameron, and Mr. John Morley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 17.]

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stack, Bill to amend the Labourers' (Ireland) Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stack, Mr. Matthew Kenny, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Tuite, and Mr. Lalor.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 18.]

TENURE OF HOUSES IN TOWNS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Foley, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Houses in Towns in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Foley, Dr. Fox, Mr. Crilly, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Peter M'Donald, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 19.]

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill for the purpose of amending the Law in regard to the Appointment, Qualification, and Removal of Justices of the Peace, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Howell, Mr. Rendel, and Sir Bernhard Samuelson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 20.]

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' HOLIDAYS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Thorburn, Bill to entitle Agricultural Labourers in Scotland to certain Holidays in lieu of fair days and fast days, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Barclay, and Mr. Bolton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 21.]

LICENSING LAWS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Laws.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir William Houldsworth, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Whitmore.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 22.]

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mayne, Bill to amend the Law relating to National School Teachers in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Mayne, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Tuite, Mr. John O'Connor, and Mr. E. Harrington.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 23.]

BILLS OF SALE REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hunter, Bill to provide for the Registration of dishonoured Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes, and to allow Summary Judgment thereon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hunter, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Barclay, Mr. S. Williamson, and Mr. Esslemont.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 24.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable owners and occupiers in towns, electoral divisions, and other districts in Ireland to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the Drink Traffic within such areas.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Johnston, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. De Cobain, and Mr. Jordan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 25.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Byrne, Bill to amend "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Byrne, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. W. A. Macdonald, Mr. Chance, Mr. Clancy, and Mr. Sexton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 26.]

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James A. Campbell, Bill to amend the Law as to Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. James A. Campbell, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Thorburn, and Mr. Mark Stewart.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 27.]

CHURCH SITES (COMPULSORY POWERS REPEAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis S. Powell, Bill to repeal the provisions of the Church Buildings Acts relating to the Compulsory Purchase of Sites for Churches and Burial Grounds, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Francis S. Powell, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Addison, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 28.]

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Murphy, Bill to amend the Laws relating to the Representation of the People, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Murphy, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Chance, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. O'Doherty, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 29.]

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Biggar, Bill to amend University Education in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Biggar, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Dillon, Dr. Fox, Mr. Thomas Gill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Clancy, Dr. Kenny, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 30.]

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

On Motion of Sir Albert Rollit, Bill for the Registration of Firms, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Maclure, Mr. W. L. Bright, Mr. John Barry, and Mr. Hayne.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 31.]

FISHERY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Nolan, Bill to amend the Fishery Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Nolan, Mr. E. Harrington, Mr. Peter M'Donald, and Mr. Foley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 32.]

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Kilbride, Bill to promote Technical Education in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Kilbride, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Alderman Hooper.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 33.]

GLEBE LANDS OCCUPATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mowbray, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Occupation of Glebe Lands by Incumbents in England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Childers, Mr. John Talbot, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 34.]

SUFFRAGANS' NOMINATION BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend an Act of 26 Hen. 8, c. 14, intituled "An Act for the Nomination of Suffragans and the consecration of them."

Resolution *reported*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. John Talbot, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Francis Powell, Admiral Field, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, and Mr. Dixon-Hartland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 35.]

POINDING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Watt, Bill to amend the Law relating to Poinding in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Watt, Mr. Bolton, Mr. M'Ewan, Mr. Baird, and Mr. Howell.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 36.]

THEATRES (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Bill for the better regulation of Theatres and Music Halls in the Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Lawson, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 37.]

FRANCHISE EXTENSION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Walter M'Laren, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Representation of the People, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Walter M'Laren, Mr. Woodall, Sir Albert Rollit, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Edwards-Heathcote, Mr. Arthur Williams, and Mr. Howorth.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 38.]

TURBARY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lea, Bill to amend "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," in relation to Turbary, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lea, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Mr. Sinclair.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 39.]

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON (PENSIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Richard Temple, Bill to enable the School Board for London to guarantee Superannuation Allowances from the funds at their disposal, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Richard Temple, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. M'Arthur, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Francis Powell, and Mr. Gent-Davis.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 40.]

SMALL DEBTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Caldwell, Bill to extend and amend the Law relating to the recovery of Small Debts in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Thorburn, and Mr. Provand.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 41.]

SLAVERY LAW CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alfred Pease, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law relating to Slavery, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Pease, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Henry Anstruther.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 42.]

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. M'Cartan, Bill to amend and extend the Law relating to Piers and Harbours in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Clancy, Dr. Fox, and Mr. Carew.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 43.]

FAIRS AND MARKETS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Crilly, Bill to amend the Law relating to Fairs and Markets in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Crilly, Dr. Tanner, Dr. Commins, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Lane, and Dr. Kenny.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. Bill 44.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MEETINGS IN SCHOOLS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Gardner, Bill to make provision for the use, subject to certain restrictions, of rooms in Public Elementary Schools for Meetings of Parliamentary Electors, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Gardner, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Maitland, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Stevenson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 45.]

PORT AND HARBOUR AUTHORITIES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Bill to amend the Law relating to Port and Harbour Authorities in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. T. Harrington, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dwyer Gray, and Mr. Hooper.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 46.]

BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT (1874) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Neill, Bill to amend "The Building Societies Act, 1874," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. O'Neill, Colonel Saunderson, and Colonel Waring.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 47.]

CHURCHES, &C. (IRELAND) SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Peter M'Donald, Bill to facilitate the acquiring of Sites for Churches and Schools, and for residences for clergymen and school teachers in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Peter M'Donald, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Byrne, and Mr. Jordan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 48.]

RAILWAY AND CANAL COMPANIES CHARGES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Bill for the revision of the Charges of Railway and Canal Companies; and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Barran, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Hunter, Mr. J. Maclean, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Woodall.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 49.]

BELFAST GOVERNMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tuite, Bill for the better Government of Belfast, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Tuite, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Biggar, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. O'Doherty.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 50.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (TRANSMISSION OF MONEY) BILL.

On Motion of Viscount Curzon, Bill for the free Transmission through the Post Office of benefits from Friendly Societies to their members, *ordered* to be brought in by Viscount Curzon, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Grotrian.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 51.]

CHARITIES (RENT-CHARGES) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Walter Foster, Bill to facilitate the recovery of Rent-Charges and other payments owing to Charities, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cobb, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Robert Reid, and Mr. Arthur Williams.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 52.]

TECHNICAL EDUCATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry Roscoe, Bill to provide for Technical Education in England and Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. G. Dixon, and Mr. Arthur Acland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 53.]

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shiress Will, Bill to amend the provisions of "The Education (Scotland) Act, 1872," with regard to voting at Elections of School Boards, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. M'Lagan, and Mr. Esslemont.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 54.]

ACCUMULATIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Bill to amend the Law relating to Accumulations, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Elton, and Mr. Haldane.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 55.]

DEACONS (CHURCH OF ENGLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Gedge, Bill to amend the Acts 41 Geo. 3, c. 63, and 1 and 2 Vic. c. 106, so far as they relate to Deacons of the Church of England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Gedge, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Robert Fowler, and Lord Henry Bruce.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 56.]

WHIPPING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Milvain, Bill to consolidate and amend the Law in relation to punishment by whipping, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Milvain, Sir Matthew Ridley, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Fulton, and Mr. Samuel Smith.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 57.]

CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Anderson, Bill to amend the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Anderson, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. A. Sutherland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 58.]

PARLIAMENTARY AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (REGISTRATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stansfeld, Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Registration of Electors at Parliamentary and Municipal Elections in England, modifying, with a view to the simplification of their registration, the qualification of such Electors, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Childers, and Sir Charles Russell.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 59.]

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Nolan, Bill to encourage the planting of Trees and Osiers in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Nolan, Mr. Chance, Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Marum, and Mr. Sheehan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 60.]

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mundella, Bill to promote Intermediate Education in Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richard, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, and Mr. William Abraham.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 61.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings in England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Arthur Williams, and Mr. Francis Stevenson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 62.]

LIMITED OWNERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Haldane, Bill to enlarge the powers of Limited Owners of Land in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Haldane, Mr. Asquith, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Mark Stewart, Lord Elcho, and Mr. Ferguson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 63.]

CHARITIES (IRELAND) ADMINISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. P. J. Power, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Administration of Charities in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. Sexton, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Henry Campbell, and Mr. Crilly.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 64.]

JURORS' DETENTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Detention of Juries on the trial of felonies, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Finlay, and Mr. Howard Vincent

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 65.]

SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jeffreys, Bill to remove the disabilities of Soldiers and Sailors to be registered as Voters at Parliamentary Elections, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Whitmore, and Colonel Hughes.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 66.]

SOLICITORS' ANNUAL CERTIFICATE (DUTY REPEAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Hea, Bill for the repeal of Solicitors' Annual Certificate Duty, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Sexton, Mr. M'Cartan, and Mr. Deasy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 67.]

PAROCHIAL BOARDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to reform the constitution of Parochial Boards in Scotland, and the mode of electing the members of such Boards, *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, and Mr. Preston Bruce.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 68.]

REPRODUCTIVE LOAN FUND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hayden, Bill to amend the Reproductive Loan Fund (Ireland) Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hayden, Dr. Commins, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. Conway.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 69.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Childers, Bill to provide for the payment of Expenses to be incurred by Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections out of Local Rates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Childers, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Picton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 70.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to amend "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Lockwood.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 71.]

RAILWAY COMPANIES (CARRIAGE OF FISH) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bill to secure one uniform scale of rates and charges for the Carriage of common kinds of Fish by the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Hunter, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Mallock, Mr. Gilhooly, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 72.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Stevenson, Bill to amend "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Francis Stevenson, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Sir Savile Crossley, Mr. Channing, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Mason.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 73.]

LEASEHOLDERS (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to enable Leaseholders of Houses to purchase the fee simple of their holdings, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. J. Rowlands, Mr. Warmington, Mr. R. Reid, Sir John Puleston, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 74.]

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Malcolm, Bill to amend the Herring Fishery (Scotland) Acts, and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Malcolm and Mr. Finlay.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 75.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Stevenson, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Atkinson, and Mr. Cozens-Hardy.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 76.]

VACCINATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Picton, Bill to repeal so much of the Law as compels under penalty the practice of Vaccination, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Picton, Mr. Holden, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. James Ellis, Mr. Colman, and Mr. Channing.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 77.]

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON ELECTION BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hughes, Bill to amend "The Elementary Education Act, 1870," and "The School Boards Act, 1885," so far as relates to the Election of the School Board for London, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Hughes, Sir Richard Temple, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Lafone, Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, and Mr. Isaacs.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 78.]

ADVERTISEMENT RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Bill to amend the Law with respect to rating places used for Advertisements, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. Seager Hunt, and Mr. Mowbray.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 79.]

INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill for Industrial Agricultural Education in public elementary schools in rural districts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Henry Fowler, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Howell, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. G. Dixon, Mr. Robert Reid, and Major Rasch.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 80.]

ARCHITECTS' REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Duncan, Bill to arrange for the Qualification and Registration of Architects, Engineers, and Surveyors, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Duncan, Captain Penton, Mr. Murphy, General Goldsworthy, and Colonel Makins.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 81.]

DWELLING HOUSES (SANITARY INSPECTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Staveley Hill, Bill to provide for the Sanitary Inspection of Dwelling Houses, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Davenport, and The Marquess of Stafford.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 82.]

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William Corbet, Bill to alter and amend the Law relating to Lunatic Asylums in Ireland kept for private profit, and to make other and more suitable provision for paying patients, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. P. J. Power, Dr. Cameron, and Mr. Molloy.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 83.]

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed:—And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it:—And that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of,—Sir Charles Forster, Mr. William Lowther, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Hugh Elliot, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Mulholland, Viscount Lymington, Mr. Wiggin, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Henry Tollemache, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and Sir Charles Dalrymple.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

RAILWAY REGULATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to make further provision for the safe working of Railways, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Charles Parker, Mr. A. H. Dyke Acland, Mr. H. L. Lawson, Mr. John Ellis, and Mr. Jacoby.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 84.]

TOWN HOLDINGS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee be re-appointed to inquire into the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland; and to inquire into the expediency of giving the leaseholders facilities for the purchase of the fee simple of their property, and also into the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of ground rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations or other improvements.—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

PUBLIC HOUSES, HOURS OF CLOSING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend "The Public Houses, Hours of Closing (Scotland) Act, 1887," *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Caldwell, and Mr. Angus Sutherland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 85.]

SALE OF LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lea, Bill to amend "The Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act, 1878," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lea, Sir James Corry, Sir William Ewart, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Mr. Jordan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 86.]

POOR RATES METROPOLIS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Pickersgill, Bill to remove the inequalities now existing between the Poor Rates in different districts of the Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. Sydney Buxton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 87.]

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (LOCAL MANAGEMENT, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hughes, Bill to amend "The Metropolis Management Act, 1855," "The Metropolitan Building Act, 1855," and the Acts amending the same respectively, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Hughes, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Whitmore, and Sir Algernon Borthwick.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 88.]

SAVING LIFE AT SEA BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill for the Saving of Life at Sea, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Howard Vincent, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Lord Charles Beresford, Mr. Hoare, Mr. Menzies, Captain Price, and Mr. Mallock.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 89.]

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Howard Vincent, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Anderson, and Mr. Bradlaugh.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 90.]

PARISH VESTRIES REFORM BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cobb, Bill to reform the procedure and to increase the powers of Parish Vestries, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 91.]

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES (PENSIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Richard Temple, Bill to enable Municipal Corporations to grant Pensions to Stipendiary Magistrates, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Godson, and Mr. Hastings.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 92.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Eleven o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 13*th February*, 1888.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS—QUESTION.

EARL SPENCER asked the Lord Privy Seal, When the Returns promised in "another place" in reference to Ireland would be presented; what the nature of the Returns as to the condition of Ireland during the last six months would be; and whether the noble Earl proposed to present the Returns to their Lordships?

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN), in reply, said, that the usual Return showing the agrarian outrages falling under each head of offence, in each county in Ireland, would be made. Those for the September and December quarters of last year had already been laid on the Table of their Lordships' House last Thursday. On Friday his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary laid on the Table of the House of Commons a supplementary Return, which had been moved for, and which would be found to be analogous to that presented by Sir George Trevelyan in February, 1883, showing the distribution of those offences—that was, the number reported in each month of the years 1886 and 1887, and in the month of January, 1888. His right hon. Friend had also laid on the Table of the other House a Return showing the number of cases of Boycotting and the number of persons affected thereby in each county up to the 31st July last and up to January 31st, 1888. The latter Returns would be circulated in the other House that day (Monday); and if his noble Friend opposite wished to move for them, they would be laid on the Table of their Lordships' House and circulated as soon as possible.

Lord HERSCHELL asked, whether the noble Earl would have any objection to lay on the Table a Return showing the number of proceedings under the Crimes Act; before what magistrates the proceedings took place; what the nature of the charge and the result? Also, whether he could give a Return of the number of meetings, or attempted meetings, which had been brought under the notice of the authorities; and also the number of offences which had been reported, and whether prosecutions had taken place or not?

Earl CADOGAN said, he would hardly like to give a direct reply without consultation with his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but perhaps the noble and learned Lord would repeat his Question on a future day.

Earl SPENCER said, he thought it would be desirable that all the Returns presented to the House of Commons should also be presented to their Lordships, and he would therefore move for them. He should like to know if the Lord Privy Seal could also present a Return which he thought had an important bearing on the condition of Ireland, and which was made to the Government, at all events, if not made public, when he was in Ireland, and that was a Return of what were called derelict farms—farms from which the tenants had been evicted, and which the landlords could not let? He was quite aware that no Return based upon this information had been published; but it would be important if a Return on this subject could be laid upon the Table. It would also be interesting to have a Return of the number of persons partially or wholly under police protection. Such a Return might be given for certain periods before and after the passing of the Crimes Act, so as to enable a comparison to be made between the two periods. He considered these last would be of great service.

Earl CADOGAN said, he must ask his noble Friend to put the Question in reference to the last-mentioned Returns again upon Thursday next, and during the interval he (Earl Cadogan) would consult his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary and give an answer on that day.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 13*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees—Emigration and Immigration, *appointed;* Printing, *appointed* and *nominated;* Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons), *appointed* and *nominated.*

Public Bills — *Resolutions in Committee* — *Ordered—First Reading*—London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance * [96]; Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) * [106]; Burials * [111].

Ordered—First Reading—Places of Worship Sites * [93]; Agricultural Tenancies Rating * [94]; Borough Funds * [95]; Housing of the Working Classes * [97]; Office under the Crown (Vacating of Seats) * [98]; Life Leases Conversion * [99]; Ecclesiastical Contumacy * [100]; Hares Preservation * [101]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) * [102]; Access to Mountains (Scotland) * [103]; Allotments Act (1887) Amendment * [104]; Beer Adulteration * [105]; Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment * [107]; University of Glasgow (St. Mungo's College) * [108]; Municipal Rates * [109]; Occupiers' Disqualification Removal * [110]; British and Irish Industry * [112]; Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses * [113]; Mining Leases (Cornwall and Devon) * [114].

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act (1878) Amendment * [86].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (ARREST OF MEMBERS).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received the following Letters relating to the Imprisonment of certain Members of this House:—

Castlerea, County of Roscommon,
9th February, 1888.

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you that David Sheehy, Esq., a Member of the House of Commons, was tried before John T. Dillon, R.M., and Fras. B. Henn, R.M., constituted as a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, pursuant to the provisions of the Act 50 & 51 Vic. chap. 20, at Frenchpark, on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of December last, and was convicted of the offence following:—

"That he on the 25th day of September 1887, at Frenchpark, in the county of Roscommon, being a proclaimed district under the provisions of 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' did wilfully and unlawfully incite certain persons to resist and obstruct certain other persons, to wit, sheriff's bailiffs and other ministers of the Law while in the execution of their duty."

And that the said David Sheehy, Esq., M.P., was sentenced by said Court to imprisonment for three calendar months, and that he is at present in Her Majesty's Prison at Sligo.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
JOHN T. DILLON, R.M.

To the Right Honourable,
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Waterford,
February 11th, 1888.

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you that I have this day committed to the county Waterford Gaol Mr. J. D. Pyne, a Member of the House of Commons, upon remand to appear at Kilmacthomas Petty Sessions on Tuesday next the 14th inst. to answer a charge of having unlawfully incited certain persons to wilfully resist and obstruct certain Sheriffs, Constables, Bailiffs, and others, Ministers of the Law, while in the execution of their duty. The charge states that the offence was committed at Schraban, in the county of Waterford, being a proclaimed district under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act of 1887, and on the 15th day of October, 1887. Mr. J. D. Pyne is at present in the Prison at Waterford.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
D. G. BODKIN,
Resident Magistrate.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

February 13th, 1888.

Sir,

It having been officially communicated to me that Mr. Jasper Douglas Pyne, and Mr. James Gilhooly, both Members of the House of Commons, have been arrested in London under Irish Warrants backed by me, I have the honour to inform you that Warrants issued by Justices for the Counties of Waterford and Cork respectively, for offences committed by those gentlemen in those respective Counties in Ireland, were presented to me at this Court on the 18th of January last for my Indorsement thereon, and that having satisfied myself, upon the oath of the officer who presented them, that the Warrants were respectively issued by the Justices whose signatures they bore, and that they exercised jurisdiction in the respective Counties in which the alleged offences were committed, I backed the said Warrants under the provisions of the 11 and 12 Vic. c. 42, sec. 12.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. VAUGHAN.

Metropolitan Police Magistrate,
sitting at the Police Court,
Bow Street.

The Right Hon.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

LABOUR STATISTICS—PERIODICAL RETURNS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether it is the intention of the Department of Labour Statistics to issue any periodical Return of present Labour Statistics; and, if so, when the first Return will be issued; and, whether any steps have been taken to give effect to the yet unexecuted proposals in the Memorandum issued by the Board of Trade in August, 1886?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The question of the issue of periodical Returns has not yet been formally taken up by the Department. It is expected that this question may be considered more properly after experience has been gained by the issue of Returns on special points such as have been issued since the Department was formed, including the notices which have appeared from time to time—and lately month by month—in *The Board of Trade Journal.* The proposals in the Memorandum issued by the Board of Trade in August, 1886, are being carried out as rapidly as possible with the means at the disposal of the Department. With regard to the more important of them—namely, the census of wages—the Department have issued no fewer than 57,936 Circulars to employers in 94 trades requiring the use of many forms and schedules. The number of Returns received is 7,836, and further Returns are coming. The labour is one of very great magnitude; and the work of digesting these Returns so as to throw light on the relative numbers of the wage-earning classes employed at different rates of wages, which is deemed to be essential, must necessarily take much time.

ADMIRALTY—NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he would consent to lay upon the Table of the House the Report (dated November, 1886) containing the strong and unanimous opinion of the Committee composed of the four Naval members of the Board of Admiralty relative to the salaries and duties of a proposed Naval Intelligence Department, as well as to the absolute necessity for immediately forming such a department in the interests of the safety of the Empire?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Memorandum in question is of a confidential character, and the rule which has invariably regulated the production of all Official Papers is that, when they are of a confidential character, they should not be made public. Therefore, I am afraid that in the present instance, in consequence of this rule, I cannot accede to the request of my noble and gallant Friend.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: In consequence of the answer I have received from my noble Friend, I beg to give Notice that I shall, on the earliest opportunity, move for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the system of administration both of the War Office and of the Admiralty.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CASESOF M. MOYNIHAM AND T. QUINLAN.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Maurice Moyniham and Thomas Quinlan, sentenced at Tralee, on Monday, 6th February, to a month's imprisonment for "booing and hissing" at a constable named Clarke; whether Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., in giving judgment, is correctly reported to have said, "our duty is to stop such insults to officers of the law;" whether, at the trial, any evidence was given of any obstruction offered to Clarke by the accused except such as consisted in the utterance of jeering sounds; and, whether that is the only crime for which they are now in prison?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Maurice Moyniham and Thomas Quinlan appeared on summons at Tralee Petty Sessions on the 6th of February to show cause why they should not be bound over to their good behaviour for having been guilty of conduct calculated to lead to a breach of the peace. It was proved that when Sergeant Clarke and two constables were proceeding on duty they were met by the two defendants, who followed them for some distance, booing, hissing, and shouting at them. The Resident Magistrate says it is quite true he made the statement quoted in the question. There was no other evidence given, as there was no other charge against the defendants. The defendants were ordered to find bail to be of good behaviour, or in default to be imprisoned for a month. They declined to give the required bail, electing to go to prison.

LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINANTS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the further Correspondence that has taken place on the subject of Lighthouse Illuminants since the issue of the last Return (No. 282 of last Session), so as to complete the Correspondence on the subject up to the present date?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: If the hon. Member will move for the Correspondence I shall have pleasure in laying it on the Table.

TRADES UNIONS—STATISTICAL TABLES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, To how many Trades Unions the Circular of October, 1887, headed "Statistical Tables and Report on Trades Unions," was sent by the labour correspondent, and the earliest and latest dates at which such Circular was sent out; what number of Societies have replied, and the earliest and latest dates of such replies; and, whether the replies are full and satisfactory, or otherwise?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: Circulars were sent to 312 Unions on the 10th of November, 1887, or within a few days thereafter. Sixteen were returned from the Post Office as "not found;" two were returned marked "dissolved;" 24 up to now have been received, most of which are in a very incomplete state. The latest was received two days ago; 270 are, therefore, still out; but it is possible that some Unions may not send in their Returns until they are able to give the results for 1887.

REGISTER OF SASINES, EDINBURGH—OFFICE OF KEEPER.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether in the recent filling up of the vacated office of Keeper of the Register of Sasines, the provisions of the Act 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 64, s. 20, have been strictly fulfilled; and, whether he will lay a Copy of the deed of appointment upon the Table of the House?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Yes, Sir; they have been. I cannot undertake to lay the deed of appointment on the Table.

THE IRON-WORKING INDUSTRY—IMPORTATION OF POLISH WORKMEN.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has received any communications with regard to the importation of Russian Poles into Scotland as a source of cheap labour in the iron-working industry; and, if so, whether he has come to any decision with a view to putting a stop to the immigration of workers who are likely to become a charge upon the ratepayers of the country?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The only communication we have received is the letter addressed to us by the hon. Gentleman himself. We have had no other communication. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman is aware that the Government on Friday intimated that they would consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the whole subject of pauper immigration.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—RETURN OF EVICTION NOTICES.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Return of notices issued under section 7 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," will be presented?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Return to which the hon. Member's Question refers was laid on the Table at the opening of the Session.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1887—THE CONVENTION OF ROME.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any of the Powers who were parties to the Convention of Rome have expressed their intention of adopting the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act of last Session; and, if he can state what efforts have been made, and with what success, to give practical effect to the Resolutions of the Convention?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Several Governments have notified their adhesion to the additional Articles drawn up at the Conference at Rome of 1886; but difficulties have occurred in several instances with reference to the domestic legislation required to give effect to those Articles. A Circular was addressed, after the passing of the Merchandise Marks Act of 1887, to the Powers who were parties to the Convention of 1883, and correspondence has continued with reference to the subject.

INDIA (FINANCE &c.)—INCREASE OF THE SALT TAX.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What addition to the Revenue is estimated from the increase of the Salt Tax?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): Rs.x.1,625,000 annually.

THE DUTCH EAST INDIES—IMPORTATION OF COOLIES.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether an application has been received from the Dutch Government to be allowed to import Coolies from British India to the Sugar Colonies of the Dutch East Indies?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N. E.), in reply, said, that no such information had been received by the Foreign Office.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. J. E. BARRETT, J.P.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. Gilhooly) (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to legal procceedings at the Quarter Sessions, held at Skibbereen in October last, at which it was shown that Mr. John E. Barrett, agent to Mr. Gumbleton, and Justice of Peace for the County of Cork, falsified a rent receipt in order to procure the benefit of the Arrears Act for Mr. James Mahoney, a tenant to Mr. Gumbleton; whether Mr. Barrett made an affidavit that Mr. Mahoney owed arrears; whether, in the course of the proceedings referred to, that affidavit has been proved to be false; whether Judge Ferguson decided that Mr. Barrett had charged Mr. Mahoney a half-year's rent remitted by the Arrears Court; and if the above allegations are correct; and, whether Mr. Barrett's action will be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The matter referred to occurred in 1881, and the dispute about it only arose when Mr. Barrett, as agent, sued for subsequent arrears in 1887. Judge Ferguson, who tried the case, found that Mr. Barret had not given credit to the tenant for a half-year's rent which had been paid, and therefore made a corresponding deduction when decreasing the amount of rent due. He, however, stated that he was clearly of opinion, and so stated openly in Court when giving judgment, that the matter in dispute which involved all the circumstances of the case was a mere mistake, and that no fraud was intended. Mr. Barrett did make the usual affidavit jointly with the tenant; but Judge Ferguson, in his Report to the Lord Chancellor, has not referred to the subject. The matter was then dealt with by the Lord Chancellor. He found that Mr. Barrett, acting as agent for Mr. Gumbleton, had made an alteration in the receipt, but without any intention of fraud, the alteration having been made openly and in good faith, Mr. Barrett believing that he was simply carrying out the intention of the Arrears Act. The Lord Chancellor thereupon decided there was nothing calling for further action on his part. The case of Mr. Byrne, late Collector General of Rates in Dublin, is materially different from this. In that case he inserted in his own tenants' receipt a false date for the day of payment of the rent, in order to bring within the Act cases that would otherwise be outside it—a matter regarded as especially serious in an officer whose public duties involved accuracy of accounts and dates. The date of payment was the date that regulated the right to the benefit of the Arrears Act, and Mr. Barrett did not alter that date.

WAR OFFICE RE-ORGANIZATION—RECENT ORDER IN COUNCIL.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table the recent Order in Council defining the duties now to be assigned to the officers at the head of departments in the War Office? He further asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would lay on the Table Papers showing the present distribution of those duties, in order that the House might be able to judge of the changes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Order in Council requires some verbal amendments; but as soon as they are made I propose to lay it on the Table, with the clauses defining the duties of the various officers of the Department. I will lay on the Table the old Orders in Council, and will see what I can do to meet the request of the right hon. Gentleman.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE PNEUMATIC DYNAMITE GUN.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the recent experiments reported to have been carried out in America, with the Pneumatic Dynamite Gun; and, whether any tests of it had been made, or are in contemplation, in this country?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The experiments in America have been carefully considered by the Ordnance Committee, and I hope it will be possible to carry out further experiments with this gun in this country in the Metropolis.

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS—TOWER HILL.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that a public meeting was held on Tower Hill, Whitechapel, on the 5th of February last; and, whether the Government recognize the right of the public to hold *bonâ fide* political meetings at that place?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner that such a meeting did take place, but it was conducted in an orderly manner, and there was no cause for the interference of the police. The Government are not aware that the public have any right to hold meetings anywhere in the public thoroughfares; but the practice of the police has been not to interfere unless they have good reasons to fear a breach of the peace, an obstruction of traffic, or danger to property or person.

POLICE (METROPOLIS)—POLICE-CONSTABLE BLOY.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why Police-constable Bloy has been transferred to the Poplar District, and how long he will remain there?

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked, whether Sir Charles Warren, before exonerating Police-constable Bloy, examined any witnesses except policemen; and, if so, what witnesses; whether, before issuing his Memorandum, the Chief Commissioner communicated with Mr. Baggallay; whether Mr. Baggallay requested to be furnished with a copy of the Memorandum; whether that request was complied with; and lastly, whether, as the public was somewhat interested in this matter, the Home Secretary would at once lay upon the Table copies of the Memorandum, and of the correspondence with Mr. Baggallay?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): In answer to the Question on the Paper, I am informed by the Chief Commissioner that it has been, and is, the custom of the Service, when an officer had been found fault with by a magistrate, to remove that officer from the district of the Magistrate's Court. It is uncertain how long Police-constable Bloy will remain at Poplar. These are matters of ordinary police discipline, which are left to the discretion of the Commissioner. In answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, my answer to the first and second paragraphs is in the negative. In answer to the third paragraph, I have to say that the magistrate did not apply directly to the Commissioner for a copy of the Memorandum. If he had done so, I feel sure that his request would have been complied with. He asked for a copy through an Inspector, whose message was not received by the Commissioner until after the magistrate had made his remarks in Court. I do not think it would be useful, or to the public advantage, to lay on the Table copies of the Paper referred to.

MR. PICKERSGILL: In consequence of the exceedingly unsatisfactory reply of the Home Secretary, I beg to give Notice that I shall, at the earliest opportunity, draw the attention of this House to the action of the Executive Government in the case of Constable Bloy, and move a Resolution.

PUBLIC HEALTH—INSPECTION OF INHABITED HOUSES.

Mr. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the great amount of sickness and mortality resulting from insanitary dwellings, Her Majesty's Government will introduce a measure making it compulsory for owners of property to have a periodical inspection into the sanitary condition of inhabited houses?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, he was afraid that, looking to the amount of work already lying before the Government, they could hardly undertake to initiate legislation of the kind referred to.

WAR OFFICE—1st LANCASHIRE ENGINEER VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been called to a statement in *The Liverpool Daily Post* of the 8th instant, to the effect that a Submarine Mining Company, formed in connection with the 1st Lancashire Engineer Volunteers, is to be disbanded; and, if the statement be true, what steps can be taken to prevent the loss to the country of a body of highly skilled and efficient Volunteers upon which upwards of £2,000 has already been spent?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In the opinion of His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, it was of importance, for the unity of defence for the Mersey, that all the submarine miners of the locality should belong to the Mersey Division of the Royal Engineers' Submarine Miners. The colonel of the battalion having declined to assent to the transfer of the non-commissioned officers and men of the Submarine Mining Company to that corps, the only remaining course in the interests of military efficiency was to disband and re-constitute it. I am glad, however, to say that it is anticipated that all, or nearly all, of the members of the disbanded Company will take service in the new corps, so that the expenditure and pains taken in their training will not be lost.

LAND (IRELAND)—THE "PLAN OF CAMPAIGN."

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) (for Mr. Waddy) (Lincolnshire, Brigg) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the cases in which tenants in Ireland have put in operation the system of combination known as the "Plan of Campaign," stating the amount of rents originally claimed, the amounts offered by the tenants, the amounts finally accepted by the landlord; and, whether such amounts have been fixed by voluntary agreement between the parties, or by any official or legal authority?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Government cannot undertake to lay upon the Table a Return of the nature indicated.

EGYPT—THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL AT CAIRO.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Judge Advocate General, in going to Cairo to press certain claims of the ex-Khedive Ismail against the Egyptian Government, went on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, or as the private agent of the ex-Khedive Ismail; or whether, if he went in the latter capacity, he received any, and what, permission or authorization from Her Majesty, or any person on behalf of Her Majesty, to undertake to press the claims of a private person against a Foreign Government?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Judge Advocate General went to Cairo in October last, I think it was as the agent of the ex-Khedive, and in his private capacity. In regard to the second part of the Question, I have to say that he did not apply for authorization from Her Majesty's Government, or to any person on behalf of the Government, and, therefore, did not receive any. It was known to all parties concerned that he was acting in his professional, as distinct from his official, capacity; and I believe it was also pretty well known that he had acted for the ex-Khedive in a professional capacity for a long time prior to his entrance into the Government.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether before the appointment of the present Judge Advocate General in 1885, there is any precedent for the holder of that Office continuing to practise as Counsel in the Courts of Law; and, whether he is aware of any case in which a Minister of the Crown, holding that or any similar Office under the Queen, has been retained as an advocate to prosecute a personal claim against a Foreign and friendly Government?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Prior to 1885, I am informed there were cases of holders of the Office of Judge Advocate General practising as Counsel in arbitrations, but not in Court. I am not aware of any case of the character mentioned in the last paragraph of the Question.

MR. BRYCE: Do I understand that the Judge Advocate General went to Cairo without any communication whatever being made by him to the Head of Her Majesty's Government, and that Her Majesty's Government have no knowledge and no responsibility in the matter?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it is desirable that Notice should be given of Questions of this character. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be so good as to give Notice.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN: In consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentlemen, I beg to give Notice that on the question of the administration of military law in the Army Estimates, or possibly on an earlier occasion, I will call the attention of the House to the whole of this subject.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Can the right hon. Gentleman state whether the Judge Advocate General continued to receive the emoluments of his office while he was in Cairo?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Judge Advocate General, in common with all other servants of the Crown, is entitled to a holiday. He spent that holiday in travelling from London to Cairo, and returning from Cairo to London.

BELFAST A "CITY."

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government are able to comply with the Memorial presented from the Town Council of Belfast, praying that Belfast might have conferred on it the style and title of "City?"

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The question of conferring the title of "City" on the town of Belfast is still under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—RETURNS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he could state what were the undermentioned sums in connection with "The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885," up to 31st January, 1888; total sum sanctioned; sum applied for but refused; sum applied for respecting which no decision has been arrived at; and, sum sanctioned after modification of terms of purchase, with amount of such modification?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply to the hon. Member's Question, which my right hon. Friend has asked me to answer, I have to say that the total amount of advances sanctioned on application under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885, up to the 31st of January last was £3,602,625. This includes advances to the amount of £131,455, which were refused on first application, but were subsequently granted. The advances applied for, but refused, amount to £390,004, while applications for advances to the amount of £548,186 are still under consideration.

LONDON CORPORATION (CHARGES OF MALVERSATION).

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee, with power to take evidence, to investigate the allegations made by the Junior Member for Northampton in a letter dated 2nd December, 1887, and published in *The Times* 3rd December, 1887?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I need hardly say that I do not consider—however eminent the parties may be—that in a dispute of the character to which the hon. Gentleman refers it would be fitting or proper that the House of Commons should appoint a Select Committee; and I am fortified in that view by the knowledge, officially conveyed to me, that the subject matter is before a Court of Law and will shortly be tried.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: What the right hon. Gentleman says is not quite accurate —I do not mean that he has not been so informed, but that there are no proceedings that will enable the investigation to take place. If the noble Marquess will acknowledge the letter signed "R. T. Gunton," which I have no means of proving, then I will undertake to raise the issue in a Court of Law.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I will undertake to communicate at once with the Prime Minister on the subject.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—A ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as the result of the exhaustive inquiry which the Chancellor of the Exchequer undertook to make during the Recess into the question of Friendly Societies, it is the intention of the Government either to propose the appointment of a Royal Commission, or to introduce in the course of the present Session any legislation dealing with the subject?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the Question. As the hon. Member's Question indicates, I have given this subject considerable attention during the Recess. My inquiries have convinced me that, in any action we may take, a broad line of distinction must be maintained between the so-called Collecting Friendly Societies—which are nearly akin to the Industrial Assurance Companies — and the Friendly Societies proper. These two classes of Societies are essentially distinct in constitution and methods; and they must be dealt with on different principles. The need and the demand for reforms seem to be mainly on the side of the former—that is to say, the Collecting Friendly Societies. On the other hand, I am not at this moment prepared to propose further legislation with reference to such Bodies as the Affiliated Orders, Bodies which have shown such remarkable powers of healthy growth and self-government, though the Government would carefully consider suggestions made to them on the subject generally. With regard to the Collecting Friendly Societies, the last step in the procedings which have taken place was that a deputation representing a Congress of these Bodies recently waited on me. It then appeared that a Bill embodying the proposals of these Societies for their own reform was about to be introduced by the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), and I undertook that if the measure were confined to the Collecting Societies the Government would agree to a second reading on condition of the Bill being referred to a Select Committee, where the whole subject might be fully threshed out.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW (IRELAND)—"BLUNT *v.* BYRNE."

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in one of the morning papers that in the trial in which Mr. Blunt appeared on Saturday, he stated that he had been without food from the day preceding; whether the right hon. Gentleman had made any inquiry into that statement; and, if it turns out that the facts are true, whether they are to be attributed to negligence or wilful misconduct on the part of any officials?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that no conversation such as that referred to in the newspaper took place in the Court at all. The statement was brought to the notice of the Judge, who said there was no foundation whatever for the newspaper report; and, as regards the original allegation, there is no proof of it.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SUPPRESSION OF NATIONAL LEAGUE BRANCHES.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) said, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question, of which he had given private Notice—namely, How many branches of the Irish National League had been suppressed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Association known as the Irish National League has been suppressed in the following districts:—the County of Clare, the County of Kerry; the Baronies of Condons, Clangibbon, Duhallow, West Muskerry, in the County of Cork; the Baronies of Leitrim, and Loughrea, in the County of Galway; and the Barony of Shelburne, in County Wexford. I cannot, however, undertake to give the number of the branches affected thereby. No doubt, the hon. Member will be able to obtain all the information he requires as to the suppressed branches at the office of the National League.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD: The right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood the purport of my Question. I did not ask how many branches of the National League had been suppressed on paper. What I want to know is how many have been suppressed in reality? How many have been so suppressed that the meetings of those branches are held or have been held since the date of their alleged suppression?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Gentleman the information he asks for.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY.

In reply to Mr. Broadhurst (Nottingham, W.),

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, he had given Notice to introduce a Bill to amend the law on this subject on Thursday week, and he hoped that soon after that time it would be in print.

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Mr. Speaker, as I see the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in his place, I wish to refer to a suggestion which he made last Thursday. He was good enough to suggest that the debate on the Trafalgar Square incidents would be taken with greater convenience to the House as a substantive Motion. The information has been conveyed to me that there is a great probability that the debate on the Address will be completed in the course of the present week. If that should be so, I propose that the discussion of the substantive Motion with reference to Trafalgar Square should be taken on Monday next.

PRIVILEGE.

PRIVILEGE (WRONGFUL ARREST OF MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I desire to raise a question of Privilege as regards the recent arrest of Members of this House, and I purpose to conclude with a motion that a breach of the Privilege of Parliament has been committed. I do not intend to occupy the time of the House for more than a very few minutes; but it is very important that this question should be brought forward. The House of Commons used to fear the tyranny of the Crown; it used to fear invasions of its rights by privileged orders of society. No such fear is now entertained; but there is a fear lest a temporary majority may, for a few years, exercise a tyranny that may, perhaps, in some cases, become insupportable.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member seems about to refer to a case of Privilege, affecting, as I understand him, three hon. Members of this House. I understood from the hon. Member privately that the main purport of his Motion was to allude to the arrest of a certain Member of this House without any justification. If the hon. Member proposes to refer to the arrest of the hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne) and the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly), he would not, in my opinion, be within Privilege. Privilege cannot be pleaded to an arrest on a criminal charge, nor to the administration of criminal justice. But with regard to the case of the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) there is a clear case demanding explanation, and in that matter the hon. Member is perfectly within his right in calling it a matter of Privilege, and so taking precedence.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I submit, Sir, with great deference, that the House has not yet any information before it as to the case of the two hon. Members for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne) and West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly). It would be very proper for the Government to give us that information, and if they are in a position to tell us that those hon. Members had been arrested on a criminal charge the Government would have the benefit of that fact. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member evidently was not in the House when I read the official intimation that those hon. Members had been arrested on a criminal charge.

Mr. PICTON: Of course I will follow your ruling, Sir, and will confine myself to the case of the hon. Member for North Monaghan; but I will venture to say that the House ought to bear in mind the danger that may arise from occasional excesses of power on the part of a temporary majority. The question is one of equal interest to both sides of the House, and to both political Parties, and they ought to be on their guard against such dangers. Last Thursday and Friday we had an experience in this House that I think must be without precedent since the days of Pride's Purge. All the doors and avenues of the House were haunted by officers of the law — constables and detectives—on the look-out to arrest certain hon. Members of this House. Any hon. Member who possessed the remotest resemblance, either in features, in form, or in size, to the Members wanted, had to use the greatest care in leaving the House or in coming in lest he should be pounced upon. The House during those two days seemed to be a kind of Alsatia or refuge for criminals. Outside the portals of the House the officers of the law were lying in wait to seize upon their victims. I suppose that I should not be in Order in alluding to an easy remedy for such a state of things; but I will take another opportunity of doing so. All, however, will see that there is considerable danger of mistaking one hon. Member for another, especially in the uncertain light of the gas; and, as a matter of fact, a mistake was made, and in broad daylight. The hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien), having come down to the House early to attend to his correspondence, left the House again, intending to return speedily. As soon as he had gone outside the gates of Palace Yard a detective came up to him and said—"I beg your pardon, Sir, but I have a warrant for your arrest." Then the hon. Member said—"Produce your warrant." The officer, however, was not in possession of the warrant, and called to a colleague and asked him to fetch it; then, without waiting for it, or asking the name of the hon. Member for North Monaghan, the officer persuaded him by gentle force to come with him some distance up Parliament Street. Of course, it was manifest to all around that the hon. Gentleman was under arrest. The mistake having been made known by another detective to Constable M'Intyre, who had hold of the hon. Member, that officer said to him—"I beg your pardon, if I have made a mistake, and I offer an apology." But the hon. Member for North Monaghan was something of the mind of St. Paul in similar circumstances, and he said—"They have arrested me openly, uncondemned, being a Member of Parliament, and now do they thrust me, Sir, aside privily? nay, verily." I think the hon. Member was within his right in declining a personal apology; but it was not for the individual Member who was thus affronted to take upon himhimself to gain the remedy that was due to the authority and dignity of the House itself. That is for the House itself, and for my own part, it is on behalf of the House, and not merely of the hon. Member for North Monaghan, that I am raising this question now. I should like to call attention to the exceedingly severe terms in which the House formerly condemned any attempt to obstruct, assault, or insult any Member coming to or going from the House. On the 12th of April, 1733, it was resolved—

> "That the assaulting, insulting, or menacing any Member of this House in his coming to or going from the House, or on account of his behaviour in Parliament, is a high infringement of the Privilege of this House, and a most outrageous and dangerous violation of the rights of Parliament and a high crime and misdemeanour."

On the 1st of June, 1780, it was resolved—

> "It is a gross breach of the Privileges of this House for any person to obstruct or insult Members of this House in coming to or going from this House."

I think it will be agreed that this Resolution applies to the present case. It is clear that a mistake has been made and an apology offered for the mistake; but that mistake itself ought not to have been made. The officer might easily have obtained exact information; and why did he not produce his warrant? If he had done so Mr. O'Brien would have seen at once the name that was upon it, and would have shown that there was a mistake. I think the difficulty made about producing the warrants in some of these cases is scarcely Constitutional. When a subject of Her Majesty is suddenly informed that he is under arrest, surely he ought to have a warrant shown to him to justify his detention. The constable ought to have informed himself of the figure and likeness of the person against whom the warrant was issued with sufficient accuracy to prevent an act of injustice from being committed. I maintain that a gross insult has been committed upon an hon. Member of the House, and I trust that the House will not pass it by simply because the hon. Member arrested belongs to a particular Party. I remember that when I was at school, when we saw one boy pommeling another, we would cry out to the pommeler, "Hit him hard, he's Irish." That is the only apology I can offer. This boyish habit did not result from any confidence in the superior hardness of the Irish, but rather from a certain antipathy of race. I may say that those were my unregenerate days. In a case like the present I am sure that the House will not allow any kind of distinction to be made between Irish Representatives and others; they will never think of literally applying the words of the Prime Minister—namely, that one of his Colleagues is worth the whole of the 85 Irish Members. I hope, therefore, that this matter will be treated with seriousness. We wish to take such a course as will insure that in the case of any hon. Member being, unfortunately, arrested the constable should produce his warrant at once, and make sure that he has got hold of the right man. The gross carelessness in this case, I think, is a fault which demands an ample apology, not to the individual Member concerned alone, but to the House itself. I beg, therefore, to move the following Resolution:—

"That the wrongful arrest of Mr. P. O'Brien, a Member of this House, in going from the House, on Friday, Feb. 10, was a high infringement of the Privileges of Parliament."

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): —I beg leave to second the Motion. If it had not been the case that I was present at the arrest of one of the three hon. Members, probably I should not have ventured to trouble the House. I feel very strongly that the House should take as strong a view as possible of this question, and treat as a breach of Privilege the arrest of my hon. Friend the Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien). There are two circumstances in connection with the arrest of the other two hon. Members which, doubtless, you, Mr. Speaker, are not aware of, and which, with all respect, I should like to submit. The hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne) maintains that he was actually within the precincts of the House at the time he was arrested.

MR. SPEAKER: The arrest of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Waterford is not before the House. It is my duty to keep the attention of the House confined to the particular question of Privilege raised—namely, the arrest of the hon. Member for North Monaghan. Of course, if the hon. Member desires to bring forward in a proper way the arrest of the hon. Member for West Waterford it is competent for him to do so; but it is impossible for him to bring it forward now on the particular question of breach of Privilege which has been raised by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton).

MR. M'LAREN: Then I will not proceed further with the remarks I intended to offer, but I will confine myself to the immediate question before the House. In the case of the hon. Member for North Monaghan it is said not only were there detectives surrounding the House, but they were actually in the building within the precincts of the House; and, in these circumstances, I venture to think the breach of Privilege in the present case becomes a very serious one indeed. The police constables may be doing their duty by arresting Members of Parliament in the streets; but to arrest them when within the precincts of Palace Yard, as in this instance, is to commit a still greater breach of Privilege. My hon. Friend the Member for North Monaghan has suffered a very serious indignity indeed, and was put to great personal inconvenience. It is no light matter for a Member of Parliament to be arrested in the street within a stone's throw of Palace Yard, and it is all the worse in this case, because the hon. Member was not guilty of any offence at all. A Member of Parliament ought not to be liable to be treated in the way complained of in respect of political offences, for it was merely a political offence, and not a crime, with which the hon. Member for North Monaghan was charged. Of course, if a Member of Parliament commit a crime he must be expected to receive the same treatment as other criminals; but in this case I think a distinction should be drawn between an arrest for the commission of a real crime and political offences. It is for the interest and dignity of Parliament to purge itself from all complicity with persons who are guilty of crime, and not to extend its indulgence to them; but my hon. Friend the Member for North Monaghan, although previously under a sentence of seven months' imprisonment, was even then guilty of no crime, but simply of a political offence. Surely, for an alleged offence on the part of the hon. Member for West Cork, the police were not entitled to drag the hon. Member for North Monaghan through the streets as if he were a common pickpocket. Although my hon. Friend has suffered this great indignity, I do not think that any hon. Member of this House or any man in the country will think the worse of him in consequence; nor even for the sentence of seven months' imprisonment which has been passed upon him. It is our duty to resent as strongly as possible the fact not only that he should have been arrested on a false charge, but that any hon. Member should be arrested for a political offence at all. I and many other English and Scotch Members are very proud to call Irish Members who are undergoing imprisonment our friends, and we feel that they should not be arrested on such charges. The Government will do well, instead of putting Irish Members in prison, to alter their conduct.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not keeping to the Question before the House. He is discussing the difference between political and other offences.

MR. M'LAREN: I will only say, in conclusion, that it is clearly proved there was no pretence for denying that an hon. Member has been arrested wrongfully. I hope the House will regard it as a serious breach of its Privileges.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the wrongful arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien, a Member of this House, in going from the House on Friday, 10th February, was a high infringement of the Privilege of Parliament."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I do not propose to follow in any way the remarks which have fallen from the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren), who seconded the Motion, nor do I propose to deal with the observations which fell from the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). I wish to repudiate in the strongest language possible the doctrine that any difference should be made as between the hon. Member who has just been subjected to an unfortunate indignity in consequence of a mistake, and who represents a constituency in the Sister Island, and any other hon. Member. No such idea certainly entered my mind, nor, so far as I know, that of any Member of the Government. I entirely agree that this question of Privilege does not concern the individual Member whose personal dignity may have been assailed, or to whom personal discomfort may have been caused; the Privilege is really the Privilege of the House. Now, about the facts I do not think there is the slightest doubt. The hon. Member for Leicester has stated with perfect accuracy that there was a mistake. He went on to say that there ought not to have been a mistake. I entirely agree with him. I am hardly aware of any case in which a mistake can be regarded as permissible. It was a mistake, certainly, on the part of the officer in fault, but the mistake was not intentional. I hold in my hand a Report, carefully made by the heads of the police, which I instantly called for when I heard of the circumstance. I am informed that the sergeant in question, Sergeant M'Intyre, was told—not himself having personal acquaintance with either of the hon. Members concerned—that the gentleman leaving the precincts of the House was the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly)—[An hon. MEMBER: Who told him?] A constable who was on duty in the precincts of the House informed him that that was the gentleman against whom there was a warrant. The sergeant followed the hon. Member, and, lifting his hat, addressed him interrogatively, "Mr. Gilhooly?" to which the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) nodded his head without making any reply. Thereupon the sergeant informed him that there was a warrant out for his arrest, and that he must consider himself in custody, and asked him to accompany him to Scotland Yard. The sergeant sent an officer to fetch the warrant, which was in the custody of another constable. Well, every police constable cannot have the warrant in his possession. The constable went to get it, and he came back in the course of a minute or two with the warrant in his possession. In the meantime the sergeant was informed that he had made a mistake, and that the hon. Member who was then in custody was not the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly), but the hon. Member for North Monaghan. The sergeant immediately apologized to the hon. Member, and said he would not detain him any longer. I might add that at first the officer offered to convey the hon. Member to Scotland Yard in a cab. The hon. Member, however, preferred going on foot. I do not defend what has been done; of course, it was a most unfortunate and most regrettable mistake. The Commissioner of Police, the moment he heard of the circumstance, sent Inspector Littechild to the hon. Member to offer him a sincere and absolute apology. I—in so far as I represent the Police Force, though I take no blame to myself in the matter—I repeat, in the name of the Force and in the name of the Government, my sincere apologies and great regret to the hon. Member for the mistake that has been made. I do not know that anything more is called for from the House. I do not know that anything more is called for on the part of the Government. No doubt, Members are free from molestation and arrest except in criminal cases. There was no intentional breach of Privilege. About that there can be no doubt whatever. The officer who made this unhappy mistake supposed he was dealing with an hon. Member with reference to whom no question of Privilege would have arisen, as there was a warrant in a criminal matter against him. There was no intention to commit a breach of Privilege of the House. The police having made their apologies, and I having offered apologies to the hon. Member on behalf of the Government, I leave it to the House to say whether the complaint made by the hon. Member is not now entirely met.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): What the Home Secretary has said is perfectly true. We are here not to consider the question of personal indignity offered to an individual Member, but what is due to the dignity of the House under the circumstances. The apology to the particular Member, whether on the part of the police or the Home Secretary—that is one thing, and may be adequate; but what the House has to consider is, how this transaction came to occur, and what precautions must be taken in the future against its occurring again; because I am afraid that we are at the beginning of a chapter at which these arrests of Members of the House of Commons are to become habitual. That is the situation in which we find ourselves in consequence of the policy in which we are embarked. At all events, it is of some importance that the Government should at least arrest the right man. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) would care much about that, because he announces that people have been convicted when they have not been convicted; but it is desirable that we should have some precautions as to who is to be arrested at the instance of the Government among the Members who sit in this House. Now, the arrest was a singular one. The Home Secretary says that one sergeant, who did not know the person to be arrested, told another sergeant that he—the hon. Member for North Monaghan—was the person who ought to be arrested.

MR. MATTHEWS: I beg pardon—I did not say that. I said that a constable professing to know the hon. Member who was to be arrested informed Sergeant M'Intyre that that was Mr. Gilhooly.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, it appears I am mixing up two sergeants, instead of one constable and one sergeant. One constable, who does not know the man who is to be arrested, informs a sergeant that there is the man, whereupon the sergeant does arrest him, and arrests the wrong man. That is the state of things in which we all are at the present moment. I do not know how many warrants the Chief Secretary for Ireland may have out just at this moment; but anybody is liable to be arrested if some constable who does not know the individual to be arrested tells somebody else—"That is the person to be arrested." Now, in my opinion, this is a thing which ought to be inquired into by the House. We ought to know what are to be the forms and proceedings with future arrests of Members of this House. It is quite obvious that this is a serious matter. When the Government attempt to arrest a Member of this House, either within the precincts or immediately adjoining the precincts, surely it is not too much to expect that they should provide constables for that service who know the persons of Members. There should be no difficulty, I imagine, in securing the services of detectives or others who are acquainted with the persons it is intended to arrest. There seems, on the part of somebody or other, to be a very gross act of negligence and carelessness—that they should have employed for a service of this kind persons not properly informed on the subject. Instead of doing these things in this haphazard, ramshackle way, it is desirable there should be some understanding as to what course of proceeding is to be taken in arresting Members of this House. There is the case, exceedingly well known, of Lord Cochrane. There was no doubt whatever in his case. He was extremely well known. The proper course was taken—Lord Cochrane was arrested within the precincts of the House; but the Government of the day, regarding the arrest as a serious matter, took what I believe to have been the proper Parliamentary and Constitutional course of referring the question to a Committee of Privileges of this House. It is only a night or two ago that the House appointed the Committee of Privileges. It is one of the first proceedings of this House to appoint the Committee of Privileges. It is to that Committee of Privileges, if there is any question at all with reference to the treatment of Members, that that question ought to be referred. That was done by the Government in the year 1814 or 1815 in Lord Cochrane's case. The Committee in that case reported that, after an examination of the circumstances, they were of opinion that there was no ground for taking any further action against the person incriminated, who happened to be in that case the Marshal of the Court. It may be that the Committee of Privileges here, having heard the circumstances, will arrive at the same decision; but the Committee of Privileges might do something else. They might recommend to you, Mr. Speaker, or the Government, certain forms and proceedings in the case of the arrest of Members of this House which might prevent the scandal which has been committed in this case, and would insure that we should have some approach to decency in procedure of this kind. That would be an extremely proper thing for the Committee of Privileges to inquire into. They would inquire, first, whether due caution and care had been taken in this particular case with reference to the arrest of this particular Member. They might, or they might not, come to the conclusion that it required no notice from the House under the particular circumstances of the case. Above all, the Committee of Privileges would do that which would be extremely useful to the dignity of the House and to the respect in which the House of Commons should be held in the country if they would recommend some course of procedure in the future which will obviate that which I feel is a great indignity and a scandal in the transaction which has taken place.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) sat down without indicating to the House what question of Privilege has possibly arisen which can be referred to the Committee. I will venture, in a few words, to recall to the mind of the House what the position of the matter is. The police officer has made an unfortunate mistake. Her Majesty's Government—who, as a Government, can give no guarantee (any more than the right hon. Gentleman could give any guarantee when he was Home Secretary) that the police shall make no mistake—have expressed their regret for the mistake, and the Chief Commissioner of Police, through the mouth of the Home Secretary, has also apologized. Now, let the right hon. Gentleman tell the House what the question of Privilege is that can possibly arise. The matter of Privilege was disposed of when the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) admitted that it was a mistake. He did not suggest that any superior or inferior officer intended to arrest a man who was not named in the warrant. The right hon. Gentleman is an esteemed lawyer, and I ask him what the form of proceeding is? First, there must be an offence against the Criminal Law. The police constable had nothing to do with that. Then there must be a charge, and there must be a warrant. There is the charge and the warrant; and a Member of Parliament, as you have said, Sir, to-day from the Chair—and, if I may be allowed, I endorse your statement—has no privilege or protection whatever. Now, the right hon. Gentleman is a great Constitutional lawyer, and he referred to the case of Lord Cochrane. That has nothing to do with this matter at all. Lord Cochrane, as a Privy Councillor, was sitting on one of the Benches of this House, or rather the old House.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not say that he was a Privy Councillor. He was not a Privy Councillor.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I referred to the Report of the Committee, and if the right hon. Gentleman will refer to the diary of Lord Colchester he will find that I am correct.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: He sat on the Privy Council as a Councillor's Bench; but it did not follow that he was a Privy Councillor.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I do not think it necessary to go into this point, and I will assume that I was wrong there. Lord Cochrane was sitting in the House when arrested, and the question referred to the Committee of Privileges was whether persons sitting in the House were liable to arrest, and did the arrest create a question of Privilege. The Report of the Committee was that there was no breach of the Privileges of the House; and Mr. Speaker Abbott laid it down that the House of Commons Chamber afforded no Privilege unless the Speaker was in the Chair and the Mace upon the Table. I appeal to the House, and to every lawyer in it, what possible question of Privilege can arise here? There has been a mistake—that mistake has been apologized for; and if the hon. Member desires to take proceedings he has a remedy. A mistake having been committed, and an apology having been made, no question of Privilege has occurred. So far as this House is concerned, nobody alleging that there is any real question to go to the Committee, I humbly submit that—unless the right hon. Gentleman will give the Government some prescription by which the Government can insure that no policeman will ever make a mistake again—as there is no matter for inquiry, after the explanation given by the Home Secretary, and after the illustrations given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, there is no question of Privilege involved. This being the state of things, if I am in Order, I will move an Amendment to the Motion of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton).

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House regrets that an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan; but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter." — (*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): I am rather surprised at one statement that my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General made, that because the arrest was a mistake, as it was admitted to be by my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), it was clear that there was no question of Privilege in the case. I cannot understand that argument. I maintain that it is impossible to contradict this statement—that the act of arrest of itself was a distinct breach of Privilege. It was, in fact, an arrest without any legal process whatever. It may be that the circumstances under which that breach of Privilege took place—namely, that it was a mistake—may or may not be a sufficient reason for passing the matter by without further notice; but I entirely contravene my hon. and learned Friend's suggestion, that it is the less a breach of Privilege because the arrest was made under a mistake. My hon. and learned Friend suggests that the Home Secretary, having for himself and his Government, and also in the name of the Police Force, apologized for the mistake, that there ought to be an end of the matter. I will point out to the House that that is not the way in which questions of this kind have, so far as I know, in any previous case been treated by the House of Commons. It has uniformly been the course to refer all questions of this nature to the consideration of the Committee of Privileges, whose functions are directed to this subject, and the reason is obvious—namely, that there shall remain a perfect record of the inquiry, and of the circumstances of the case which gave rise to such inquiry. Before such a tribunal the circumstances can be gone into, and they become a permanent record in the Report of the Committee. As to what the Committee may report in this case I do not venture to speculate. It would be impertinent to do so. I make no suggestion. They may be of opinion that, under the circumstances, no further action need be taken; but before I sit down I should like to make reference to another point in this case. After all, assuming it to have been a mistake—accepting that—it certainly was a clumsy and inexcusable mistake. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby did not mistake the position of affairs as explained by the Home Secretary, and the House will be good enough to bear in mind that it has no authentic account as to how the arrest was brought about, but merely the statement of the Home Secretary, who receives it merely from the constables without further inquiry. What an extraordinary statement that is—that the constable did not know the hon. Member.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have already corrected the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) when he made that statement, and I would really ask the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Charles Russell) to observe that the constable did know.

An hon. MEMBER: Then there is no mistake.

MR. MATTHEWS: The constable mentioned it to the sergeant.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: It appears to me that the explanation of the Home Secretary makes the matter more confused and difficult than it was before. The statement now made differs altogether from that which was originally made. We have now the corrected and amended statement that a constable who did know pointed out the wrong man. It now seems that a constable, who did not know the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly), pointed out the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. Patrick O'Brien) as the hon. Member for West Cork to a sergeant who did not pretend to know either one or the other. I should have thought that in this delicate and important matter moderate care ought to have been taken by the Police Authorities to put warrants into the hands of sergeants, police constables, or detectives, who had, at least, taken previous pains to identify the persons to be arrested. The extraordinary part of the story does not end there. It now appears upon the statement of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) that the sergeant who proceeded to make the arrest, and thereby to commit an assault upon a Member of this House, and thus was guilty of a breach of the Privileges of this House, made the arrest without having possession of the warrant. Again, I say, that is a matter proper to be inquired into by the Committee of Privileges. We do not know yet where that warrant was; whether it was ever in the control or within easy reach of the arresting constable; we do not know in whose custody it was. It is certainly a new doctrine that an officer without the legal document in his possession, or within his reach, can arrest a man upon a warrant, that warrant being in the possession of somebody else. It seems to me, therefore, that this case, in accordance with the ordinary procedure of this House in other cases, ought to be referred to the Committee of Privileges to report upon. Such an inquiry would, at all events, secure two things—first, an accurate statement, which we clearly have not now before the House, of the circumstances of the arrest; and, secondly, a permanent and authentic record of the opinion of this House upon the transaction and the circumstances attending the transaction.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I should not have intervened in this debate but for the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. The hon. and learned Attorney General asks what is the breach of Privilege to be inquired into. I will suggest that the breach of Privilege really consists in the insulting indignity put upon Members of the House in consequence of surrounding the House with a number of detectives not sufficiently instructed as to the persons they are to arrest, and acting upon information, perhaps, maliciously given. The explanation of the Home Secretary makes it clear that the information was maliciously given. The right hon. Gentleman has himself suggested that the constable wilfully pointed out another Member, knowing that he was the wrong man. [*A laugh.*] I am sorry that the Home Secretary should think it necessary to treat this as a laughing matter. I feel ashamed that on Friday the House of Commons should have put itself into a lower position than any Parliamentary Assembly in Europe, where precautions are taken to avoid the possibility of insult being offered to their Members. Our Parliamentary morality must have, indeed, fallen low, if hon. Gentlemen will permit insults to be offered to a fellow-Member simply because he is a political opponent, which they would not tolerate if offered to a Member sitting on their own side of the House. It was contended that the arrest without cause of a Member of that House being by mistake, there was no breach of privilege. I venture to deny that contention. In former days there were scores of cases where arrests had been made of servants of Members, which were defended on the ground that the guilty persons did not know they were servants of Members. But in every case the House exacted an apology, and made the offenders pay the fees of the Sergeant-at-Arms. [An hon. MEMBER: This was only an Irish Member.] Oh, we are not in Ireland. I protest against the whole unworthy fashion in which the arrests of Irish Members were effected, and against the carelessness shown by those who instructed the police of the dignity of that House. The constituents who send us here are more careful of the dignity of the House than Her Majesty's Ministers; and they repudiated the notion that, for some matter made criminal by the House, the House should be surrounded, and in its very Lobbies officers of the detective force should be placed, not for the purpose of protecting Members of the House, but of spying upon the whole of them in order to find out who is the unfortunate Member against whom a warrant has been issued. I am afraid that they have now made themselves a byeword in Europe by arresting the wrong man.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury): There were some words which fell from my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) from which I so dissent, that I wish to detain the House for a few moments. The question we have to determine is whether a breach of the Privileges of the House has been committed. I do not gather from my hon. and learned Friend what is the breach of Privilege which he states has been committed. [*Cries of* "No!"] It is true that the so-called arrest of a Member took place in the neighbourhood of this House. But as a matter of principle it would be the same if made in any other part of the country, however distant from this House—[*Cries of* "No!"]—yes; that is so in regard to such question of Privilege. My hon. and learned Friend does not base his suggestions upon the arrest having been made within this House, or within the precincts of the House. Even if it did raise a matter of Privilege, the point is whether an hon. Gentleman who is a Member of this House has been stopped in a public thoroughfare unintentionally through having been mistaken for another person. I venture to say that a Member has no more protection than the humblest subject of the Queen from a mistaken arrest in reference to a criminal charge. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hackney has confused two matters which are entirely distinct. Suppose there was an absence of warrant. That is not a question of Privilege, and would equally apply to the poorest person.

Suppose it is pointed out that the constable making the arrest did not know the individual who was to be arrested, and so makes a mistake; that applies equally to the humblest person. It may be a matter deserving of inquiry, or even of censure of the delinquent, but it is not a matter of Privilege. What is the Privilege which has been infringed? [Mr. PICTON: Going from the House.] Now, I know what it is that is claimed as a Privilege. Will my hon. and learned Friend, or any Constitutional lawyer, assert that there is any Privilege for any Member, either inside or outside of this House, against a criminal process? The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has confused the well-known Privilege against civil process, which even applies to the servants of Members, with Privilege against criminal process.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman permit me to explain? My point was that there was no charge, criminal or otherwise, against the hon. Member for North Monaghan.

SIR HENRY JAMES: That makes it clearer. Where, then, is the Privilege greater than the Privilege which attaches to the humblest man in the street who may be mistakenly arrested? I am astonished that an hon. Member should, under such circumstances, claim Privilege and the right to be protected from a mistake more than any other man who is innocent. There is no privilege on the part of Members of this House against being arrested on a criminal charge more than that which is possessed by the humblest of Her Majesty's subjects. And yet we are asked specially to protect hon. Members of this House from the liability of a mistake being committed. That is certainly not a democratic view of the question, and I hope the House will forgive me for having called its attention to what the real nature of the issue is.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I rise, Sir, to speak upon the Amendment which has been moved by the Attorney General, and I rise, at the same time, to defend the Attorney General and the Home Secretary from their most indiscreet adviser. If there was a doubt whether this question ought to go before the Committee of Privileges, there can be no doubt now. My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) has struck at the whole Privileges of this House. He has said that Members of this House have no Privileges, covering that statement by an extraordinary fallacy with respect to criminal process, that they have no Privileges different from those possessed by any other person. Sir, I challenge that statement altogether. It is a statement without a shadow of foundation. The truth is that a Member of Parliament has Privilege against arrest altogether, and under all circumstances, unless it be for criminal process properly directed against himself. That is the doctrine. Here is a case of a Member of Parliament who has been arrested, there being no criminal process properly directed against him. Consequently, the whole doctrine of the Privilege of a Member of Parliament against arrest comes into full force. The moment you have not got distinctive criminal process he has Privilege from arrest. That is the doctrine of Privilege; and how so distinguished a lawyer as my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury could have fallen into so palpable a fallacy I cannot conceive. You have a man in the position of my right hon. and learned Friend coming forward and denying what the Government have practically admitted. The Home Secretary did not dispute or deny for one moment that this is a breach of Privilege; but now the Liberal Unionists, who are always in advance of their allies, come forward. If there is some reactionary doctrine, something that will strike against the liberties of Parliament, my right hon. and learned Friend will always be to the fore. I hope the Government will not allow themselves to be led into these imprudent excesses. The Government are going quite fast enough; but if they took my right hon. and learned Friend for their counsel, they would have every man on this side of the House arrested. [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] My right hon. and learned Friend has got a disciple already. As my hon. and learned Friend near me has said, the House of Commons has never dealt with these matters in this harum-scarum sort of way, and the wisdom of our ancestors ought to be protected as against an occurrence of this kind. It is seldom that the Privileges of this House have been attacked. There may have been a question before the speech of my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury; but now we cannot escape an inquiry, because the Privileges of this House must be ascertained upon the challenge which he has made. I hope, therefore, that the course will be taken which was followed in the cases of Mr. Wellesley Pole and Lord Cochrane. In these cases the House, instead of discussing the matter on the floor of the House, consented to send them to the Committee of Privileges. Whenever a case of the kind has occurred, the House has, for the sake of its own dignity, referred it to the Committee of Privileges. The hon. and learned Attorney General put to me a very proper and pertinent question—namely, what it is I want to refer to the Committee of Privileges? I want to refer exactly what was referred in the case of Lord Cochrane — whether or not, in the circumstances, any action should be taken on the matter by this House? The Committee of Privileges in Lord Cochrane's case, having inquired into the matter, reported to the House that there was no call for the interposition of the House. That is exactly what may be reported in this case, not that I think the Committee, or any half-a-dozen Members of this House, would come to such a conclusion as that stated by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury—namely, that there has been no breach of Privilege committed. I do not think that, excepting my right hon. and learned Friend, there is a man in this House who would come to that conclusion. The Home Secretary did not come to that conclusion, for he admitted that it was a breach of Privilege; and until I hear someone who has, I will say that no one but my right hon. and learned Friend holds such an opinion. The case is this—whether, there being a breach of Privilege, it is such a breach as calls for the action of this House? It might be that the Committee would come to the conclusion that was come to in Lord Cochrane's case. Then there is this further matter to be referred to the Committee, and that is the taking of proper precautions that things of this kind shall not recur in future. I do not think that we can possibly accept the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Attorney General, more especially after the challenge thrown out by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I hope the House will believe me when I say that if I had had my own choice I would have preferred some other occasion than this on which to address it for the first time, particularly as this matter is, to a considerable extent, personal to myself; but I feel that it is due to the House that it should, as far as I can, be put in possession of the full facts. I wish to make one very important correction in the version of my arrest which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews), who, I presume, received his brief from the police officer concerned. The officer did not say to me that he thought I was Mr. Gilhooly. If he had done so, I think the House will believe me when I say that I should not have courted the company of the officer to Scotland Yard. What the officer did say—and in a low voice, too—just as I stepped from the Gate was—"I beg your pardon, Sir; I have a warrant for your arrest, and I require you to come with me to Scotland Yard." I said to the officer—"Produce your warrant," and the officer then called out to another who stood at some distance—whose name, I am told, was Sergeant Sweeney—"Go back for the warrant." Touching me on the arm, the officer then said—"Come this way, Sir." Well, I went, and accompanied the officer along the street. It may be asked why I did so without hearing the warrant read. I will explain. I am known in Ireland as what they call, in the Balfourian sense of the term, a criminal—aye, a double-dyed criminal. I have two sentences to serve with hard labour, and I would not be in the least surprised if I had a third added. But why do I expect a third? I will tell the House. On the conclusion of my second trial, when I was found guilty, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment for telling the rack-rented tenantry of the counties of Kilkenny and Carlow not to pay their rack-rents, and for telling the tenantry of Lord Monck not to purchase land at 17 years' purchase with British money—rack-rents which would be equal to 30 years' purchase at a proper rental—when I was sentenced, and after I had appealed, so little did I think myself a criminal that I walked from the Court and repeated to the people word for word the advice which I had given, and for which I had got three months' imprisonment. I afterwards said to my friends that I would not be in the least surprised if, before I reached Dublin, or before getting to London, at the outside, I was arrested again. When, therefore, the officer came up to me, I thought he was about to arrest me on a third charge. That is the explanation I have to give for accompanying the officer without demanding that the warrant should first be read. I was also aware that my hon. Friend the Member for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne) had been pushed off the precincts of the House, and had been taken forcibly into custody, without the warrant having been read; and I was not, therefore, prepared for a street scuffle with the servants of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has offered an apology to me. I do not feel that any apology whatever is due to me. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the indignity which has been cast upon me. All the indignity which this infamous Government could cast upon me they have already cast, and I should not have troubled the House with this matter if it had been left to my choice. I am not wanting in respect for this honourable House and its great traditions; but I do not pretend to have that respect which British citizens have, and rightly have, for it. Holding that view, I asked the officer, and, as a Member of Parliament, I think I had a right to ask, what was the name of his superior officer. I think that many hon. Members of this House will think it worth while to try the issue as to what extent their Privileges were affected. While I respect British feeling as to the traditions of this House, I confess I am much more concerned about the dignity of the House which—please God—we shall soon have open in Ireland, and I must be content to leave to English Members, and especially to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), the duty of dealing with this case so far as it affects, or may affect, their liberties and the dignity of Parliament. I have nothing more to add. I have been very reluctant indeed, in the absence of the officer who was the second party to the case, and who cannot be heard in this House, to push anything strongly against him. I should consider myself guilty of mean and contemptible conduct similar to that from which my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) suffered at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), when he had him under lock and key, if I were to attack the officer in his absence. I would prefer to meet him in another place, and face to face, and state my version of the case on oath before a British jury. I scorn to take advantage of him in a place where his voice cannot be heard. I wish, further, to lay stress on the fact that both the officer who arrested me and the officer who was sent back for the warrant refused to give me the name of their superior officer. Now, if they felt that their conduct was above-board in this case, and if Sergeant M'Intyre felt that he addressed me as Mr. Gilhooly, why did they hesitate to give me the name, and why should there have been the necessity for me to return to the House and appeal to the officer in charge of the police there to try and get it? I was arrested without a warrant. The officer who was sent from the Department to apologize to me subsequently told me in the Lobby that as he understood his duty, and as the Metropolitan Police understood theirs, a warrant delivered to any officer of the Metropolitan Police is a warrant to all of them. The invariable practice is that if they should catch their man they should secure him, even without the warrant. We are accustomed to that sort of treatment in Ireland, where we are a police governed people, but it is for hon. Members of this House to say whether they will suffer their liberties to be bandied about in that way. I thank the House for its attention. If it had been left to myself I would have chosen another opportunity for addressing it; but I cordially acknowledge the courtesy and attention with which I have been listened to.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I have before me, in the speech of my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), a warning against the consequences of widening the field of debate which he was so completely successful in effecting, and I shall endeavour to avoid following the example that he set, I think with unfortunate consequences. But when I came into the House I had had some conversation with one or two of my friends, and it appeared to me that obviously this was a case which it would be convenient to refer to the Committee of Privileges. But I did not see that there was any matter likely to be of a contentious character which could enter into the consideration of the question. I will do this act of justice to the Government, and especially to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews)—that, so far as apology is concerned, I think he has made every apology which possibly can in fairness be expected from him; and so far as vindictive or penal proceedings are concerned, there is no reason why we should entertain the thought of them at all. I have seen, not very long ago, a disposition to establish the doctrine that apology does not purge offence. I think that a very dangerous innovation, and I am glad that on this occasion the Government have adopted a doctrine of a more rational and more merciful character. Now, I wish to put this to Her Majesty's Government—as they will see, in no contentious spirit—that since this discussion began, the grounds for this reference has been greatly widened, and I think that after hearing the statement just made by the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) of the facts, according to his view of them, the right hon. Gentlemen the Home Secretary will see that they are so seriously in conflict with the statement made by himself, that this of itself constitutes a just and reasonable ground, without the least imputation on the right hon. Gentleman, for sending this matter to a Committee of Privileges. We have here before us three points. We have the point that a Member of this House was without cause arrested. He was subsequently released, and no vindictive proceedings are contemplated. But the fact is that a Member of this House was arrested when in a position which has always be recognized by the House as entitling him to special regard and protection—namely, while on his way to or from the performance of his duties in Parliament. The second point before us is that in this very grave matter of arresting a Member of this House on his way to or from the performance of his duty, the officer of police proceeded without being in possession of the warrant. That is a grave fact in this case. Will the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) say that the police officer not in possession of a warrant was entitled in law to make an arrest? I do not put the question in any captious spirit; but I am imformed by high legal authorities that the arrest could not be properly and legally made by a man not in possession of a warrant. If not in possession of the warrant he could not be absolutely certain of its existence at the moment. It ought to be shown whether an arrest can be made without the production of the warrant. Although the officer was not in possession of the warrant, yet he was cognizant of the name of the person whom he had intended to arrest. That person was Mr. Gilhooly. He said that he had a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Gilhooly, and that the hon. Member made some sign which made him take it that he assented to that being his name. That is an important matter, because if the hon. Member gave the police constable to understand that he was Mr. Gilhooly, it would have gone very far indeed to dispose of the whole question. But the most important fact is now denied on what we have always been accustomed to consider the highest authority—namely, the deliberate assertion of an hon. Member in his place in this House. I really think that on these grounds alone Her Majesty's Government ought to allow this case to be referred to a Committee of Privilege. But I must say that after the speech of my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), upon which I congratulate the Government, it does appear to me that the necessity for such a reference is most urgent. We are all concerned in it, for there is no saying how far the doctrines of my right hon. and learned Friend are to extend. My right hon. and learned Friend says that except as to civil process there is no Privilege of a Member of Parliament against arrest other than what is possessed by every other member of the community. If that proposition be true, it is a most grave proposition—namely, that any hon. Member of this House, any one of us, at a time when any criminal process whatever is out against anybody, it does not signify whom—that is perfectly irrelevant to the question of Privilege—whether it was by mistake for another Member or not, any one of us may be arrested in mistake, and there is no question of Privilege involved; and the only question, I suppose, is whether he has a remedy by a civil action for false imprisonment. How far does my right hon. and learned Friend mean to carry that doctrine? Does he mean to deny personal Privilege altogether? He appeared to denounce it as in itself odious and indefensible. It is odious and indefensible if it be regarded as attaching to us in our personal and individual capacity. But it is because of the great functions which we discharge—it is because it is necessary for the public interest that there should be the free discharge of those functions, free access to and from their discharge—that is the reason why we are surrounded with Privilege. The doctrine of my right hon. and learned Friend appears to me to imperil our liberty. According to the view of my right hon. and learned Friend, what constitutes a breach of Privilege? He says—what the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary and the hon. and learned Attorney General do not say—that there was no breach of Privilege here, although a Member of Parliament was taken into custody, there being no authority or warrant whatever for his arrest. That, in the view of my right hon. and learned Friend, constituted no breach of Privilege. Upon what does he base breach of Privilege? My right hon. and learned Friend's doctrine appears to be that no man can commit a breach of Privilege unless he knows that he is committing, and intends to commit, it. Is he prepared to lay down that as a general proposition? If not, what has he to show for the assertion that there was no breach of Privilege in this case? There was an act done, which act, apart from the motive, was a breach of Privilege—namely, the arrest, without cause, of a Member of this House. The arrest without cause of a Member of this House is a breach of Privilege, and that which, in the case of an ordinary person, is false imprisonment, is in the case of a Member of this House a breach of Privilege. With all my right hon. and learned Friend's ability, with all his astuteness, all his legal knowledge, with all his zeal to out-Herod the Government, can he find any doctrine which will cover his statement that this was no breach of Privilege, except the doctrine that there cannot be breach of Privilege unless there is intention to commit it? If he holds that doctrine he must be prepared to carry it out to all its consequences. The hon. and learned Attorney General referred to the case of Lord Cochrane. In the case of Lord Cochrane, the arrest took place within the four walls of this House at a time when the House was not sitting. The Question was raised as to what this House is, as to the Privileges of Members when the House is not sitting, and the Committee had to inquire into that Question. The Committee was appointed in that instance whether there was a breach of Privilege or not. I humbly submit to my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury, as he is the only man in this House who has spoken in this debate and denied that there has been a breach of Privilege, that in deference to the precedent of Lord Cochrane's case—and as the Government have not denied that there has been a breach of Privilege, and as high legal authorities in the House have asserted that there has been a breach of Privilege—I submit to my right hon. and learned Friend that he ought to allow this case to go before the Committee of Privileges. I put it to him—however confident he may be in his opinion that there was no breach of Privilege here—that he must show us why there was no breach of Privilege when an illegal act was done against a Member of this House within a sphere recognized as coming within the range of Parliamentary duty; and if in the case of Lord Cochrane, when there was not only a criminal process, but there was nothing except the bare and shadowy notion that the benches and cushions and walls of the House might by some spell impart a Privilege at a time when the House was not in living practical existence, the matter was yet referred to a Committee of Privilege in order to ascertain if there had been a breach of Privilege committed, surely in this instance the case should be so dealt with. Therefore I contend that there are two grounds on which that course should be followed. Those who think with my right hon. and learned Friend that there was no breach of Privilege in this instance, may yet, in deference to the general opinion, admit that there is in the case fair matter for inquiry. There is also the ground of those who think that an incident has occurred which may lead to very inconvenient consequences. I should be the last person who would wish to press unduly on any member of a Force to which, in my opinion, the Metropolitan community is under the deepest obligations. But I must say it was a very careless proceeding, and not merely a purely innocent error. The officer proceeded without his warrant, and he proceeded in circumstances where his statement of the case which he has given to the Government is diametrically in contradiction on a most material point with the statement of the hon. Member. In these circumstances, I do not myself understand why there should be any sentiment on one side of the House or the other involving the advocacy of extreme doctrines, or the advocacy of any doctrine whatever, to lead to excitement. It is, it seems to me, a matter of plain prudence, in which we ought to proceed as men of business, not willing to extend our Privileges beyond just bounds, and at the same time believing that they rest upon a just and broad foundation—upon a foundation of public necessity and public interest. Therefore, we ought to ascertain—supposing it is a breach of Privilege which has been committed, and supposing the Committee find that it has been committed, or whatever view the Committee may take of it—whether it is not desirable, after some careful consideration, to see that the recurrence of similar incidents may be avoided. We are not in a position to move an Amendment, because the original Motion has been made, and the hon. and learned Attorney General has moved an Amendment; but we are in a position—if the hon. and learned Attorney General should find it necessary to persevere without seeking any accommodation in the matter, and if his Amendment is carried—to move as an Amendment this proposition—

> "That the circumstances attending the arrest of the hon. Member for North Monaghan be referred to the Committee of Privileges of this House to consider whether any or what action shall be taken thereupon and what measures shall be adopted to prevent such occurrences in future."

It will be admitted that they are grave and inconvenient occurrences leading to debate in this House, and making it a matter of propriety and prudence, as men of business, that we should endeavour to obviate all risk of similar inconveniences.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth): Although the words which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has just read are not, of course, formally before the House, they contain a suggestion which I have to say at once the Government cannot accept. It is a suggestion which I may be allowed to point out does not touch the Question before the House to-night. Those words do not say that there has been any breach of Privilege committed at all, and they actually amount to a reference to the Committee of Privileges to provide the means of doing that which it is absolutely impossible can ever be done—namely, if a warrant is issued against one person you are to secure the whole police from making any mistakes in arresting another. It is very inconvenient that there should be warrants out against Members of Parliament at all. It is still more inconvenient that those Members should take a course and adopt expedients which render it probable that mistakes of this kind should arise. But under any arrangement, in any circumstances, such mistakes are possible. The Committee of Privileges of the House of Commons could do nothing whatever to prevent their recurrence. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said that he did not propose to widen the field of debate, and that he would discuss the matter in a calm and businesslike way. Indeed, he gave an effectual rebuke to the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), who had turned on the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) the moment he sat down, and attacked him with great violence, declaring that no one in the House had ventured to endorse the proposition that there was not a breach of Privilege. The right hon. Gentleman never gave the House or any Member of it the opportunity of endorsing the propositions of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury. If he had been good enough to wait until someone on the Government Bench had had the opportunity of speaking, he would have found there were plenty ready to endorse the propositions of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That was not what I said. I said that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary and the hon. and learned Attorney General had stated exactly the contrary. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary said that there was a question of Privilege, and that nobody could doubt it.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) said that in his judgment no breach of Privilege had been committed, and I say so now. With all respect to the right hon. Member for Derby, and the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, they seem to me to have missed the point and the meaning of the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury. He said there is no privilege for Members of this House in criminal cases anywhere; but out of respect for the authority of the Chair and the order of proceedings of this House, no arrest can take place within the walls of this Chamber while the House is sitting. There would be no need for it, for the officers of the law could wait at the doors of the House and make the arrest as the Member concerned was leaving it. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Hear, hear!] I am glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby agrees with me. Therefore, I submit, my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury was perfectly accurate in saying that in criminal cases there is no question of Privilege at all. If he had been a private person walking through Parliament Street, and had been mistaken for the hon, Member against whom the warrant had been issued, there would have been just as much and just as little right to invoke the Privilege of Parliament as there is in the present case. The Privilege of Parliament is a special and peculiar immunity from process on the part of the Members of this House. That immunity does not exist when a criminal process has been issued and a warrant is in existence. That being so, and inasmuch as this was a warrant issued in a criminal case, and the arrest was made by mistake on a criminal charge, I hold with my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury that there cannot be a question of Privilege in it. What is the question to be referred to the Committee of Privileges? There is no dispute as to the facts. The hon. Member who began the debate (Mr. Picton) said there had been a mistake on the part of the police. That mistake was apologized for at once, and since then in a more formal manner. What is there to ask the Committee of Privileges about. It has been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that that which would be ground for an action for false imprisonment in the case of a private person is ground for invoking the Privilege of Parliament in the case of a Member. I venture to think that the right hon. Gentleman will not find in any book of authority the smallest shadow of foundation for such a distinction as that. These matters are within the knowledge of the House; but the right hon. Gentleman said that on the main point there was controversy. With all submission I think that is not so. The hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) told us himself the incidents of his own arrest, and he said that he was spoken to in a low voice. It may be that he did not hear the name which was suggested to him by the officer who spoke to him. There is no other matter in controversy at all, and nothing on which the Committee of Privileges can pronounce. I support the Amendment which the hon. and learned Attorney General has moved. I hope the House, having heard now the statement of the hon. Member principally concerned—seeing that he has no desire to press the House to take penal measures against the person who made the mistake—will consent to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Attorney General and pass to the discussion of other Business.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has suggested that when an arrest is made the warrant must be in the hand or pocket of the officer making it. That view is quite contrary to all practice. The rule is that the warrant must be in the possession or under the control of the person making the arrest. That is exactly what occurred here. The officer had the warrant under his control, though not in his possession, for he was able to send another officer for it. As to the main question, if the right man had been arrested there would have been no breach of Privilege, for the arrest was on a criminal charge. Inasmuch, however, as the arrest was made *boná fide* by the officer, who believed the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) to be a certain person, and it is conceded by both sides that a mistake had been made, the arrest, which would otherwise have been a breach of Privilege, loses that character, and I cannot refrain from asking whether there is really any question that the House can possibly consider?

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I think, Sir, if this had been a question of the arrest, even by mistake, of an English Member, hon. Members opposite would have been in less haste to deny that it was a breach of Privilege. I wonder why it was necessary for the Government Front Bench to wait till it had been fortified by the legal opinion of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) before it came to the conclusion that there had been no breach of Privilege. This is certainly a case in which an hon. Member has not been arrested on a criminal charge. No one pretends that there was any criminal charge against the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien), who was arrested, unless they accept the principle, "once a criminal always a criminal," and that the quality which has been attached to my hon. Friend by the judgments of the removable magistrates in Ireland will continue to attach to him during the rest of his natural life. I cannot see how it can for a single moment be suggested that there is any question of proceedings or arrest in any criminal matter or cause. I complain of the arrest, and of the manner of the arrest, and the proceedings of the Government in reference to it. I say, at the commencement, that if it had been an English Member who had been arrested, not only would the question have been treated as one of breach of Privilege, but the Government would have taken care, and the Detective Department would have taken care, to send a member of the Force who at least knew the hon. Member who was to be arrested. It is because there is an opinion abroad that Irish Members are to be treated like vermin that the Government would not take the trouble to see that the Irish Member to be arrested is the right man. How do you effect these arrests? You effect them as if you were arresting some common street rowdy. I am complaining of the method of the arrest of my hon. Friend—a method which may be extended to any of us. The arrest of my hon. Friend was forcibly carried out, and my hon. Friend was taken to the police station as if he were a common thief. My hon. Friend, immediately he got his foot outside this building, was pounced upon when he was outside the precincts of Westminster, and he was dragged through the streets like a thief, without the police knowing or caring whether they were taking the right man into custody. Sir, I protest against this, and also against another matter which has been disclosed in the circumstances connected with the arrest of my hon. Friend. Sir, it used to be the custom, before the Speaker was provided with a residence here, for hon. Members, on the call of "Who goes home?" to accompany the Speaker, in order to protect him from thieves and robbers; but now it appears that hon. Members have to obtain protection from the detectives who are waiting ready to pounce upon them immediately they set their feet outside the gates of Palace Yard, without even knowing whether they may not be arresting the wrong man. I also protest against another practice which the Government are initiating, and which has been disclosed by the circumstances connected with the arrest of my hon. Friend. I do not blame the police in the matter—I do not blame the detectives. They are only imitating the spirit of their masters. If the Irish detectives who carried off one of my hon. Friends to Ireland the other day had not known of this spirit they would not have refused him all opportunity for obtaining refreshment on his long journey from London to Waterford, and have dragged him before the magistrates faint with hunger. I draw a great distinction between the conduct of the English police and that of the Irish detectives. I do not attach any blame either in regard to discourtesy or misconduct to the English police. All I say is that there is a marked difference between their conduct and that of the Irish detectives. What has just been disclosed as to the new departure of the

Government in reference to these arrests? We all know that at the commencement of every Session a Resolution is passed by this House directing the officers of the London police to make provision for securing the free egress of hon. Members; and I am sure that hon. Members will join me in testifying to the ample courtesy which constables stationed both inside and outside of this House have always extended to hon. Members in reference to that part of their duty. They are a special class of men chosen for that purpose; and it is with much pleasure that we see the same faces year after year, both at the entrances to the House and in the Lobbies. But, I would ask, what is the duty that has now been imposed upon those men by the Government? It is that of spying about the House. They cannot avoid doing what they are ordered to do; and in pursuance of the new practice initiated by the Government they have to spy after hon. Members, and to give information to the detectives at the gates with regard to those against whom there may be warrants. Sir, I protest against this. I believe that if the opinions of those officers were known, they would support my protest against such foreign duties being thrust upon them. I may remind the House of the case of one of its hon. Members who was pushed back from the steps leading to the passage beneath the Clock Tower at Westminster Bridge by an officer in uniform who had been placed there for the purpose of facilitating the ingress and egress of hon. Members. I say that it is the duty of the Government, when English or Irish Members have to be arrested, to send some person to execute the warrants who is able to identify the Members in question. Is it too much to ask of Her Majesty's Government that hon. Members shall be allowed to leave the House without being pounced upon by the detectives in plain clothes and dragged off to Scotland Yard? Some men are naturally of a nervous disposition, and the shock of such an arrest might kill them, while others of a hasty disposition might be tempted in the heat of the moment to commit acts of violence. Since Irish Members are likely to be arrested in large numbers, and since the place chosen for their arrest is of all others at the gates of Westminster Palace, let them be arrested by those who know them. Do not call upon the constables here to spy about and assist the detectives in the discharge of their duty. I think I have said enough to show to the House that there is a question of breach of Privilege involved in this matter, if there be any Privilege whatever accorded to a Member of this House to come to it or go away from it without molestation. It is true that if there be a criminal warrant out against an hon. Member and he is arrested under it, he can claim no Privilege; but there was no such warrant against my hon. Friend the Member for North Monaghan, for the warrant was against another hon. Member, and therefore, in his case, there clearly has been a breach of Privilege. This question should be looked at as one concerning the whole House, and not merely as affecting Irish Members. The practice adopted lately by the Government is a most inconvenient one, and is likely to give rise to similar occurrences, and as Members of this House I submit that we ought to be free to go and come without molestation by Irish detectives. I am surprised at the line that Her Majesty's Government have taken in reference to this matter, and I hope that even at the eleventh hour they will see the propriety of referring the question to a Select Committee, and of agreeing to the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). They never ventured to deny that there was a question of Privilege involved until they were fortified by the opinion of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), and now they think that they are wiser than you, Sir, who have permitted this discussion to take place as a matter of Privilege. If there is no question of Privilege involved, why are we discussing this question at the present moment? We could not have gone on with this discussion in the position in which we are unless a question of Privilege had been involved. We have now the Front Bench asserting —in opposition to the Speaker—that there is no question of Privilege involved. It is quite possible that the House might not have decided to take action against any particular person in reference to this question of Privilege; but in consequence of the Front Bench opposite denying, in opposition to the ruling of the Speaker, that there is any question of Privilege involved, a much graver issue has been raised. I think that, at all events, the Government might have consented to the matter being referred, if not to the Committee for Privileges, to a small Committee to inquire into the circumstances.

MR. HALDANE (Haddington): I rise, not for the purpose of protracting the debate, because I think it has been made abundantly clear that a breach of Privilege has been committed in the arrest of the hon. member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien). That the breach of Privilege was committed inadvertently and unintentionally is not less clear. The real question to be considered is what course the House ought to take, and I submit that the proper course is that this question should be referred to the Committee of Privileges, before whom the whole circumstances of the case could be laid, and who would report what course the House ought to take. At any rate, that Committee would be able to point out whether the Privileges of this House have been rashly violated. This course is not without precedent. The case of Lord Cochrane was substantially like the present. Lord Cochrane had been arrested in his place as a Privy Councillor, but at a time when the House was not sitting, and it was plain that no breach of Privilege had been committed; it was also plain, as the Speaker ruled on that occasion, that the offence—if an offence had been committed—was not likely to be repeated. Lord Castlereagh, at that time the Leader of the Tory Party—a Leader whom the right hon. Gentleman the present Leader of that Party in the House may be expected to regard as worthy of some admiration—however, said that if any Gentleman entertained a doubt upon the subject, and if any hon. Member conceived that the Privileges of the House had been violated, it was only proper that the circumstances should be fully inquired into, and an adequate investigation made. Mr. Tierney, who was Leader of the Opposition on that occasion, approved of that proposition; and Mr. Speaker Abbott—your Predecessor, Sir, in that Chair—gave an important ruling upon the matter which, I think, meets the objection of the Solicitor General. Mr. Speaker said that, in his opinion, it was quite clear that Lord Cochrane had been returned to Parliament, and that he had come down to the House in order to go through the necessary form for taking his seat, and that, whatever might be the form of the inquiry, it should be directed to ascertain whether a breach of the Privileges of Parliament had been committed or not. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman the present Leader of the House will see fit on the present occasion to follow the course which was adopted by his Predecessor in the case of Lord Cochrane.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): As the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Haldane) has thought fit to appeal to me, I will at once respond. There is no parallel between the case of Lord Cochrane and that of the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. Patrick O'Brien). In the case of the hon. Member a mistake was made by a police officer in arresting him, and for that mistake an apology has since been made by the officer who committed it and by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in this House. Nothing more could be extracted even by the operations of the Committee of Privileges. But then, Sir, it is contended that an inquiry should take place by the Committee of Privileges in order that mistakes may never be committed in future. It is admitted on all hands that no Member has any Privilege as regards criminal process; while it is also admitted that he is privileged as regards civil process. There is, therefore, no question in dispute, and the matter comes to this—whether there is to be an inquiry as to an accident which has been amply apologized for, with a view of steps being taken to prevent its repetition. To take a wider interpretation of the hon. Member for Cork's (Mr. Parnell's) words, we are to inquire how hon. Gentlemen are to be relieved from the presence of officers in this House——

MR. PARNELL: I did not say anything of the kind.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am the last person to wish to attribute to the hon. Member anything contrary to what he said. I wish to give a correct and moderate interpretation of the hon. Member's language. He complained that the Government called upon the officers of police in this House to do a duty from which they themselves, at least, would desire to be relieved. On the part of the Government I repudiate any charge of that kind.

Mr. PARNELL: Do you deny the facts?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: We impose no duty whatever upon the police of this House. The police are discharging their duty in the protection of Members of this House, and in the protection of this House itself against the designs of persons who might expose Members of this House and the House itself to serious danger.

Mr. PARNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that the police officers in the House of Commons were directed by their superior officers to report when certain Members of this House, who were afterwards arrested, were going to leave the House?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I say that the Government have imposed no such duties whatever on the police. The facts of the case are these. Warrants are in the hands of the police. The police act upon them, and it is their duty to give effect to them, and they never apply to the Government for directions as to the means by which they are to carry out and discharge their duties. The Government have no knowledge whatever of the modes and methods adopted by the police in discharge of their duty.

Mr. PARNELL: The Commissioners of Police have.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I know nothing whatever of the Commissioners of Police, or what instructions they give.

An hon. Member: The Home Secretary does.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I say that the main duty of the police in attendance in this House is to see to the safety and protection of Members of the House under circumstances fully requiring such protection. The question has travelled widely from the original Resolution moved by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). That hon. Member moved a Resolution which it was simply impossible for the Government to accept. An indignity has been offered to the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien), which we deeply regret. We have apologized for that indignity, and we say that, the facts having been fully stated and admitted, there really does not remain any question which could be considered by the Committee of Privileges. We must, therefore, ask the House to accept the Amendment of the Attorney General.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I rise as a private Member of the House to refer to the question from a private Member's point of view. The matter is not one which solely affects the hon. Gentleman who has suffered the indignity referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House. The right hon. Gentleman has sought to establish a distinction between the Government of the day and the police employed in this House, and has declined to accept any responsibility for the action of the police. If it be the case that the Government have no responsibility for the action of the police, I want to know why the Government have taken upon themselves the duty of coming down here and making an apology to a private Member? Surely it is no more difficult for the Government to make an apology to a private Member than it is to make an apology to any other section of the House. Therefore, they cannot but feel that responsibility rests upon them in some measure for the action of the police. Will the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary undertake to say that he had no knowledge of the instructions given to the police in reference to the arrest of individual Members of this House? We want an assurance on that subject. We have all gloried in the traditions of this House, and we know the way in which the Privileges of the House have been regarded in the past. We believe that an inquiry is necessary, because we think it ought to be placed on record now that we are equally jealous of those Privileges in regard to the humblest Member of the House. I confess that it is a poor consolation to any hon. Member who has suffered an indignity to be told that it has been inflicted upon him simply because of a mistake of the police. I think it devolves upon the Government to clear the police of this matter; and, so far from believing that there is no case for inquiry by the Committee of Privileges, I concede that it is the bounden duty of the House to institute an inquiry into the matter. An apology has been made, first, by the superior officer of the police, and, secondly, by the Home Secretary; but that does not satisfy us that there might not be the same motives at work by which some further indignity might be offered to a Member of this House. I think it ought to be enough for the House to know that an indignity has been perpetrated, and, having charge of the dignity of Parliament, it ought at once to assent to the Motion that the Committee of Privileges ought to inquire into the matter in order that it may be cleared up. The mere fact that we have roaming about the Metropolis and the neighbourhood of this House such odious creatures, in my eyes, as detectives constitutes a reason why the matter should be referred to the Committee of Privileges, in order to prevent such an event as this from occurring in future. At any rate, we ought to make a protest against this, if we are at all jealous of the ancient Privileges of Parliament.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Before you put the Question, Sir, I venture to suggest to my hon. Friends above and below the Gangway that the best course to attain the object we have in view would be to allow the Amendment of the Attorney General to become the Main Question, and we should then be able to divide on an Amendment to that Motion.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Question proposed,

"That the words 'this House regrets an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan, but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter' be there added."

Amendment proposed to the said Amendment,

To leave out all the words after the word "but" to the end of the Amendment, in order to add the words "the circumstances attending his arrest be referred to the Committee of Privileges of this House, to consider whether any or what action should be taken thereupon, and what measures should be taken to prevent such occurrences in the future."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand of the proposed Amendment."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 246; Noes 151: Majority 95.

AYES.

Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Elcho, Lord
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fulton, J. F.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gent-Davis, R.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Holloway, G.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hughes, Colonel E.

Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jardine, Sir R.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, T. W.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Manners, right hon. Lord J. J. R.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barry, J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biggar, J. G.
Blane, A.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Bright, W. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Cobb, H. P.
Commins, A.
Corbet, W. J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Evelyn, W. J.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Finucane, J.
Flynn, J. C.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fuller, G. P.
Gardner, H.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Haldane, R. B.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kilbride, D.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leake, R.
Lewis, T. P.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Donald, P.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marum, E. M.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Quinn, T.
Rathbone, W.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robinson, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheil, E.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Thomas, A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.

Wayman, T.	Wright, C.
Will, J. S.	
Williams, A. J.	TELLERS.
Williamson, S.	Flower, C.
Wilson, H. J.	Morley, A.
Woodall, W.	

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House regrets that an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan, but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February.]—[See page 64.]

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said, that as another of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary's "criminals" he would ask the attention of the House for a few minutes to the manner in which the Coercion Act had been administered in Ireland. That Act had been administered in Ireland with unmitigated ferocity. He had personal knowledge of the way in which it had been administered, and he could say that, instead of its being used for the purpose of putting down and detecting crime, it had been used for an entirely different purpose—namely, for assisting rack-renting landlords in exacting unfair rents and the torture of the political opponents of the Government. He refused to call it a Criminal Law Amendment Act. It was a Coercion Act, and it was intended as such, and as such it was being used at the present moment. The Irish Members had not, however, imagined that the Irish Government would find such pliant and ready tools to their hands as the roving, resident, removable magistrates who had been called on to administer the Act. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) took credit to himself for a diminution of crime, and had asserted that such diminution was due to the working of the Act. But that was not the case. The fact was that such diminution in the amount of crime as might be was traceable to the Home Rule Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), which had enabled the priests and leaders of the people to control the less amenable class of the population, and which had infused a better feeling into the hearts of the people. The only parts of the country where crime had increased were just those parts in which the National League had been suppressed, and where it had been prevented by the right hon. Gentleman from exercising its beneficent sway over the people. In the constituency of the county of Cork which he had the bonour to represent the right hon. Gentleman was arresting respectable shopkeepers, traders, and farmers, and sending them to gaol as common criminals for what was no crime; and he himself was shortly to go through the farce of a trial for having made a speech to his constituents in which he advised them to enter into legitimate combination for the assertion of their legal rights. Wherever there was strife or conflict between landlord and tenant, owing to the exorbitant demands of the landlord, there was the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary with his Act and his removable magistrates daily at work passing sentences of extraordinary severity on men as honourable as any hon. Member who sat in that House. All the men who had been proceeded against under this Act in his constituency were hard-working, respectable men, of irreproachable character. The right hon. Gentleman was step by step advancing to the inclusion of priests and Members of that House; but he could tell the right hon. Gentleman that if he was going to tranquillize Ireland with his accursed Coercion Act in that way, he would have to proceed much further and arrest every able-bodied man in the community who happened to be a Nationalist. As an instance of the injustice perpetrated under the Act, he would refer to a case which occurred at Kanturk. Five shopkeepers had been indicted for conspiring to refuse to deal with a certain person. Those men, he pointed out, as had been shown in evidence, had had no communication whatever with one another on the subject, but were convicted notwithstanding by two roving magistrates, and sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour. He contended that exclusive dealing, such as this, was perfectly legal, both under the Common Law and under the Coercion Act. There were many similar cases which he could give the House. If his constituents and others were exposed to these terrible risks, whether they could afford it or not, they would be compelled to take costly proceedings in the Court of Queen's Bench or Exchequer, while, in the meantime, gross injustice was being perpetrated. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that the action of the Government was tending to the pacification of Ireland—did he think he was increasing respect for law and order in Ireland by proceedings of this kind all over the country? He had seen decisions of the Resident Magistrates which shocked all ideas of justice. The very last case charged was that some men wore cards in their hats when going to church on Sunday, and that they were seen going into the priest's house an hour or two after the service. The police were asked, was it not possible that they might be meetings for purposes of the chapel? and the police could not say "no" to that question. There had been a very suspicious connection between a certain speech delivered in Manchester by the right hon. Gentleman and subsequent proceedings in Ireland. Very shortly after that speech it became the rule with the Resident Magistrates to give one month's imprisonment with hard labour, in order to suspend the power of appeal. His hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) was at the present moment suffering two months' imprisonment in Tullamore Gaol under two sentences of one month each. His counsel asked to have a case stated, but this was refused; it was asked that there should be an appeal to the Recorder of Cork, so that the sentence might be increased in order to give the right of appeal. But that was only a few days after the Manchester speech of the right hon. Gentleman—the whip was in the air, and the terriers knew too well to disobey their masters. In another case, which occurred a few days ago, of the printer of a certain Cork newspaper, it was proved at the trial that he had as much control of the matter which went into that newspaper as the printer's devil or the messenger who delivered it to the subscribers; and yet, because that newspaper contained a report of a meeting of a suppressed branch of the League, the printer got two months' imprisonment—one month each on two charges. Again, it was asked that the sentence should be increased; but the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was too recent, the man was denied the right of appeal, and was then undergoing punishment. It was not alone that they had the printer imprisoned for two months—the very boys who sold the paper were pursued by the right hon. Gentleman's constables all over the streets. Then there was the case of a poor woman, who was pursued and threatened for selling *The Cork Examiner* and *Herald*. These were specimens of the administration of the Crimes Act, which, they were told, was so carefully carried out. They had been told that crime had greatly diminished in Ireland, but Irish Members contended that the abatement of crime was due to other circumstances than the Coercion Act. It was somewhat due to legislation; but it was largely the result of the different feeling entertained by the people of Ireland towards the people of this country, which feeling had been greatly improved and strengthened by the visits to Ireland of hon. Members of that House and other gentlemen. There was one thing in connection with this Act and with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which he desired to refer to; and that was that for his part, and so far as the majority of hon. Members on those Benches were concerned, they did not take the figures of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to Boycotting on his own showing. They wanted to know how those figures had been obtained, but they had no facilities whatever for testing the Returns. He refused to accept the figures of the right hon. Gentleman altogether; and, what was more, he told the right hon. Gentleman that if this Act continued in operation much longer, he feared that Boycotting would increase rather than diminish. For his own part, he regretted Boycotting as heartily as any hon. or right hon. Gentleman in the House. But he maintained that it was the lesser of two evils, and it was in many cases, unfortunately, the only protection which a persecuted people had been able to devise; and until some better protection could be afforded, they would adhere to it in spite of the way in which this Act had been administered. He had shown the House and the country the extraordinary and eccentric conduct of many of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland. There were some magistrates who stood out in bold relief from the rest; but he believed Irish Members would be able to show that this Act, instead of being carefully carried into effect for the pacification of Ireland, the restoration of social order, and increasing respect for the law in Ireland, had been carried out for totally different purposes; that it had been carried into effect for the purpose of breaking down the legitimate organization of the people of Ireland, and if not with the intention, at any rate with the result, of goading the people of Ireland to a pitch of exasperation.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, that according to the statement of his hon. Friend the Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) it would appear that there were crimes and conspiracies in Ireland other than those which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was attempting to put down; it seemed there were conspiracies for the purpose of bringing people under the law who otherwise would not have come within the cognizance of the magistrates who administered the law. But though according to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech one class of crime in Ireland had diminished, another was on the increase. If it were true, as was stated in Her Majesty's Speech, that crime had decreased, it was only what had been contended by Irish Members during the discussions which took place in that House on the Coercion Bill of last year. They had contended that crime had been greatly on the increase in Ireland, and that it only reached a greater extent on the day the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Coercion Bill as compared with what it was when the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was closeted with Lord Carnarvon on the subject of the wishes of the Irish people. Long before the Bill was introduced the Judges had gone round the country, and they had nothing to do in return for their bloated salaries but to congratulate the country on the diminution of crime, and to give white gloves to the Sheriffs. He had noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland blamed Lord Spencer for the administration of the Coercion Act. Although he (Mr. John O'Connor) had suffered at his hands, he took the earliest opportunity of bearing his testimony to the character of Lord Spencer. That noble Lord said that after looking into the organizations in Ireland he was obliged to confess that there was not one tittle of evidence which connected the Irish Leaders with crime and outrage. But he wished to point out that while Lord Spencer had struck them severely, and had put down crime with a strong hand, he restored those rights which were now being filched from the people of Ireland; he found that the right of combination had been taken away from them and he restored it, while he left the country freer from crime and outrage than it was before. Therefore it was that he would stand up in that House and defend the character of Lord Spencer against the attack made upon him by the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. But did not the argument of the right hon. Gentleman tell against the administration of the Coercion Act? A *tu quoque* was no argument at all; and if those magistrates who the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said had been appointed by his Predecessors had administered the Act in a severe manner it was because they were taking their tone from those above them. Irish Members knew well how it was that every man engaged in the execution of the law in Ireland was permeated with the spirit which prevailed in Dublin Castle. Now, although it might be endeavoured to prevent Irish Members examining into the character of those magistrates, they would do so nevertheless. One Resident Magistrate, Mr. Eaton, stated the other day in Court that he did not want any direct evidence to find his prisoners guilty; he had been informed that his victims were seen coming home from Mass with cards of the National League in their hats; their appearance alone was sufficient for him, and he sentenced them to a month's imprisonment with hard labour. Again, with regard to another Resident Magistrate. Upon the day on which Mr. Dillon sentenced Mr. Blunt to prison he himself was adjudicated a bankrupt, and yet the bankrupt magistrate was considered fit to hold Her Majesty's Commission and to consign Mr. Blunt to prison for two months with hard labour. Then they had before them the character of Mr. Stokes. Mr. Stokes was a man who stood upon no legality whatever; he did not care whether the course he took was legal or illegal so long as he pleased his masters; he was a man who had outraged every form of legality in Ireland, and was the magistrate who had held under arrest the hon. Member for North-East Cork, in whose case the Judge, who sentenced him, said there was no legality for his arrest; and although he trampled on all the forms of the law, yet this man was selected by the Government. Then there was Mr. Curran, whom the Government had appointed to administer this Act; and Mr. Curran was the man who said that Glenbeigh was the happiest and most prosperous part of Ireland. He came now to the character of another gentleman who had played an important part in the South of Ireland—Captain Seagrave. Captain Seagrave, whom they were in a position to be able to judge out of his own mouth as to his fitness for the post of Resident Magistrate, was asked the following questions in Court:—

> "How long have you been a Resident Magistrate?—About one year. I think the 15th October last was the exact date of my appointment.
>
> Where did you get your legal training for your position of Magistrate?—I had no legal training.
>
> Captain, where did you get your military training?—In South Africa.
>
> Did you ever get a Commission in the Home Army?—Never.
>
> Did you try?—I did.
>
> Did you fail?—I did.
>
> Did you try once more to get it?—I tried once more for the preliminary, and passed the second preliminary.
>
> Did you try again?—I tried a third time and failed—not very ignominiously I must say.
>
> At what time was that?—I think about the year 1875.
>
> Can you tell us whether these interesting qualifications were mentioned in the application for the Resident Magistracy?—Certainly not.
>
> Did Her Majesty's Government take the trouble to inquire before or after that time?—I cannot say.
>
> How long after your failure to get into the Army did you leave for the Cape?—Very shortly.
>
> Did you pass an examination there for your captaincy?—I passed no examination."

Captain Seagrave then went on to say that he was for three years a private at the Cape, and having been asked what Statute the Riot Act was, he replied—

> "I do not know; I will tell you if you allow me to look in my pocket. I do not see why I should be examined about my legal knowledge."

Mr. Harrington, continuing the examination, then said—

> "If I were to be prosecuted in the morning you would, perhaps, be one of the magistrates to try me."

To which Captain Seagrave replied—

> "I am not a legal Resident Magistrate."

Would the House believe that this man, after he failed to pass his examinations for the Army and had served as a private in the Cape Mounted Rifles for several years—after he failed to be promoted to the rank of sergeant—nevertheless had been found worthy by Her Majesty's Government to take the position of Resident Magistrate, to have the lives of the people in his power, and to have power to order charges of the police? And this was the man who had been appointed to the district where his hon. Friend the Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane) would be tried next week. It was men of this character, of whom he had given instances—and whose number could be multiplied almost at will—that were administering the Coercion Act in Ireland; and these were the men who were really goading the people into insurrection. The passage in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech referring to crime in Ireland was presaged at Manchester by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who said that the National League was "wobbling." But did it look like wobbling when the branches of the League which were suppressed still continued to hold their meetings, or when the applications to that organization had been increased fourfold since the suppression of those branches? There was no evidence of this in the fact that newspapers continued to publish day by day reports of the meetings of those branches. The Government might imprison the members of the branches, but the branches themselves would continue to meet, and the newspapers would continue to report their proceedings; and while those things continued he said that the League did not wobble, and that there was no foundation for the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

The Coercion Act was not passed for the purpose of putting down outrage; but it was enacted for the purpose of putting down the just combination of the Irish people. But the spirit of the people was untamed. Crime and outrage had decreased; and he was glad that it had decreased. Irish Members had done their best all along, without the aid of the Coercion Act, to keep the people within the bounds of law and reason. The only time when crime increased was when Irish Members were in Her Majesty's prisons; but since then they had used their best endeavours to reduce crime and outrage in Ireland, and he denied the right of Her Majesty's Government to claim the credit for what had taken place. He was quite sure that they would receive from posterity and history a favourable judgment. He was also satisfied with this—for while the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have to depend for his fame on a weak and washy imitation of the policy once called "thorough," the Irish people would receive credit, because they had maintained under oppression a virtuous perseverance in a cause which would be the delight of generations to come.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) said, that as one of the criminals under the Act passed last year he had been sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour and a proper amount of stone-breaking——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. BLANE, continuing, submitted that he had the same Constitutional rights as any Englishman or Scotchman. Representing, as he did, the most populous county in Ulster, he could speak for the Ulster men, because the National Party held the majority of the representation of that Province. The term of imprisonment referred to had been given to him for words which would be altogether innocent if spoken by an Englishman or Scotchman. He had been charged with inciting to the non-payment of rent. He held that he had the right to do that. In this country he could do so, where it was not an indictable offence; he could tell men in England not to fulfil their contracts and take the consequences, and in doing so he should be committing no crime. No number of wooden-headed barristers in Trinity College could make it criminal in Ireland. He (Mr. Blane) was invited to go to an Ulster county, where the landlord ground the faces of the poor to such an extent that the people had to obtain assistance from the charity of England, Scotland, and America. He found that if the assistance took the form of money, the landlord seized it in payment of his rent; and if it was in the shape of seed, he waited until the crop had ripened and then reaped it. He was actually not ashamed to do this, and to leave the people to starvation. The gentleman who acted in this way was a cousin of the Lord Lieutenant, named Stewart. The tenants used to be served with processes at Lifford, some 50 miles distant, to which place there was no railway, and soon afterwards a man would come down, and without any warrant from the County Court Judge levy blackmail, and carry off the horses and cattle. This man committed a crime under the colour of the law. He (Mr. Blane) went into the district, caused the man to be prosecuted, and for this intervention he got four months' imprisonment with hard labour. He held that that was a grave public scandal. If any hon. Gentleman could show him anything like that in any other country he would throw up the sponge. He was brought before two half-pay troopers, and got four months' imprisonment, because he told the people not to pay the rents as they were not legally due. What was the definition of rent legally due? Rent was not legally due until some Court adjudicated upon it, and issued a decree. He had known landlords issue processes in respect to rents which were not legally due. He had known landlords issue processes when receipts had been given by the agents of the property. He held that the Crimes Act was used for purposes of private vengeance. Nothing could be more clearly demonstrated than that the half-pay troopers who administered this martial law in Ireland had no idea of civil law or civil authority. Anything which they regarded as against discipline they punished with the utmost severity. There were many offences under martial law which would be no offence in the eye of a civil magistrate. The Irish Resident Magistrates, who were taken from the Army and Navy, were not fit to administer Civil Law. If he were to put the question to them—"How do you know the rent is legally due?" they would not be able to give him an answer. In his case a warrant was issued for his arrest. Under the Act the Resident Magistrates could have proceeded against him by ordinary summons, and if he had refused to appear on the summons they could then have issued a warrant. They chose to issue a warrant at once, and in the morning, long before daylight, his humble dwelling was surrounded by breechloaders and bayonets. He was in bed at the time. He spoke to the officer in charge from his bedroom window. He was scarcely allowed to dress—at least, he was told he must be quick about it or they would force in the door. In short, he was treated as a vagabond. Now, he was the first Commoner in County Armagh, and contended that the authorities had no right to treat him in the way he had described. He did not wish to shirk responsibility for any act of his, and he never would advise a man to do that which he was not quite willing to do himself. He did not mean to apply to the Government to make his term of imprisonment less. Whether his imprisonment extended over four months or 12 months it was all the same to him. He felt called upon to come to the rescue of people he found oppressed. It was the duty of the Representatives of the people to defend their constituents. He and his hon. Friends would go to prison in the cause of the defence of the people. They were holdfasts in their constituencies, and the Government did not dare to contest their seats. They had not ventured to oppose him. Why was that? He had the confidence of the people; but he had not the confidence of the Castle, or of the administrators of this martial law. There was another landlord in the district called Olphert. His son, John Olphert, was the first Gentleman in Waiting at the Castle; he was a Silver Stick, or something of the sort, and walked backwards. This man put on the screw in the Castle, and assisted in getting the warrant issued against him (Mr. Blane). Now, when he was brought to Letterkenny a half-pay trooper committed him to Derry Gaol, and refused bail. Subsequently, the magistrate held him to bail; but so gross was his ignorance of law that he would only hold him to bail in £1,000. Could they point to any such scandal in England? At most, his offence only amounted to a misdemeanour, and yet he was held to bail in £1,000. That was excessive bail. His treatment in that respect, too, was contrary to all ideas of the administration of Civil Law. He was confident the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) would not say that a man should be held to bail in £1,000 for misdemeanour. At the time of his arrest the parish priest of Gweedore was arrested. The rev. gentleman came down to the funeral of the late Catholic Primate, and he was there and then arrested. He was taken through Belfast and on to Derry, and there lodged in gaol. A second clergyman, the Rev. Daniel Stephens, was also arrested about the same time. Both these clergymen were arrested because they came to the defence of their people against a man who was levying blackmail. Why should not these gentlemen come to the rescue of the people? Manifestly, it was their duty to do so. What was the use of a pastor having a flock unless he defended them? What was the use of a Member of Parliament unless he was prepared to stand up in defence of the liberties of the people? He and the rev. gentleman he had referred to were quite willing to undergo any imprisonment in the cause they had espoused. The men who put them in gaol would not always be sitting comfortably on the Treasury Bench. There would be a wag of the pendulum which would bring them to the Opposition Benches; and except the close Corporation of landlords in Trinity College, which always preserved Trinity College from Land Acts, very few would regret the change. He asserted that unless the people of England realized that it was to their interest to take up the cause of Ireland, they also would soon lose their liberties. The people of Ireland had lost the right of public meeting, and the people of England had lost the same right. The occurrences which caused so much consternation in London not long ago were the result of the performances in Ireland. He was sure it was not necessary for him to prove to the House the necessity of his action in Donegal. The British public knew the facts only too well. They knew that but for the subscriptions of the charitable people in this country, the people of Gweedore and other places would have perished not by hundreds, but by thousands. Much of the money, however, was taken by the landlords and by the bailiff for bogus law costs and blackmail. When he was arrested he had a guard as large as that which followed the Queen down Piccadilly on the 14th of June. He never had such a following in his life, and he was highly delighted at the honour paid him. But did the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland or anybody else in the House believe that the cost of the troops would be defrayed by the people of Gweedore and the other districts concerned? Certainly, it would not. The people were too poor to keep the troops, who had to make a forced march because there were no means of accommodating them in the district. All the expense incurred would have been avoided if the landlords had come to some sort of terms with their tenants. Griffith's valuation was 1*d.* per English acre, but in some cases the rents had been forced up to the extent of 500 per cent. This was not in Cork or Kerry, or in any of the Southern Provinces, but in prosperous Ulster. The rent had been forced up from time to time, until at last the poor people could not live at all. It was not only landlords who resorted to exactions, but the agent's officers had been in the habit of sending out different processes, purporting to be decrees, and the poor people had given them 10*s.* and 15*s.* to go away. And now the Government talked about law and order. He liked to hear sermons preached from the Table by men who took as their text law and order, when what he had described was done in Ireland under the name of law and order. He contended that what he had denounced in Donegal was a perversion of justice and a grave public scandal. For endeavouring to prevent the oppression of the people he was to undergo imprisonment. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland might ask what was the reason, if he did not believe in the justice of Irish Courts, that he had appealed against his sentence. He was 11 days in Londonderry Gaol, and, as a matter of fact, he found his toes very cold. It occurred to him that it would be well for him to appeal, because then he would have to spend April, May, June, and July, four pleasanter months, in gaol. He assured them that in Londonderry Gaol a man got very cold. The floors of the cells were not boarded—at least, that of his cell was not. The floor was of flag, and the cell only measured nine feet by six. But, no matter what their privations were to be, they were bound to defend their people, and they would do so. No such acts as those of Murphy, and Stewart, of Ards, should go without resistance. However their toes became when in prison, resistance would be offered to the actions of such men. He and his hon. Friends would persevere in the course they had dictated for themselves, as certain as they would be ultimately successful. The Government could not succeed in their opposition, for they had not justice on their side. If four months' imprisonment was a proper punishment to give him because he advised the tenants to resist the unjust demands of the landlords, was four months' incarceration a righteous punishment for the blackmailing and robbery to which the people had been subjected for years? Perhaps the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland would favour the House with his opinion on that point. The hon. and learned Gentleman, he knew, was well acquainted with law; but he came from an institution where there was no equity. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman himself was not deficient in equity, and therefore he appealed to him whether the crimes and sentences he had referred to were at all parallel? Furthermore, he wished to point out that he was brought before a Mr. Hamilton, who refused him bail, committing him to Derry Gaol for eight days, and then for three days more. On a previous occasion he had found it his duty, from his place in the House, to attack Mr. Hamilton's salary. For that attack he gave his reasons. But Mr. Hamilton had his revenge. At the inquiry he (Mr. Blane) did not attempt a defence; it was not of the slightest use for him to do so. He was asked if he had anything to say, and he said he had not. Counsel for the Crown then said he was instructed by the Government to press for the utmost severity against Mr. Blane; and therefore he merely said he was sure the magistrate would pay all due respect to the requisition of the Crown. The magistrate did so, and paid him off for his attack in the House of Commons upon his salary. He maintained it was a great public scandal to bring Members of the House before magistrates whose salaries they had attacked in the House. In a certain sense it made magistrates judges in their own cause. He might, it was true, have employed a wooden-headed barrister, for it would not have been difficult to find one, there being 1,300 wooden-headed barristers in Ireland. He was not, however, rich enough to employ one, and therefore he did not do so. He conducted his own case as best he could, and he lost his case. He would not have got one day less imprisonment if he had had the Solicitor General and the whole Bar of Ireland on his side. He regretted he had occupied the time of the House so long, but the matters he had referred to were so important and grave that he could not refrain from directing the attention of the Solicitor General for Ireland to them. There was scarcely a single item in what he had brought before the House which the hon. and learned Gentleman could defend, and as an honourable man he would not try to. If the matters were tabulated and put before the hon. and learned Gentleman, he would condemn them without hesitation. It was, he maintained, a great scandal that Members who had attacked the salaries of magistrates should subsequently be summoned to appear before those very officials. The practice gave magistrates opportunities for punishing their opponents.

Mr. O'HEA (Donegal, W.) said, he should scarcely have obtruded himself on the House in the course of the debate, were it not for some of the very grave matters which had occurred in Ireland during the past three or four months. His hon. Friend who had just sat down (Mr. Blane) had detailed to the House a statement of facts and a condition of things which, although he was a Representative of the people, had brought him into the position he occupied to-night—namely, the position of having a sentence of imprisonment absolutely hanging over his head. Well, he (Mr. O'Hea), occupying the position he did, must make the assertion that instead of his hon. Friend being under a sentence of imprisonment, which inevitably would consign him for four months to a plank bed, he (Mr. O'Hea) himself was the individual to whom that sentence should apply, because all that his hon. Friend had done had been to honourably and manfully go into his constituency when he (Mr. O'Hea) had written to him saying that it would be inconvenient for him to go. His hon. Friend had gone and addressed meetings, and had stood between his (Mr. O'Hea's) constituents and the prosecution that was staring them in the face. He was thankful to his hon. Friend, and must express his thanks to him for having done a great portion of his work when his (Mr. O'Hea's) other work prevented him being on the spot; and in this connection he might refer to the administration of the Crimes Act in that particular constituency. His hon. Friend had referred to Father M'Fadden. Well, that reverend gentleman's name was known wherever the English language was spoken. Father M'Fadden was a pastor who knew what his duty was, who had always done his duty, and who had never shirked it. The feeling with him was that the post of the pastor was in front of the fold when the wolf was at hand, and there was rapine to fear. His position always had been in front of his fold, stemming the torrent of distress, putting his hand in his pocket, and even, so far as his slender resources were concerned, almost pauperizing himself in order to supply bread to the mouths of the famishing poor of his parish. This was rather fulsome praise for one whose good deeds should be recounted not in his lifetime, but after his death. However, the truth was there, and the truth had a right to be told; and he (Mr. O'Hea), as a parishioner of Father M'Fadden, was in a position to make this avowal, so far as the reverend gentleman's supreme nobility of soul was concerned. Well, Father M'Fadden had an estate in his parish, the tenants of which were standing on the very verge of eviction. He came to their rescue. It was his duty to do so. He examined into every single individual case. He had no idea, good, bad, or indifferent, of doing any injustice whatever so far as the landlord was concerned, and all that he wanted to do was to stave off the evil day and prevent such a recurrence of those things which had so often, unhappily, marked the course of eviction campaigns in Ireland. The blazing brand put to the thatched roof was a horrible thing to his mind. He did not want to see the crowbar put in operation against the mud or half-stone built walls. He did not want to see the people, some of them, perhaps, in a sickly or delicate state, thrown out on the roadside. He knew the circumstances in every individual case, and, knowing those circumstances, he believed it to be his bounden and imperative duty to do the best he could with a due regard to the interest of the landlord on the one hand, and a due regard to the well-being of the tenant on the other. The reverend gentleman impressed on the people in his parish, first and foremost of all, the obligation of being honest, and of paying their debts so far as they were in a position to do so. He impressed on the landlord, on the other side, the fact that in human concerns the maxim and the adoption of the principle of bear and forbear was a thing not altogether to be ignored. And having told the people their duty on the one hand, and having put before the landlord equally what his duty was on the other—because property had its duties as well as its rights—he succeeded in bringing about a settlement, the result of which was that nearly 60 per cent of all the arrears due from the tenants was wiped away, and instead of having all the careering of the crowbar brigade, accompanied with all the paraphernalia of horse dragoons, artillery, and all the rest of it, these people were, happily, in their homes, thanks to the exertions of that good man. Well, Father M'Fadden was asked to attend a meeting in an adjoining parish. He went to that meeting, and at that meeting he related what his experience had been so far as his own parish was concerned. He did no more than tell the people what his own parishioners had achieved—the success they had achieved. He was asked to be a mediator; the landlord was callous and inexorable, wanting his pound of flesh and nothing short of it, and he wrote a letter which would have brought the blush of shame to his cheek had it been possible for him to blush—had he not been a man of such despicable character—but, at any rate, it was a letter which would bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of every single member of his family for generations. What did he say in his letter? Why, after fair terms had been offered, and every opportunity had been given to have a settlement come to and every opportunity had been spurned and virtually rejected, he said—

> "It is useless to deal kindly any longer with these tenants. I may tell you that I would not accept 99 per cent of all rent and costs due to me, as I am going to clear out the town lands, and it is my land that I want now."

The district was remote, and poor, no doubt; but the more remote the district, and the more poor and the more homely the lot of the people, really the greater was the amount of pity which should be felt and the greater the amount of commiseration which should be entertained for them. Father M'Fadden knew from his experience what the threats fulminated against these people were. He (Mr. O'Hea) had it, and the information was statistical, that in the 66 cases where ejectment processes had been brought against the tenantry, the entire amount of rent endorsed on those ejectment processes came to £235, and the House would believe him when he said that the costs following these ejectments came to £346. That was a condition of things to which this rev. gentleman was not unfamiliar, and he thought that as he had succeeded so well in making peace in regard to the property at Gweedore, he might act as a mediator in the adjoining parish, where he was asked to go and address a meeting. Well, for so doing, he was brought before a learned luminary, with regard to whose capacity the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was so satisfied. The right hon. Gentleman, he might say, regarded every single Resident Magistrate in Ireland as one amply qualified and competent to carry out—he would use no more violent term than the administration of his Coercion Law. Well, Father M'Fadden was under sentence of imprisonment. He was served with a summons. The hon. Gentleman who had just resumed his seat had mentioned the circumstances under which the rev. gentleman was taken into custody. He (Mr. O'Hea) considered it was a downright piece of indecency to have carried out that process in the way in which it was carried out. Father M'Fadden went to attend a requiem mass that was being celebrated for a Prelate, one of whose subjects he had been—a Prelate for whom he entertained a great respect, and a Prelate who was mourned by the entire Irish race. Father M'Fadden had not gone more than perhaps a couple of hundred yards from the church in which the requiem mass was celebrated—a church draped in mourning, by the way—than the hand of a policeman was placed on his shoulder and he was told that he was a prisoner. That, of course, was the law which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary considered perfectly proper so far as its applicability to Ireland was concerned. This rev. gentleman had his obligations to discharge and his duties and functions as a clergyman to attend to. He was arrested on the Friday, and an application was made to have him admitted to bail. One of those who tendered bail to any extent was his own Bishop, others were two magistrates and leading merchants in Armagh. If it had been a matter of £100,000, there would have been bail forthcoming to have had this priest restored to liberty; and, besides that, everyone who knew Father M'Fadden knew that, having entered into his bail-bond, he was absolutely certain, if alive, to appear to take his trial at the tribunal before which he was cited to appear. However, his flock were deprived of the benefit of his ministrations on the Saturday and the Sunday. He was kept in gaol, and the summons or charge was read over to him, and his reply was that the officer who took him into custody in the first instance might just as well have written out at the foot of the document giving him authority to make the arrest the sentence he was to receive. He had been informed, he said, that he was to be prosecuted, and he might as well go round to the gaol door and ask to see his cell, as to ask for the farce and empty form of a trial. Well, to pass from that and to come from Donegal down to the part of the country that he (Mr. O'Hea) knew best, an hon. Friend of his, who was now enjoying the luxury of a plank bed, published a newspaper in the City of Cork—*The Cork Daily Herald*. He referred to the Member for South-East Cork (Mr. Hooper). His right hon. Friend the Member for the College Green Division of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan)—and he believed he was entitled to call him "right hon." in virtue of his position of Lord Mayor of Dublin—had been sent to gaol for an exactly similar offence; so that, so far as the Member for South-East Cork was concerned, there was not so much to be said by way of complaint. Unquestionably the hon. Member was responsible for what appeared in the paper—for the reports published in it, and so on. He was responsible for the publication in it of the proceedings of suppressed branches of the National League. He did not fear to do it. He had expressed his determination to do it, and even since his incarceration had caused it to be done over and over again, notwithstanding that it might be the cause of his being sent for a renewed term to enjoy the luxury of a plank bed. When the case against the hon. Member was brought forward, he (Mr. O'Hea) was struck very particularly by the way the case was presented on the part of the Crown. He (Mr. O'Hea) had heard the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary say, from his place in the House, that there was no new crime created under the Crimes Act, and he had heard the Crown Prosecutor (Mr. Stephen Ronan) inform the magistrate that the publication of these reports of the proceedings of the National League might have been a perfectly harmless thing before the passing of the Crimes Act; but that since the passing of that Act—the Act under which the action was brought—such publication was illegal and punishable by the tribunal before which it was cited. He (Mr. O'Hea) naturally asked himself the question—and many a person in Cork naturally asked himself the question—who was telling the truth? Did the Crown Prosecutor, who asked the Resident Magistrate to commit the hon. Member, or the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, state what was correct? Either one statement must be correct or the other. At any rate, on the strength of making that statement that the hon. Member's action would have been perfectly harmless before the Act of Parliament passed, the Crown Prosecutor asked the magistrate to convict, and the magistrate did convict. The hon. Member had gone to gaol, and had gone to gaol with equanimity. The block bed had no terrors for him, as he knew he was not a wrong-doer. He could lay his hand upon his heart and say that between man and man, and so far as human obligations were concerned, there was not a single act of his life in respect of which he could accuse himself of having done wrong in word or deed to his fellow-man. Well, the whole community in the City of Cork was shocked at this indecency, as it was considered. Another of his (Mr. O'Hea's) hon. Friends—an accomplished and cultured scholar—he referred to his hon. Friend the Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane) — stepped into the gap. He took his pen in his hand and controlled and directed and guided the editorial department of *The Cork Daily Herald*. He did it with ability, because he was endowed with ability, and was possessed of very rare culture. The constituents of the editor who had been sent to gaol, believing that a gross scandal had been perpetrated, were determined that they would signify in some way their appreciation of him and of his public services. A requisition was drawn up and submitted to the Mayor of Cork, and in obedience to that requisition he convened a meeting of the citizens of Cork. At that meeting a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church made a statement. It was a bold statement; but he took the full and complete responsibility on himself for having made it. It was that, instead of having detectives watching and dogging the footsteps of Irish Members, they ought rather to have them watching the movements of some Government officials who had been committing a foul crime—that of corrupting young children. He said that while perpetrating this black and foul iniquity, those Government officials were actually screened and sheltered by those who were receiving their instructions straight from the Chief Secretary. The rev. gentleman having made this statement, his hon. Friend (Mr. Lane) who conducted *The Cork Daily Herald*, having been shocked, as every one else was shocked, by hearing this horrible story, wrote an article, the reading of which was—*Who is the Offender? Who is the Government Official?* he asked, and there was a line in large print in the Bills, "Who is the Offender?" In fact, up to the time of the meeting at Watergrass Hill on the 3rd December, which was addressed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Cork—from the interval during which the prosecution of the editor of *The Cork Daily Herald* took place, and after which the hon. Member took the management of that paper—that hon. Member constantly wrote article after article and editorial after editorial, asking how it was that when a grave charge was made against a Government official, the Government were supine and inactive. It was only when the hon. Member had pressed them on and shamed them into taking action that they at last did it. But, even then, they only acted in a half-hearted manner. But then, as he said, his hon. Friend addressed a meeting on the 3rd December. The hon. Member was subsequently—more than a month after—without having been served with a summons, arrested. The delay was inexplicable, for it was well-known that the hon. Member had been in the neighbourhood. It was a fact, although it might not be generally known, that an official of the Crown had said to the hon. Member, before his arrest, and alluding to his editorials in regard to the terrible charge brought against another official—"Why on earth don't you drop this thing? Why are you bringing these charges against Captain Plunkett, a Government official?" The hon. Member, however, continued to write, and he asked the authorities, through the medium of the paper, why they did not mind what they were about, and why they did not prosecute those whom he fearlessly designated as "miscreants." Well, the hon. Member was arrested, and it was no doubt owing to the ability that he brought to bear on the case that his sentence was so small. He (Mr. O'Hea) fancied that the Chief Secretary, if he were asked what imprisonment the hon. Member should have got, would answer that it should have been infinitely more than, as a matter of fact, was meted out to him. There could be no doubt that a light sentence was passed upon him in consequence of the ability with which he had conducted his defence. Then there had been other cases. There was the case of the newspaper printer, an humble but respectable man, whose name was sent in as a mere matter of business and of routine from the paper on the staff of which he was employed. This person was nothing more than a foreman tradesman on the establishment, and when there was a prosecution his name was sent forward in order to comply with some legal requirements. The man was arrested. He was summoned, and kept in custody for a considerable time; and after the authorities had suited their own convenience, and had fixed the time, he was brought before two magistrates. He was defended by a very eminent counsel, and the defence was that the man's position was thoroughly an ornamental one, and that though, no doubt, his name did appear at the foot of the newspaper as issued daily, he, as a matter of fact, was nothing more than an ordinary member of the printing staff. The son of the proprietor of the paper went into Court boldly and generously, and was examined. He said—

> "This man is not in the smallest degree responsible for what has taken place. If any person is to be held to be responsible, I am, and I avow my responsibility."

Everybody admired that gentleman—everyone admired his self-sacrificing spirit; but still this poor printer—who, by the way, was in a delicate state of health—on two counts was sentenced in respect of each to one month's imprisonment. The counsel for the defence made a very reasonable request. He (Mr. O'Hea) was in Court at the time, and was able to say that the request preferred was a very reasonable one. It was that the sentence on the first count should be increased to two months, in order that the defendant might have an opportunity of appealing, and in order that a higher Court than that framed according to the ideas of the Chief Secretary should decide as to whether this man, who was only a mere tradesman, should be punished for what appeared in the paper, when the editor came forward and assumed all responsibility as to the article complained of, and said—

> "Let Corcoran be put on one side, and if anyone is to be placed on his trial I am prepared to take all responsibility."

The magistrates, however, refused to put the sentence at more than one month to give the man an opportunity of appealing; and he (Mr. O'Hea) certainly said he admired the pluck of the counsel for the defence, and trusted that the independence which he displayed would never depart from the Irish Bar. This gentleman said he had done his best for his client, and the Bench could do what they liked; but he left the Court with the conviction that they had not done complete justice, and that they had placed the defendant in a position which could not be regarded by any right-minded man with satisfaction. He would now refer to the case of his hon. Friend in the county of Clare. It was a fact that his hon. Friend had gone through Ireland from one part to another; he attempted no disguise; and although a warrant was out for his arrest, he never attempted to evade the service of that warrant. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for a speech that he made on one occasion; he appealed against the sentence; and immediately after the appeal, as he was leaving the Court, he was placed under arrest on a warrant charging him with having made an equally criminal speech in another part of Ireland. He was taken into custody and brought before another tribunal, and his trial was almost a mockery in connection with these travesties of justice in Ireland; the facts of the case were the same, and the gravity of the offence was not less than in the former case, and he was sentenced to one month's imprisonment. Application was made to have the sentence increased; but, he (Mr. O'Hea) said, by malice aforethought—it could be nothing else—the application was refused. The magistrate said that the sentence of one month was inadequate to the offence of the person charged. Why, then, did they not make the sentence longer, and give his hon. Friend an opportunity of appealing? Because they had got their instructions; and he (Mr. O'Hea) would say, in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that the magistrates dare not depart from those instructions. If that sentence had been increased, and if his hon. Friend had been allowed to lodge an appeal, his hon. Friend would have been present at that moment in the House of Commons, and be doing his duty to those who returned him to represent them there. The Resident Magistrates had stated that they carried out the law as they found it—as it appeared on the Statute Book, and as they were able to read and interpret it. He would like to know what answer, on behalf of these irremovable gentlemen, could be given by right hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite so far as the guilt or innocence of his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork was concerned? His hon. Friend had been sentenced at Mitchelstown by two magistrates—Captain Stokes and Mr. Eaton. Now, Mitchelstown was a very long distance from Middletown. He knew the distance well, and also that Captain Stokes never adjudicated in Middletown in the ordinary course of his duties. The sentence was passed at Mitchelstown, and the appeal was heard at Middletown. He would ask, what business had Captain Stokes or Mr. Eaton in Middletown on the day of the appeal? Captain Stokes was present, and he went into the magistrates' room and signed one warrant—the man who had originally sentenced his hon. Friend. This showed that the administration of the Act was dictated from Dublin Castle, and that the action of those gentlemen who sat in judgment on accused persons was action of which, if they had only the manliness and honesty to speak out, they would confess they were heartily ashamed.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, that the figures adduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) were exceedingly satisfactory as representing the condition of Ireland as to crime; and he (Sir Walter Foster) thought the most important part of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman consisted of the figures by which he compared the agrarian outrages in Ireland during the six months before the passing of the Act, with those which occurred during the succeeding six months. The total result of the comparison was that there was a diminution of 26 per cent for the latter period as compared with the former. It was a scientific rule, in relation to statistics referring to any difficult social problem, to be always careful to exclude any other causes which might be in action. They had been told that there was another cause acting in Ireland—namely, the increased hope which existed in the minds of the Irish people that better administration and more regard for justice in Irish affairs would be granted to the people; and they had this fact, in support of this influence, that during 1886-7, before the passing of the Crimes Act, there was a considerable diminution in agrarian crime. Now, that diminution had been going on ever since the Tory Party in 1885 took a new departure with reference to Ireland and determined not to re-enact coercive legislation. The Tory Party having instilled that hope into the breasts of the people of Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had embodied the principles of conciliation in a Bill which, unfortunately, did not receive the assent of this House after the Parliamentary Election of 1885. The hope, however, had continued through succeeding years, and it had influenced the Irish people in such a way as to lead to a progressive diminution of crime. But if the right hon. Gentleman was not content to accept that explanation of his figures, there was another explanation to which he might possibly give assent. If he used those statistics as evidence that, after the passing of the Act of last year, there was a consequent diminution of crime, he (Sir Walter Foster) would tell him that there was another cause at work which came into operation earlier in 1886. Before this cause came into action, in the quarter immediately preceding it, he found that there were 306 cases of agrarian crime; whereas, in the succeeding quarter, they had the remarkable fact that the number of these crimes had fallen from 306 to 166. The cause he alluded to was the Plan of Campaign, and it had been followed by a diminution in crime nearly double in extent of that which the right hon. Gentleman claimed as the result of the passing of the Coercion Act. It was as logical to claim improvement for the one cause as for the other. It was, however, rather the concurrent operation of the two causes which he (Sir Walter Foster) had alluded to that had contributed to the steady improvement in crime of the Irish people, and he referred to these two causes as the probable explanation of the figures which the right hon. Gentleman had brought before the House. They had, at all events, the words of the Leader of the House that at present we had made no great advance in producing obedience to the law, or sympathy with the law, on the part of the Irish people. Surely the way to make the Irish people respect and sympathize with the law was not to carry it out with harshness and cruelty, but to bring its administration more into harmony with justice and the legitimate aspirations of the people. He did not think that any successful attempt had been made to justify the indignities to which prisoners prosecuted under the Crimes Act, whether Members of that House or other persons, had been subjected; and the welcome which had been accorded to the hon. Gentleman the ex-Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), on his arrival in this country after his incarceration, did not, in his (Sir Walter Foster's) opinion, show that Englishmen approved the treatment which the Government had accorded to political prisoners; on the contrary, he thought that a feeling of exasperation and anger at an administration marked with cruelty had been steadily growing in the breasts of the English as well as the Irish people. Again, if this Act had been a great success, its action would have been to enable a greater number of convictions to be obtained by the officials than had been previously obtained. The right hon. Gentleman had said that paralysis of the "Courts of Law" was "the evil he had specially got to meet," and that evidence to convict was not forthcoming. If that evidence was now forthcoming as a result of the Act, they ought to have a larger number of cases brought forward than they had; but, on the contrary, they had a smaller number of offences with which the police had been able to grapple. This suggested that the Act was so far a failure in one of its chief objects. He believed they would obtain the sympathy of the Irish people with the law, not by passing cruel enactments, but by doing something more in harmony with the wishes of the people. The present feeling of antipathy to the law was as rife and vigorous 35 years ago in Ireland as it was to-day; and until law was brought more into harmony with popular sentiment they would not get in Ireland that obedience to the law which existed in this country. They had all been more or less pained that hon. Members of that House, and other persons equally worthy, should have been subjected to indignities under the provisions of the Coercion Act. He did not think that any attempt had been made to justify the manner in which the prisoners had been treated; and many thousands of English people felt that the men who were now suffering under the Coercion Act were men whose motives were almost, if not entirely, political. Their objects had been political in incurring the censure of the law, and their motives were purely political; they had done no moral wrong; they had been endeavouring to carry out their political programme to the best of their ability; and in consequence they came within the category of persons suffering for political offences. Mr. Davenport Hill, who some years ago was Recorder of Birmingham, and an authority on the repression of Crime, said, with regard to political prisoners, and speaking of some men who were imprisoned for taking part in Chartist meetings in Birmingham—

> "I regret that of late years the distinction between political prisoners and ordinary criminals has been well-nigh obliterated. The general instinct of the civilized world in all ages has recognized the difference. Political offenders have been felt to be, if not exactly prisoners of war, yet bearing some resemblance to such captives. To keep their persons in safe custody, or even to take their lives on great occasions, gives no shock to public sentiment; but to subject them to degrading treatment, to crop their hair, clothe them in a prison dress, march them to and fro under the command of a turnkey, prevent them from supplying themselves with books and the comforts which habit has changed into necessaries, and above all, to lay harsh restrictions on the visits of their friends, is so revolting to the most ordinary sympathies, that magistrates and governors of prisons will not subject them to such indignities and hardships unless the Legislature has made their infliction imperative. The political prisoner, when his treatment is left to the ordinary feelings of mankind, is dealt with as a person in misfortune, who must undergo the sufferings attached to his position, but whose feelings are not to be wounded by contumely. I admit it would not be difficult to find instances in every age wherein the principle has been grossly violated, but such violations have been condemned by universal consent, whenever the excited feelings by which they were caused have subsided."

He would commend that quotation to the careful consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; at all events, as a medical man knowing no distinction of persons, and looking upon all from that point of view as equal, he protested against the cruelty which inflicted no less than 22 hours' solitude out of the 24 on any man for offences of this kind. Such a prolonged strain upon a man who had been leading an active life and mixing daily with the crowd of his fellow-men was most likely to have the most mischievous effect upon his nervous system, and he did not envy the feelings of the Minister who inflicted it. They looked back with repugnant feelings on some of the horrors inflicted upon the political prisoners of old days;

but, at least, there was then a manly brutality which sent men to the gibbet and the block; whereas we had now a feline malignity and meanness in the methods which were a disgrace to the Ministers who enforced them and a degradation to the nation that allowed them.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, AND LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE—RESOLUTION.

MR. PARNELL (Cork), in rising to move the following Amendment:—

> "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session which was of an ameliorative character has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much tc aleniate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous,"

said: Before dealing with this subject, I wish to make a slight reference to the question of Procedure. I do not know, Sir, whether I shall be in Order in prefacing what I have to say by a slight reference to the question of Procedure. I merely wish to say, however, that I think we Irishmen have a very special interest in these days in facilitating the Business of the House generally—I will not say in facilitating especially the Business of the Government, although, of course, that is included in the Business of the House. Since the great Reform Act passed in 1885 this House has undoubtedly become an engine of democratic progress, and although that engine may have been temporarily diverted from its purpose, still we Members from Ireland are obliged since 1885 to recognize for the first time that we have as much interest in the progress of Public Business as any other section of hon. Members in the House. I have not had an opportunity of looking over the new Rules of the Government, and I should not be in Order in referring to them now; but I will only say this—that I believe we are prepared to go further than the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government in this House and his Colleagues in improving the Rules of the House, so as to take as much as possible out of the House for the purpose of advancing the legislation and the business of the country. Our course last Session was a difficult one, because we were then confronted with the most cruel Coercion Act, which we were obliged to oppose to the very last. It was our duty to do so. I regret the introduction of that Act, and the necessity for the bitter, stringent, and determined opposition we were obliged to advance against it; but the general public and the House will make a great mistake if they think the measure of our opposition to that Act will supply a means for estimating our general attitude as regards the Government Business or the Business of every section of the House this Session. I apprehend the Government have now done their worst in the direction of coercion so far as legislative enactment goes; but I apprehend we are only at the beginning of the exercise of coercion. But the Government having obtained their Coercion Act—which is probably the most stringent that ever entered into the minds of Ministers or men to conceive—we do not think the Government will ask for another. In any case, were it otherwise, and even had we the prospect of another Coercion Act before us—the Government can always obtain a Coercion Act independently of the ordinary Rules of the House—as was the case with the previous one—we should have no inducement whatever to oppose any real improvement that might be suggested by the Government, or from any quarter of the House, in the procedure of the House for the purpose of forwarding Public Business. On the contrary, looking forward as we do in the near future to the introduction of another Bill for the better government of Ireland, which will undoubtedly afford—not from these Benches on which I sit now, but certainly from the Benches opposite—unexampled opportunities for what is called Obstruction, it is more directly to our interests to assist the Front Bench opposite in diminishing those opportunities of Obstruction, and to assist to make it possible for the House of Commons hereafter to pass a Bill for the better government of Ireland. I wish also to refer to another matter, which is rather outside the scope of my Amendment. It is to some references made by Lord Salisbury to the action of the Conservative Party during the Session of 1885 with respect to the

Irish Members. Lord Salisbury was not in the House of Commons, otherwise I think he would have hardly ventured to commit himself to the statements he made in regard to what passed between the leading Members of the Conservative Party and the Irish Members in those days. He has endeavoured to make it appear that the alliance between the Members of the Conservative Party and the Irish Party was simply that of going into the same Lobby on one or two questions, and that the Tories would have certainly preferred if they could have gone into the Lobby by themselves; but, of course, they could not prevent the Irish Members going along with them. That is the innocent aspect which Lord Salisbury seeks to put on that Division by which his Party turned out the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and the Liberal Government by the aid of the Irish vote. Lord Salisbury also finds fault with the Liberals of the day because they have joined with people who are resisting the law of the land. He says this divides the conduct of the Liberals and the conduct of the Tories by a very sharp line, and promises that if, instead of joining in companionship with men of disorder engaged in resisting the enforcement of the law, they were to return to a legitimate form of alliance, he would have nothing further to say. But the Tory Party of that day went a good deal further than simply going into the Division Lobby for the purpose of turning the Liberals out; and it will not be denied in this House—although Lord Salisbury may deny it, not having been witness to the facts—that the Tory Party did go much further. We have had the statement the other day of my hon. Friend the Member for Derry City (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) that the then Conservative Whip and Patronage Secretary to the Treasury did give him to understand that when the Tories came into power the Coercion Act of that day would not be renewed. We have that statement made publicly, and it has not been denied by the Gentleman concerned. It is true that the present Conservative Whip and Patronage Secretary to the Treasury has denied the statement; but he was never accused of having made such an intimation. The understanding was conveyed by the then Whip of the Tory Party, who is no longer a Member of the House of Commons. Then we have the denial of Lord Carnarvon that he and I are at one on the question of Home Rule. I did not say, and I do say, that Lord Carnarvon and I are now at one on the question of Home Rule. I do not know what Lord Carnarvon's views are now, but I know what they were in 1885. The statement which I made in 1885, when Lord Carnarvon was in this country, which Lord Carnarvon did not contradict, I make now—that Lord Carnarvon's views, as conveyed to me, or rather as we exchanged them in our interview, were absolutely identical. He expressed to me the strongest belief that only by the concession of an Irish Parliament could the Irish Question be settled, and that it was to be a Parliament, and that it was to be called a Parliament—that it was to have most extensive powers, even going as far as the right of protecting Irish industries by the imposition of protective tariffs. Lord Carnarvon says that he did not agree with the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). I never said that he did agree to it. That Bill was not in existence at the time of our interview, and we had not any opportunity of conversing upon it. But Lord Carnarvon was in favour of an Irish Parliament; and he undertook the Office of Lord Lieutenant, having those views. Having those views, with Lord Salisbury's knowledge, going a little further than merely walking into the same Division Lobby with Irish Members—he, with Lord Salisbury's knowledge, certainly after our interview, conveyed to me that he (the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) was in favour of an Irish Parliament. Therefore, was I not right in supposing—as I undoubtedly did—that, holding these views, he would not have been made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland unless there had been a considerable feeling in the Cabinet that his views were right; much less would Lord Salisbury have agreed to his interview with me—I do not know that Lord Salisbury knew beforehand of his interview with me; but he certainly knew of it afterwards, because he has admitted that he did publicly. I was certainly under the impression that, dealing as I was with a man who was in the position of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, his statements and assurances were of no ordinary significance. Lord Carnarvon did a little more than allow his Colleagues in the House of Commons to walk into the Division Lobby with the Irish Members. We are now told by Lord Salisbury that it is very naughty for English politicians to unite with people who are resisting the law of the land, or to have anything to do with men of disorder, who were resisting the application and enforcement of the law. But that is precisely what Lord Carnarvon did when he went over to Ireland. The Mayor and Corporation of Limerick, at the time of Lord Carnarvon's Viceroyalty, and for some year or two previously, during the Administration of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, had been resisting the law of the land most strongly; and, in fact, it had been canvassed by the supporters of the Conservative Party whether the whole of the Corporation of Limerick, including the Mayor, should not be arrested and held in durance on account of their action. They had refused to levy the rates decreed by the Courts in Ireland; they had refused to levy the police rate—a clear breach of the law—but Lord Carnarvon did not think it beneath him to associate with those men, because he invited them to the Viceregal Lodge at Dublin Castle to confer with him upon the subject, and to see if he could not persuade them, not to desist from their bad conduct, but to see whether they could not come to some compromise. I think that the proposition was that they should obey one-fourth part of the law, and not the remaining three-fourths. The Lord Lieutenant, unfortunately, happened to be ill at the time, and he actually invited these men of disorderly and unlawful character up into his bedroom, where he was in bed, and he gave them a very good lunch and a great deal of wise counsel. There is another matter I have to refer to about Lord Carnarvon, upon which I have never touched before. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members of this House that shortly after the Conservative Government of 1885 came into power we brought forward a Motion in reference to the conviction of three sets of prisoners for murder, conspiracy to murder, and treason-felony. They were the Maamtrasna prisoners, the Crossmaglen prisoners, and the Barbavilla prisoners. We asked that there should be inquiry into the conviction of these prisoners, which had taken place during the Viceroyalty of Lord Spencer—an inquiry which Lord Spencer had refused, but which the Conservative Front Bench immediately they came into Office granted. This inquiry took place in respect of two out of the three sets of prisoners—namely, those of Crossmaglen and Barbavilla. Shortly before the General Election in 1885 an hon. Friend came to me in Dublin and told me that he had just been sent for by Lord Carnarvon, and that his Lordship evidently wished him to communicate what he had told him to me, and it was to this effect—that Lord Carnarvon had investigated the cases of the Crossmaglen and the Barbavilla prisoners, and had come to the conclusion that the latter were justly convicted, and that he could not interfere; but with regard to the case of the Crossmaglen prisoners he did not think that there was sufficient evidence for their conviction, and that he intended to liberate them forthwith. That was just before the General Election of 1885. I am under the impression that shortly afterwards Lord Carnarvon came to England, and I daily expected to see in the newspapers the anouncement that the Crossmaglen prisoners had been liberated. Those prisoners, however, were not liberated. I do not know the reason or the motive for that. It is possible that Lord Carnarvon waited until after the result of the General Election to liberate the prisoners convicted of the serious offences of treason-felony and conspiracy to murder. I should not have blamed him for so doing, because I can understand that it might have seriously injured the prospects of the Conservative Party at the polls if just before the General Election they had liberated the prisoners convicted of such grave offences. Whatever was the cause, these men were not liberated. As the result of the Election Lord Carnarvon came to England, and as it was useless for him to expect to convince the majority of the Cabinet then upon the subject of Home Rule he gave up his Office, in that way acting as a high-minded and most honourable man. These men—and I say this for the information of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland—were considered by Lord Carnarvon—according to the statement made to my hon. Friend, whose name could be given if Lord Carnarvon desires it—innocent of this offence, and he had made up his mind to liberate them; but from that day to this they have not been liberated. I think it is a terrible comment on English rule in Ireland that prisoners who were held to be innocent of the crime of which they were convicted by one Viceroy belonging to the Conservative Government should be kept in penal servitude by the next Viceroy. I want to say one word with reference to the county government of Ireland. It would appear from all we have heard that England is, but Ireland is not, to be given county government, because it would be used as an engine to resist the Coercion Act. All I have to say is this—that marks the very great advance that has been made by the Conservative Party in the downward course of coercion. They came into Office stating their determination to carry local government for the Irish counties *pari passu*, or almost so, with local government for the English counties. We now find that in little more than a year of Conservative rule in Ireland the condition of the country has become so bad that it is impossible to intrust the Irish counties with the right of levying rates for building bridges and making and repairing roads. I now turn to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). It appears to me that he considers it sufficient excuse, whenever he is accused of excessive tyranny or maladministration in Ireland, to point to the Bench opposite and say—"You did the same thing, or worse, when you were in Office." When the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) complained of the excessive powers which have been given to the Resident Magistrates under the Crimes Act of last Session, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary thought it quite sufficient answer to say that the majority of these magistrates were appointed by Lord Spencer. That may be, but Lord Spencer appointed these Resident Magistrates to administer the Coercion Act, but there was an appeal in every case to the County Court Judge. A similar appeal was promised in the Crimes Act by the Chief Secretary, but the right hon. Gentleman either forgot or broke his word—you may choose which you like. When we were in Committee on the Bill he said—"There will be an appeal in every case to the County Court." He also promised the House that if there should be any legal technicalities in connection with appeals to the County Courts, the Government would not object to give a right of appeal to a still higher tribunal. Well, we know that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, by means of the special Rule of Urgency, contrived to pass a great part of the Crimes Act without discussion, and in that way he got out of his promise. There was no right of appeal given at all in the case, except that which already existed, and in all the 540 cases in which convictions had been obtained in the first six months only 112 appeals had been given, or about 1 in 6.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The number is 373.

MR. PARNELL: We have not the advantage of the statistics of the right hon. Gentleman; but I am certainly under the impression that the number is 540, collected from the newspapers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Up to the end of the year the number was 373. Possibly the hon. Gentleman may be right up to the present time.

MR. PARNELL: The figures I have given comprise six months, which would be up to the 1st of February, but I am inclined to think that 540 is considerably under than over the mark up to this date. There have been only 112 appeals, but most of these appeals took place under the earlier working of the Coercion Act. It is only in cases of sentences over one month that appeals can be taken; but, under the ordinary law, appeals can be made from the magistrate in cases of summary jurisdiction. During the first month or so it was the custom of the magistrate—probably they thought they were carrying out the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—to inflict sentences exceeding one month, which carried appeals; but the right hon. Gentleman was not satisfied with that. He was not satisfied with breaking his pledge, or with the action of the magistrates in endeavouring to hold him to his pledge. He went to Birmingham and made a speech, which was certainly the most extraordinary speech which was ever made by a Minister in his position. The right hon. Gentleman appears to have imbibed a little of the genius of the country. There is much in that speech reminding me of the story of a certain don of Trinity College, Dublin, who was passing by the pump of the College one day when he found an unfortunate bailiff surrounded by a number of students, who were pumping water upon him. He said to them—"Boys, boys, whatever you do, don't nail his ears to the pump. Of course, it is no business of mine to interfere, but it would be a terrible thing if you nailed his ears to the pump." I need not say the hint was taken. The bailiff's ears were nailed to the pump. But the right hon. Gentleman did not go so far as this in a negative direction. He said—

> "I have been asked whether it would not have been an expedient thing if certain individuals, who have been guilty of undoubted breaches of the law, were not sentenced to less than a month, in order to prevent this scandal of men going about the country between the time of their condemnation and their appeal. The Executive has nothing to do"—

like the gentleman at Trinity College—

> "and ought to have nothing to do with the sentences passed. It would be a gross abuse of me to interfere and to tell the Judges or magistrates that we, the Executive, were of opinion"—

plainly intimating his opinion—

> "that such and such a sentence was or was not desirable. That is entirely beyond our province. We should consider ourselves guilty of a grave dereliction of duty if we did so."

So the right hon. Gentleman went his way, satisfied that he had given the hint to his removable magistrates to nail the ears of this unfortunate man to the pump. Accordingly, since the speech, short sentences have been the rule. Amongst those who received short sentences to avoid appeal were Mr. Lane, M.P., Mr. E. Harrington, M.P., Father Matthew Ryan, and the newsvendor in Killarney. Alderman Hooper, M.P., it is true, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment; but there was no right of appeal, as there were two separate and cumulative terms. Then there was the case of Mr. David Sheehy, who was sentenced to three months and appealed; but, as he was leaving the Court, he was arrested, tried, and sentenced on another charge to one month, which prevented him from having the opportunity of appealing. He asked the magistrates to state a case on a month's sentence to the Superior Courts, but they would not do so. The right hon. Gentleman, not content with having broken his promise, with having given this hint to his Resident Magistrates, commenced to make excuses, and retorted that the magistrates could state a case. But the matter being left to the discretion of removable magistrates, acting upon the speech of the Chief Secretary, I can but think that the promise of the right hon. Gentleman has been kept only to the ear. Well, now, Sir, I have dealt with this question of appeals. The only appeal that can be taken in Ireland in cases of sentences of a month is an appeal on a very narrow point of law to the Court of Exchequer; a matter which has only just been discovered, and which the right hon. Gentleman, apparently, had no idea of; but it is stated that in the forthcoming Judicature Act the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary intends to take away this right of appeal. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has told us that his Coercion Act has largely reduced Boycotting, and somewhat reduced crime. The right hon. Gentleman might have given some credit to some other causes as well as to the Coercion Act. Does the right hon. Gentleman not admit that there has always been an intimate relation between agrarian crime in Ireland and evictions? Does he not remember that the leaseholders, numbering 120,000 heads of families, were admitted to the benefits of the Land Act, representing considerably more than half the rent roll of Ireland, probably two-thirds? Of course he will not admit that anything is due to English sympathy—a sympathy which has done wonders, worked miracles, changed the nature of the people, I would say, did I not know that their nature was good, and that nothing except the abominable treatment which the agricultural tenants and labourers have received at the hands of the Government of this country—the horrible sufferings and semi-starvation in which some of them have lived—would have caused the strained terms which have existed between them and their landlords. I might be excused if I were to say that a miracle had been wrought by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and that not all the exasperation produced by the contemptible Coercion Act of the present Government has been sufficient to counteract the effects of what had been done by the Liberal Party. If no other result were ever to follow, I think that those Liberal Members who cheerfully, in the summer of 1886, faced the loss of their seats—many did lose their seats—in following the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in his great work of pacification, might feel themselves abundantly rewarded by the history of what has since happened in Ireland. We have these three great things working in the direction of pacification, quietude, and patience in Ireland, in addition to the Coercion Act of the right hon. Gentleman. I should have hoped that there would have been a still greater diminution of crime. There has been but a small diminution. Of course, there was not much crime at the commencement. But the right hon. Gentleman seems to imagine that Boycotting is his strong card, and that if he could show that Boycotting in Ireland is a very disgraceful thing in itself he will justify his administration of the Coercion Act by showing a reduction in Boycotting. Well, now, as regards the figures of Boycotting, I do not know how far we can trust them. These figures are compiled I know not by whom. The right hon. Gentleman told us in a speech the other night that Boycotting was a term of art. There is a good deal of room in the compilation of statistics for art. We cannot tell how far we can rely upon the figures of the right hon. Gentleman; how far what may seem to be Boycotting to an energetic sergeant of police when he knows the right hon. Gentleman wants his report is really Boycotting. And until we know what these individual cases are, until we have the names of the people who are Boycotted, and can thus test the accuracy of the right hon. Gentleman's figures, we must take a great many grains of salt in the consumption of his statistics. The right hon. Gentleman was most unfortunate in the examples which he gave us for the purpose of inducing the House of Commons last Session to pass the Coercion Act. We find they are all fraudulent. They would not hold water; and the right hon. Gentleman has now been equally unfortunate in the one example which he has given us of Boycotting. After the expiration of six months he has only one case of Boycotting to submit to the consideration of the House of Commons, and he has been equally unfortunate also in the case of Mrs. Connell. The right hon. Gentleman said he would give an example of the kind of Boycotting which the Government were dealing with now. He stated that an old woman named Connell, 80 years of age, was the neighbour of a man who took an evicted farm, and that for this crime she was rigidly Boycotted; she was nearly starved; she lay on her bed for three days at Christmas time almost in a state of starvation, and was saved from death by a certain Mrs. Moroney. The right hon. Gentleman introduced this woman as "a certain" woman of Samaria, who was never heard of before, and who came to the assistance of Mrs. Connell. Hannah Connell swore that on the day she went to the police court she had to go into the barrack because she was afraid of the people, and that, before going into the barrack, she went into several shops in order to purchase bread, and was refused food in every case. She also swore that one of the defendants, who used to supply her with bread, said that after the Boycotting she could get no further provisions there. The right hon. Gentleman found a parallel to this case in the Dublin parson who dismissed his curate. Now, what is the true story of Mrs. Connell? In the first place, she is only a little over 50 years of age—really the right hon. Gentleman will have to keep a travelling doctor to go round and examine his patients. Mr. Redmond, who defended the persons charged with Boycotting this old—or rather middle-aged—lady, writes that Mrs. Connell is not a decrepit old woman of 80, but an active and strong dame of about 50, and that she lived upon the charity of the people whom she now prosecutes until Mrs. Moroney took her under her wing. In order to get up the prosecutions Mrs. Moroney one day sent this women Connell into the town, over a mile off, to buy bread, which she—Mrs. Connell—was in the habit of getting from Mrs. Moroney's shop. Mrs. Connell offered no money at any shop where she asked for provisions. She was refused, but the shopkeepers said that she had never bought bread in their shops in her life. She told Mr. Redmond that she was starving; but, in point of fact, she had a "pit" of potatoes in her house, and she had all she wanted from Mrs. Moroney. She was a disreputable woman, and in one of the cases she came more than half drunk up to the table. Now, who was this "certain Mrs. Moroney" of the right hon. Gentleman? I will give her history. She is the chief landowner in that district. In 1881, after the passing of the Land Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, nearly all her tenants, being leaseholders, were excluded from the benefits of that Act. Consequently she fell foul of these tenants; and after that she evicted a large number of them and plunged the whole district into a state of confusion and uproar as long ago as 1881. She has continued in that attitude from that time to the present. She was Boycotted. None of the shopkeepers of the town would supply her; but she was a woman of means, and she set up a shop and hotel of her own to provide provisions for the emergency men whom she brought down for the purpose of occupying the evicted farms. At the time when she sent out Mrs. Connell to these shops to get up a case of conspiracy to Boycott against the shopkeepers, she also sent out two of her old servants, William M'Keown and Henry Kelly. They went to shops to which they had never been before, in order—as Kelly admitted on oath—to make up a prosecution under the Crimes Act. Kelly further admitted, on oath in Court, that they knew they would be refused—they had not money to pay for one of the things they asked for. They asked for them in obedience to Mrs. Moroney, and they could procure all they wanted at her publichouse and general shop. Now, I think I have said enough to show the nature of the solitary example which the right hon. Gentleman has brought forward in order to show the horrible character of Boycotting. I could speak very strongly on this point, but I do not like to trust myself to do so. I think that possibly the right hon. Gentleman may have been deceived by his underlings as regards the character of the information supplied to him. But I do think he ought to be more careful before he undertakes in this House to take away the character of a nation, or of individuals, on such evidence as this. Well, now, Sir, I pass from the solitary and unfortunate example of this middle-aged lady, and I return to the question of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. First of all I wish to say that I regret that the Government seem to have no idea of the gravity of the situation in Ireland. Things there are in a state of extreme tension. The people have been kept quiet by the causes I have mentioned. They have indulged in the strongest hope in the results of Parliamentary and Constitutional action. I think I am entitled to congratulate myself upon this fact. It is now 12 years since I first entered political life. At that time very few people in Ireland—not one in 10—believed in the efficacy of Parliamentary action. The Fenian Rebellion was only recently over, and the idea widely prevailed that revolution was the only means of securing justice to Ireland. All that is changed now. I asked my constituents to trust to Parliamentary action, promising them that we would not accept Office or become the slaves of any English Government. And the people have given us a trial, and they have now been largely admitted to the franchise. Now, the proportions are reversed, and nine out of 10 persons in Ireland believe in Parliamentary and Constitutional action. That is great progress to have made. I believe that that progress will not be undone—that the hands of the clock will not be put back by the puny attempts of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. The Irish people will still continue to laugh at his coercion, and to suffer what he has in store for them in the future with a cheerful heart, and with the assured conviction that their country is on the eve of prosperity and progress. I say I could have wished that the Government were more fully sensitive of the gravity of the situation. The prices of agricultural produce revived last November, and it has helped the tenants in endeavouring to pay their rents. The Irish tenant will pay his rent as long as he can. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Is that denied? Who denies it? Hon. Gentlemen are dumb. But, "all the king's horses and all the king's men" will not get them to pay when they have not the money. You say that the agrarian question is the whole Irish Question. Why, then, in the name of common sense, do you not settle it? Your own Supporters from the North of Ireland warned you last year of the fatal consequences of acceding to the Amendments of the House of Lords. You have now a breathing-time. Why do you not take advantage of it? What do you propose to do when the three years are up—the period for which the judicial rents were abated? We do not hear anything more now of the gigantic scheme of land purchase. How are you going to settle the agrarian question? Are you going to depend upon the Plan of Campaign? That plan has certainly proved most signally successful; for, with one exception, on the 50 estates, or so, where it has been adopted, the landlords either have conceded, or are on the point of conceding, the demands of the tenants—and that exception is Lord Clanricarde. I should like to know from the Government how they are going to settle this Land Question. It is time for them to be settling the point. I am myself going to introduce a Land Bill; but it will be a very small Bill compared with some that have gone before, but that is because the Government have taken my Bill bit by bit, and now there is not much of it left. I hope that they will take the last bit of it now, and thus settle the Irish agrarian question. They will then see if they have settled the whole Irish Question. If the Government believe in their own statements they will settle the Land Question, and so settle the Irish Question. I pass now to the hard usage the Government have dealt out to Mr. Blunt as compared with their treatment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). Both Mr. Blunt and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford went to Loughrea—both went to the Clanricarde estate. Both of them went on the eve of evictions that had either taken place or were about to take place, each stating that his object was Constitutional; yet, in the case of Mr. Blunt, the meeting was proclaimed, and he was dragged about and sentenced to two months' hard labour, while the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford has held a meeting for precisely similar objects and has escaped scot-free. Will the Government tell us upon what principle they acted in these two cases? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, at Manchester, denied that a woman over 80 years and a child under 12 years had been sent to prison under the Coercion Act. But such is the fact, nevertheless. They were sent to gaol—this old woman of 80 and this little girl of 12—for resisting several able-bodied men. In another case, the mother of a family of six children was sent to gaol in one week, and in the next the father of the same family—while the mother was still in gaol—was also convicted and sent to gaol. The right hon. Gentleman has said that he never sent little boys to prison for selling newspapers. That may be true; but that was because he could not catch them. He, however, sent a boy to gaol in Cork for refusing to sell a copy of *United Ireland.* A policeman wanted to buy a copy for the purpose of getting up a case against this itinerant seller of newspapers. The little boy was too sharp, and was not inclined to sell the policeman a newspaper, and he was forthwith taken off to prison. English readers, perhaps, do not know the character of many of the persons who have been convicted by the right hon. Gentleman. When he talks of criminals, they imagine some desperate persons similar to the criminals one is accustomed to meet with in the ordinary practice of the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has prosecuted 12 Members of Parliament—since this Return was made out the number, I believe, has been increased—and has convicted 10. He has prosecuted nine Poor Law Guardians, all of whom have been convicted; three Town Councillors, all of whom have been convicted; four clergymen, two of whom have been convicted; 14 boys, nine of whom have been convicted; 38 girls, one under 12 years of age and one under 14, of whom 23 were convicted; and two old women over 70 years of age, both of whom were convicted. The right hon. Gentleman asked, if Resident Magistrates were appointed in London, why they should not be appointed in Dublin? The answer is, that they administer a very different law in London to what they do in Ireland. That is the evident answer, and I wonder he did not have it in his mind before he asked the question. But there is one significant matter about these Resident Magistrates to which I should like to call attention. The Resident Magistrates who have been most notorious for their partizanship and disregard of the decencies of the judgment seat have been selected to try the great majority of the cases under the Crimes Act. Take the case of Cecil Roche, who, I believe, was not appointed by Lord Spencer. He has tried twice as many cases as any other Resident Magistrate, and has probably imprisoned about 150 people. One of his favourite occupations when he has no work to do on the Bench is to take a big stick in his hand and swagger up and down in front of the Court House. If he sees people gathering together in little crowds he turns the police on them. He will order some to be taken into custody, and will then sentence them. He was a briefless barrister, and was also a paid lecturer of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic League. It has been frequently stated—and it has not been denied by Mr. Roche—that at one meeting in England he used the words of an American gentleman to the effect that—"The loyal minority would fight against Home Rule till Hell was frozen over, and that they would then fight it out on the ice outside." At a meeting held at Dingle, in Kerry, a short time ago, he said that if the people did not behave themselves he could be wired for, and he would come immediately and keep them in order. Mr. Dillon, another Resident Magistrate, had a judgment summons out against him for £2,000 the very day he sentenced Mr. Blunt. Captain Stokes, who tried the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), and arrested him in the Appeal Court without a warrant, despite the order of the Recorder that he should not be arrested, has, I am informed, been promoted to the office of Divisional Magistrate. Captain Seagrave, another Resident Magistrate, said, in cross-examination, that he had been in that office about a year; that he had had no legal training; that he got his military training in South Africa; that he had never held a commission in the Home Army, and that he had tried and failed; and that he did not know in what Statute the Riot Act was unless he consulted a paper in his pocket. I have been a little more fortunate in my examples of Crimes Act magistrates than the right hon. Gentleman was in his examples of Boycotted old women. There is one other thing that I must draw attention to before I sit down, and that is the treatment of these political prisoners, because if they are not political prisoners they are nothing. It is useless for the Government to say that these men are criminals. That plea has been urged by every tyrant in excuse for his tortures to his political opponents; and it will not avail the right hon. Gentleman now any more than it availed his Predecessors, or any of those infamous characters in ancient history who did not draw the line between political and other prisoners. The right hon. Gentleman has said that it is not for him to draw a distinction between gentlemen and men who are not gentlemen. Nobody asked him to draw such a distinction. But we have insisted, and we shall continue to insist, upon a distinction being drawn between political and other offences. The great majority of the cases tried in Ireland under the summary jurisdiction clauses of the Crimes Act have not been cases of crimes, but of open and advised speaking, of publishing newspapers, and of editing newspapers. Can anything be meaner than the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the proceedings against the foreman printer of *The Cork Examiner?* He was tried under the Crimes Act for printing and publishing accounts of the meetings of suppressed branches of the National League. The right hon. Gentleman says that he will make no distinction between gentlemen and persons who are not gentlemen. Now, I charge the right hon. Gentleman that he distinctly shrank from prosecuting the editor or the acting editor of that paper, because he was a supporter of many of the right hon. Gentleman's friends in Cork, and he selected for prosecution the foreman printer, who had no more control over the policy of the paper than I have. Neither the editor, Mr. Crosbie, nor his son, the acting editor, was prosecuted, but the right hon. Gentleman put his hand upon the foreman printer, who had nothing to do with anything but the machinery of the paper, and sent him to gaol. Well, that is one example of the right hon. Gentleman's discrimination between gentlemen and men who are not. Now I take the case of the newsvendors. I think the attack of the right hon. Gentleman on the newsvendors is particularly atrocious. Of course, from the right hon. Gentleman's point of view, he is consistent in attacking men like my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork—the editor of *United Ireland*—and others, but he flies in the face of all his declarations when he takes up men who are earning their bread by selling National newspapers, and deprives them of their living. Here I think that some line should be drawn, and that if you think it necessary to go at the leaders of the National movement, at least you should have the decency to refrain from attacking men and women who cannot be responsible for the policy of the paper. Of course, the object of the right hon. Gentleman is to destroy the circulation of the newspapers; but he is afraid of attacking them at headquarters, because then he would be said to be interfering with the liberty and freedom of the Press. But he thinks that by attacking the vendors, the little boys who sell the papers, he will stop their circulation as effectually as if he stepped into the printing office. That is not an English proceeding. The late Mr. Forster was a strong and able man, and he dealt heavy blows against the National League. The right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary talks of suppressing the National League in certain districts. Well, Sir, these suppressed branches are holding thousands of meetings, and a more contemptible exhibition of impotence than that of the right hon. Gentleman was never seen. The late Mr. Forster suppressed the Land League throughout the whole of Ireland at one stroke of his pen. He struck down the League in a night, and no branch of the Land League dared to hold a meeting from the time it was proclaimed. Well, there was a man. But the meetings of the suppressed branches of the National League are held just as if nothing had happened, as if the right hon. Gentleman was not in existence at all. There is as much difference between the administration of the right hon. Gentleman and that of Mr. Forster as between the scratch of a cat and a blow from the paw of the British lion. Now, I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will, for the future, be a little more straightforward and a little more English—though, as he happens to be a Scotchman, I will say a little more Scotch—in his conduct. If he wants to suppress newspapers, let him suppress them; but let him not proceed against little boys and girls trying to earn a few pence, or against foremen printers, while he shrinks from proceeding against gentlemen merely because they happen to be friends of his own supporters. That is not a method of administration which will gain him respect even from his own supporters, from his political opponents, or from the people of this country. In conclusion, I have only to say that I look with confidence to the future. Much as I am troubled about the irritation—the frightful irritation—which exists against the right hon. Gentleman, and his administration, and his neglect in appreciating the wants of the Irish tenants, I believe that, some way or other, we shall be able to manage to pull things through in such a way as to save the tenants from eviction in large numbers, and to avoid staining our cause or disgracing our English friends by acts of crime and blood. I am sure our people will be patient in the confident hope that in the near future they will see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in his rightful place, and coming forward with another great measure of peace and tranquillity for Ireland. I beg to move an Amendment to the Address, in lieu of paragraphs 10 and 11.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out paragraphs ten and eleven, in order to insert the words — "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session, which was of an ameliorative character, has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much to alienate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): Mr. Speaker, I listened with the closest attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), in order that I might fully appreciate the grounds on which he presents his Amendment to the House, and I am sure I may ask with confidence the indulgence of the House while I lay my views before it with reference to the speech of the hon. Member. The first observation I have to make is that the greater portion of the speech of the hon. Member has had little or no reference to the

Amendment before the House; and my second observation is that, having regard to the serious nature of the charge which has been put upon the Paper against the administration of law and order in Ireland, the instances which he alleged against it are trivial in the extreme. I shall go through in detail the instances given by the hon. Member; but I should have expected, I am bound to say, that some more great and signal instances of the "harsh, partial, and mischievous" administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland would have been laid before the House. Before I proceed to the question of the administration of law and order, I must say one word about an important admission in the speech of the hon. Member. He admits that the legislation of last Session, which he also agreed was of an ameliorative character, has tended to diminish agrarian crime in Ireland. Now, Sir, that is an admission of improvement in the state of Ireland, and it is an admission that the improvement is due to the policy of the Government in some degree at least. The ameliorative legislation of last Session is the legislation of the present Government, and that, it is admitted, has tended to diminish agrarian crime. I think the country is to be congratulated on the admission of its improved condition, and the Government is also to be congratulated on the admission that some portion at least of the improvement is due to their policy, and that it has had the effect desired. I must also congratulate the hon. Member upon his conversion to those views; because there is a great difference between what he says now and what he said last year, when the Land Bill was about to become law. In that speech the hon. Member said—

> "Two hundred thousand tenants have been looking with some hopes to the proceedings in connection with this Bill. They will be bitterly disappointed, and will learn to trust those persons who told them not to look to Parliament for redress, but to look to methods outside the law and outside the Constitution, which, in the long run, have been the only arguments that Parliament have ever listened to."—(3 *Hansard*, [319] 1021.)

Now, the hon. Gentleman admits that the Bill has had an ameliorating effect, and I cannot help remarking that that effect might have been greater if the hon. Member had used then the language he uses now. Now, Sir, the administration of the law has been arraigned. It was arraigned in a speech on the Address to Her Majesty by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The Government does not shrink from a full and strict inquiry into its administration of the Crimes Act. It is the right of Parliament to examine the action of the Executive, and when the Executive applies for additional powers to Parliament it may be fairly called upon to give a full and particular account of its administration of those powers, and that account we are prepared to give. But in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian a charge was brought against the Government of so grave and sweeping a character that it is impossible to exaggerate its importance. That charge was no less than this—that, having obtained an Act for the repression of crime, they used that Act not against crime, but against combinations perfectly lawful. A graver accusation could not have been brought against the administration of the law. How is it borne out? The right hon. Gentleman in his speech used these words—

> "I am sorry to say the first suggestion is that our assertions of last year are verified that the Act was not an Act aimed at crime; it was an Act aimed at combination as apart from crime—combination which did not, to use the expression of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Colonel Duncan), fatally blossom into crime—which did not develop itself in crime, and even that allegation of ours which was so much contested and which was treated as almost ridiculous is verified; that not even combination was the sole object of the Act, but that exclusive dealing by Irish Nationalists was to be made a punishable offence. I am bound to say that it appears to me that, as far as I have read the accounts of some of these convictions, the simple act of exclusive dealing by an individual has been made a crime."

A graver accusation could not be brought against the administration of the law; and how has it been borne out? I ask, Sir, this question, what are the two combinations against which this Act is practically directed? They are, in the first place, that combination known as Boycotting; and, secondly, the Plan of Campaign. I will not take up the time of the House by arguing that the conspiracy known as Boycotting is a criminal conspiracy; it has been held so by the Judges of the land, and the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, when he was responsible for the government of Ireland, in 1882, was of the same opinion. I will not quote his definition of Boycotting; but I will quote what I do not think has been so often quoted. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I may have said, and I say now, that I have a perfect right to deal with one man rather than another, and even to tell people that I am doing so. But that has nothing to do with the combined intimidation exercised for the purpose of inflicting ruin and driving men to do what they do not want to do, and preventing them from doing what they have a right to do."

There we have the distinction drawn between the exclusive dealing which is lawful, and that which he now calls exclusive dealing. It cannot be said that Boycotting is different now from what it then was. Sir, I will read a passage from a speech reported in *The Cork Daily Herald* of February 9, 1888, containing a definition of strict and most rigid Boycotting—

> "We put the most rigid Boycott on Cremin in every other walk of life. We deal with no one who supplies him with goods. Whoever works for Cremin must work for him alone. Whoever associates with Cremin must have him for his sole companion, and this not for a spurt of a month or two, but until Cremin throws up the farm he has grabbed, and makes ample compensation to the boys against whom he has falsely sworn."

Boycotting is now what it was before; it is a criminal conspiracy, as it was then, to be put down by the law; and why is it now to be called merely exclusive dealing, and compared to a mere quarrel between a rector and his curate, and to other cases of exclusive dealing, some of which may have been matters of bad taste, not one of which approached to crime? What is the other combination against which this Act has been directed? It is the conspiracy known as the Plan of Campaign. What is the Plan of Campaign? The Plan of Campaign is a combination among the tenants of an estate to this effect—" We will hold our farms, and, holding them, we will ourselves dictate the rent; we will pay a portion of the rent measured by ourselves to our own agents, not to yours, who will transfer it to you if you choose to accept it, and, if not, we will fight you to the last extremity with your own money—all the while, remember, holding our farms against you." Will any lawyer with a sense of responsibility stand up in this House and say that a combination for this purpose is not a criminal conspiracy? We have not had a definition of it from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, because it had not been invented when he was responsible for the government of Ireland, or, no doubt, we should have had one. But, in the absence of that definition, we have something to go upon. This conspiracy has come before the Judges of the land, and one of them on the Queen's Bench has declared that it is clearly, distinctly, and absolutely illegal, and that no doubt whatever can be entertained on the subject. This is the second combination against which this Act was directed. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean, by crime, outrage and murder? In 1882 he spoke of such crimes as being the sanction of Boycotting, and so now they may be described as the sanction of the Plan of Campaign. But, Sir, it is not a question of whether they lead to outrage or murder—the combinations are themselves crime. It does not matter whether they lead to the other crimes of outrage and murder; they themselves are criminal, and every man who engages in them is guilty of an offence against the ordinary Criminal Law of the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who was recently Chief Secretary for Ireland, said that the two coercive conspiracies are, in his opinion, lawful combinations; but I confront him with the opinion of his Leader the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian as to the one, and the opinion of the Judges as to the other. I am not going to re-open the question as to the suppression of certain branches of the National League. I will only point out that it was suppressed in those districts only where it was shown to the satisfaction of the House of Commons that its operation was to encourage those two illegal conspiracies of Boycotting and the Plan of Campaign. Therefore, in so far as it has been interfered with by the Government, it has come into precisely the same category of inciting to unlawful acts and unlawful conspiracies. What, then, becomes of the statement that the administration of the Crimes Act has been directed against what is not crime, but against political opponents? Is it suggested that it has been so administered as to convict innocent persons and acquit the guilty? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] I suppose that is the meaning of the attack on the tribunals by whom the Act is administered. When we refer to the tribunals created by the Act of 1882, our argument is described as the *tu quoque* argument, or the *argumentum ad hominem.* But it is really much more. When the Bill of 1882 was introduced, the then Chief Secretary, the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), adopted exactly the same tribunals for exactly the same duties, and declared that it was a remedy for the worst of all evils; and after that Bill was passed, credit was claimed for its efficient working. After that Act had been working for years, I should like to know when it was discovered by the right hon. Gentleman that his tribunals were not fit to try these cases? When did the Government of that day announce that discovery? On the contrary, they took credit for the work done by these tribunals. Now, as to the Resident Magistrates upon whom the present attack has been made. There are 73 in all, and, of the 73, 60 were appointed by Lord Spencer, or retained by him when he revised the list. Under the Act of 1882 one member of the Court must be certified as having legal knowledge. Thirty of these gentlemen are now certified; 20 were so certified by Lord Spencer, and of the other 10, three are practising barristers. It has been suggested in this debate that before these tribunals a trial and a conviction are very much the same thing; but, whereas up to the end of 1887 there were 659 trials, I find there were only 373 convictions. With reference to the question of appeals, the statement was made, no donbt inadvertently, by the hon. Member for Cork City, that under the Act of 1880 there was an appeal in every case, whereas, under the present Act, the appeal is only the same as in ordinary Petty Sessions cases. Well, the fact is that the provision in the Act of 1882 is identical with the provision in this Act. And therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman's references to what occurred in the House are not more accurate than his references to the Act of 1882, his case as to appeals is a very poor one. I find in the speech of the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, as reported in *The Times*, this passage—

> "One need not be a lawyer to understand that there is no class of cases so delicate, so important, requiring such nicety and precision of legal training, as cases turning on the effect of words in an Act of Parliament or the construction of those words."

The right hon. Gentleman was thus contemplating the decision by the Resident Magistrates of legal questions. Then the hon. Member for Cork City has said that it was within the discretion of magistrates whether they should state a case. That is not so. The complaint of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne is that the decision of legal questions must rest with Resident Magistrates. The fact is that, no matter whether the sentence is one month or six months, the prisoner has the right to have a case stated for the Superior Court, unless the magistrates should consider his appeal to be frivolous. But even in that case, if it can be shown to the Superior Court that the application is not frivolous, a case must be stated. Now, a large number of appeals have been taken from the decisions of the Resident Magistrates, and I think it is overlooked in this discussion what has been the result of those appeals. Those appeals go to the County Court Judges, who have nothing to hope or to fear from the Government. Up to the end of last year—and I am aware of no case since—the result has been that only one single case has been reversed by the County Court Judges. In the case which was reversed, additional evidence was produced which was not before the Court below. Thus the decisions of the removable magistrates have been confirmed by irremovable magistrates in every case except the one I have quoted. Reference has been made in the course of the debate to a case in which it was said that the Court of Exchequer reversed the decision of some magistrates at Killarney. I will state the precise reason why the Court of Exchequer reversed that decision. There was a prosecution against, I think, five persons for Boycotting. Evidence was given by Mrs. Curtin, whose name is well known to the House, in one case only; but that evidence had not been formally given, as against each of those persons. It had only been taken against one of them, and the learned Chief Baron of the Exchequer admitted that if the evidence of Boycotting had been given in all the cases as it could have been given by Mrs. Curtin, the matter being personal to herself, the convictions would have been good. The decision was reversed because the evidence heard orally before the magistrates was not taken down in writing in each case, and therefore was not available for the prosecution in the case before the Court of Exchequer. I now pass to instances quoted by the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell). He referred to one case of the Boycotting of a tenant farmer (Connell), which the Chief Secretary had mentioned. The hon. Member's statement of the case differed from that of the Chief Secretary, but the latter stated the view of the facts which was adopted by the magistrates who tried the case. The persons charged, having been sentenced to three months' imprisonment, of course have a right of appeal. We may, therefore, fairly suspend our judment on the conflicting statements of the case until the appeal has been decided. The next case to which the hon. Gentleman referred was that of Mr. Blunt. He asked why Mr. Blunt was treated so differently from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). Well, has the House before it the circumstances in which the meeting of October was held at Woodford? That meeting was a continuation of a meeting held on a previous occasion. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Why, only to-day I saw in the papers a reference to the meeting of October 16 as a preliminary meeting. That torchlight meeting, at which the Proclamation in Her Majesty's name was burnt, was a preliminary to Mr. Blunt's meeting of October 23. It is evident that a meeting may, in certain circumstances, be permitted, when a similar meeting in other circumstances would be unlawful in the same place. Then the hon. Member made an attack upon Mr. Cecil Roche. I think it was ungenerous to describe Mr. Roche as a briefless barrister, and to refer to some old platform utterances of his. That gentleman was appointed by Earl Spencer to the very responsible post of Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act. [*Laughter from the Irish Members.*] Surely the position of Sub-Commissioner is a position of responsibility; and I have no doubt Earl Spencer selected him for his merits, and I think he made an uncommonly good selection. It was somewhat ungenerous to refer to language which Mr. Roche used upon the hustings long ago; I dare say even hon. Members below the Gangway opposite have occasionally used strong language of this kind. I could understand the reference if the language had been used after his appointment to a judicial position; but to rake up circumstances in which strong language was said to have been used at a former time, in order to attack Mr. Roche's character, is certainly ungenerous. The hon. Member was also ungenerous to another gentleman to whom he referred. The only fact alleged against this person is that judgment was once entered against him. To suggest that a gentleman is necessarily unfit to act as a magistrate because a judgment has been entered against him is an argument which will commend itself to very few. As to Captain Seagrave, the hon. Member is under a misapprehension. He stated that Captain Seagrave was supposed to have been selected for his legal knowledge, but that was not the case. The only accusation brought by the hon. Member against Captain Stokes was based upon his detention of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) at the close of his trial. The hon. Member's appeal having been dismissed, he reverted to his original position of prisoner under sentence; and it cannot be contended that a prisoner is to be allowed to walk out of Court pending the preparation of a warrant. Therefore, Captain Stokes was perfectly justified in arresting Mr. O'Brien directly his appeal had been refused.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The Recorder said Mr. O'Brien was perfectly at liberty to leave the Court.

Mr. MADDEN: My recollection is that he said—as far as he was concerned. He had nothing more to do with the matter. Another of the trivial cases which have been brought forward to sustain the heavy charge of the hon. Member for Cork City is that of the foreman printer of *The Cork Examiner*, who, it is alleged, was prosecuted instead of another person. I am informed that the man who was prosecuted was the only person whose name appeared upon the register as proprietor of the newspaper, and the only person against whom proceedings could be taken. With reference to the observations made about newsvendors, I have to say that no newsvendor has been arrested or prosecuted until fully cautioned; that these prosecutions have only been instituted in the counties of Kerry and Clare, where the dissemination of the principles contained in certain newspapers was especially dangerous; and further, that no one has ever been punished for selling the newspapers without being given the option of undertaking not to repeat the offence. I submit that these prosecutions furnish no evidence of a harsh or partial administration of the law. I have some figures which supply a complete demolition of the suggestions that have been made; they are an analysis of a Return of the offences for which 373 persons were convicted under the Crimes Act in 1887. The numbers are—35 cases of intimidation, 100 riot and unlawful assembly, 19 criminal conspiracy, 18 taking forcible possession, 175 resisting and assaulting constables or bailiffs, 7 for inciting to such offences, and 19 for publishing illegal notices of suppressed branches of the National League. Will anyone say that these persons were convicted for acts unconnected with crime? Is there any foundation at all for the suggestion that has been made, that this Act has been put into force against persons who were merely partakers in lawful combinations as distinct from crime? I have gone through the cases referred to by the hon. Member, and I submit that the result of the investigation of the working of the Crimes Act has been to confirm the view that it has been wisely and temperately administered, and administered absolutely without distinction of persons.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir George Trevelyan,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

SALE OF LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Lea, Sir James Corry, Sir William Ewart, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Jordan.*)

[BILL 86.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, that last Session the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant stated that this Session he would move for a Select Committee to consider the question of the sale of liquor on Sunday in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman, he believed, intended to move for the Committee on Thursday, and as it was only the proper course that the Bill should be referred to that Committee, he (Mr. Lea) would not do more now than move the second reading of the Bill. He heard the Government were prepared to assent to the second reading, on the understanding that after that stage he should move that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Irish Sunday Liquor Question. He begged to move the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Lea.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, that on the part of the Government he desired to assent to the second reading of the Bill, on the understanding, suggested by the hon. Member (Mr. Lea), that after it was read a second time it should be referred to a Select Committee, which he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) proposed to move for on Thursday next. He did not suppose, under those circumstances, it was at all necessary that the discussion should be prolonged.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

MOTIONS.

——o——

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Ellis, Bill for giving further facilities for the acquisition of Sites for Places of Worship, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. M'Arthur, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 93.]

AGRICULTURAL TENANCIES RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to divide Rates between Landlord and Tenant, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. C. T. Dyke Acland, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Cossham, and Sir Bernhard Samuelson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 94.]

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Woodall, Bill to amend an Act of the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter ninety-one, intituled "An Act to authorise the application of Funds of Municipal Corporations and other Governing Bodies in certain cases," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Woodall, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, Mr. Picton, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Woodhead.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 95.]

LONDON COAL AND WINE DUTIES CONTINUANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to further continue and appropriate the London Coal and Wine Duties.

Resolution *reported*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Baring, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Colonel Hughes, Mr. Webster, Colonel Duncan, Mr. Seager Hunt, and Mr. Wootton Isaacson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 96.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

On Motion of Lord Henry Bruce, Bill to further amend the Law relating to Dwellings of the Working Classes and the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Acts, 1875 to 1885, *ordered* to be brought in by Lord Henry Bruce, Major-General Goldsworthy, Sir William Plowden, Mr. Howell, and Mr. White.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 97.]

OFFICE UNDER THE CROWN (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Vacation of Seats by Members of the Commons House of Parliament accepting Office under the Crown, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Edmund Robertson, and Mr. Seager Hunt.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 98.]

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the Laws existing in the United States and elsewhere on the subject of the Immigration of destitute aliens, and as to the extent and effect of such Immigration into the United Kingdom, and to report whether it is desirable to impose any and, if so, what restrictions on such Immigration, with power to send for persons, papers, and records."—(*Captain Colomb.*)

PRINTING.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the Printing executed by Order of this House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for Printing Returns and Papers presented in pursuance of Motions made by Members of this House.

The Select Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Whitbread, Sir George Russell, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Murdoch, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, and Mr. Jackson.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the department of the Sergeant at Arms.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Herbert, Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Agg-Gardner, Mr. Biggar, Mr. William Corbet, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Flower, General Goldsworthy, Colonel Hambro, Viscount Lewisham, Mr. Marjoribanks, Baron De Rothschild, Mr. Sheil, and Colonel Malcolm.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Herbert.*)

LIFE LEASES CONVERSION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Edmund Lechmere, Bill to provide for the conversion of leases for lives into leases for years, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Edmund Lechmere, Mr. Hastings, Sir John Puleston, and Mr. Radcliffe Cooke.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 99.]

ECCLESIASTICAL CONTUMACY BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Sandys, Bill to substitute deprivation for imprisonment for contumacy in proceeding under the Church Discipline Act of 1840, and "The Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874," *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Sandys, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Wardle, Mr. Joicey, and Colonel Saunderson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 100.]

HARES PRESERVATION BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Dawnay, Bill to enact a "close time" for Hares, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Dawnay, Sir John Lubbock, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Dillwyn, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 101.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (CORNWALL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Charles Acland, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays in the County of Cornwall, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Bickford-Smith, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Courtney, and Mr. M'Arthur.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 102.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to secure to the public the right of Access to Mountains and Moorlands in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Mr. J. C. Bolton, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Donald Crawford, Sir H. Roscoe, and Mr. Samuel Smith.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 103.]

ALLOTMENTS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cobb, Bill to amend "The Allotments Act, 1887," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 104.]

BEER ADULTERATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Quilter, Bill for better securing the purity of Beer, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Quilter, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Heneage, Viscount Wolmer, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Francis Stevenson, and Mr. Gurdon.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 105.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable owners and occupiers in burghs, wards of burghs, parishes, and districts in Scotland to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the Drink Traffic within such areas.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Lyell, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Stewart, Dr. Clark, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Thorburn.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 106.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Norton, Bill to amend "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Norton, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Llewellyn.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 107.]

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW (ST. MUNGO'S COLLEGE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Baird, Bill for establishing in the East end of Glasgow a College of the University of Glasgow, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Baird, Mr. Caldwell, and Mr. Mason.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 108.]

MUNICIPAL RATES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Craig, Bill to make provision for the making, assessment, and collection of Municipal Rates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Craig, Mr. Rowntree, Mr. Dodds, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 109.]

OCCUPIERS' DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Whitmore, Bill to relieve Occupiers of dwelling houses and lodgers from Disqualification as Voters at Parliamentary Elections by reason of temporary absence or service, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Hozier, and Mr. Mowbray.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 110.]

BURIALS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Burial Law.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Illingworth, and Mr. Richard.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 111.]

BRITISH AND IRISH INDUSTRY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill for the Defence of British and Irish Industry, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Charles Gray, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Norris, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Farquharson, Mr. Byron Reed, and Mr. Maple.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 112.]

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE EXPENSES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Webster, Bill to amend the Law in regard to the Fire Brigade Expenses, Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Webster, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Isaacs, and Mr. Maple.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 113.]

MINING LEASES (CORNWALL AND DEVON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Charles Acland, Bill to amend the Law relating to Mining Leases in Cornwall and Devon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Bickford-Smith, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. Courtney, Mr. M'Arthur, and Mr. Seale-Hayne.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 114.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 14*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—Railway and Canal Traffic (12).

THE DEATH OF MR. M'NEILL AT BOULOGNE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF **DUNRAVEN**: My Lords, I wish to ask the noble Marquess at the head of the Government a Question of which I have given him private Notice, in connection with the lamentable death, under very suspicious circumstances, of Mr. M'Neill at Boulogne in December last. Your Lordships know the circumstances of the case, and I need not therefore further allude to them; but I saw it mentioned in the papers yesterday that practically speaking the further investigation into the cause of death has ceased, and I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether there has been any communication between the two Governments of France and England upon the subject, and whether there is any truth in that statement; and also, in view of the fact that there is a very grave suspicion that a murder was committed, whether Her Majesty's Government will be able to make any further representations to the French Government upon the subject?

THE **PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I have reason to doubt that it is true, as my noble Friend has stated, that investigation in this case has been given up. Our latest information is that the French Government has assured the British Ambassador that the inquiry is actively proceeding at Boulogne, under the direction of the Commissaire Centrale, and that a special Commissaire has been despatched by the Minister of the Interior. Of course I do not know the particulars of the investigation; nobody probably but the magistrate actually concerned can know them. No doubt it is within the knowledge of the noble Earl that investigations of this kind in France are conducted not in public, as with us, but, on the contrary, quite privately, and therefore it would be out of the power of anyone to say whether the investigation was actively proceeding or not. We have expressed to the French Government our great anxiety that every measure should be taken to discover the murderer, if murder there was, and I have not the smallest ground for believing that there will be the slightest lukewarmness on the part of the French Government in carrying out the investigation.

LAW AND JUSTICE—APPOINTMENT OF A PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD **ELLENBOROUGH** rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, What prospect there was of the appointment of a Public Prosecutor? A general opinion prevailed that such a public officer was necessary to prevent inequality in respect to the trial of persons under the Criminal Law, and he was prompted to ask the Question by what had occurred in reference to one case in London and another in Birmingham. In London a man was tried for murder said to be brought about by arson, when the jury brought in a verdict of not guilty. The prisoner was subsequently tried for arson, found guilty, and received an adequate punishment. The case at Birmingham was that of a man and a woman tried for the murder of Colonel Fendall. The Grand Jury brought in a true bill for murder. A robbery clearly was committed with violence. The clothes of the murdered man were found with the parents of the man who was tried for murder. He was found guilty of manslaughter, and received a trifling punishment only, not being subsequently tried for robbery with violence, although it resulted in death. He submitted that in the two cases quoted there was a great inequality before the law. There was additional cause for believing a foul murder was committed on the person of Colonel Fendall from the circumstance that the cabman who gave evidence stated that he had been requested to state by the man and woman found guilty of manslaughter that he had found the body in the street, although he had assisted in removing it from the house where the crimes of manslaughter and robbery with violence were committed. There was a great deal of evidence in support of the crime of murder or manslaughter together with robbery with violence; and why in the one case a man should be tried for arson, having been acquitted of the crime of murder, and in the other the man and woman found guilty of manslaughter were not tried for robbery with violence he was at a loss to imagine, unless it was due to the absence of a public officer charged with the investigation of such cases.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, he was not quite sure that he distinctly understood the Question of the noble Lord; it was not certain what he intended to convey by asking the Question whether the Government were about to recommend the appointment of a Public Prosecutor. If the noble Lord meant by a Public Prosecutor a person charged with the duty of looking after any prosecution in which his intervention was required, such an officer was already in existence. By the Act of 1879 a Public Prosecutor was appointed, and by the amending Act of 1884 the Office was vested in the Solicitor to the Treasury, who was charged to take up cases in which no private prosecutor was to be found, and who in fact often took cases out of the hands of private prosecutors. Therefore, the answer to the Question was that there was a Public Prosecutor already existing. He believed the duties of the Office were performed by Sir Augustus Stephenson with great skill and diligence, and he had not heard of any failure of justice by reason of the supposed absence of such an officer. Not knowing what cases would be cited by the noble Lord, he had not acquainted himself with the details of the two that had been mentioned. But from the circumstances that had been stated he did not see how the action of a Public Prosecutor could have averted the failures of justice which had been suggested. As to the case in which persons were tried for murder and convicted of manslaughter, the sentence was the sentence of the Judge. Did the noble Lord desire that a Public Prosecutor should be appointed to control the discretion of Judges in the infliction of punishment?

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: No.

LORD HALSBURY: Then he did not see what was the object of the noble Lord in putting the case forward. The offence of manslaughter was one in respect of which, for obvious reasons, there was left to Judges a very large discretion between sentencing to penal servitude and inflicting a fine. As to the non-trial of the accused for the robbery which was involved in the original charge of murder, if in the case of a robbery a person was killed it could not be manslaughter, and it must be murder. He could not say more without knowing exactly the facts of the case, and the answer to the Question would be that the Government had no intention of appointing such an officer as the noble Lord seemed to contemplate.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Lord STANLEY of PRESTON), in presenting this Bill, said, it was a Bill to provide for the better regulation of railway and canal traffic, and was essentially the same as the Bill which passed through their Lordships' House last year.

A Bill for the better regulation of railway and canal traffic; and for other purposes—*Presented* (The Lord STANLEY of PRESTON); read 1ª. (No. 12.)

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five o'clock, to Thursday next,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 14*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons); Mr. Fenwick *disch.*; Mr. Cremer *added.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolutions in Committee*—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) * [117]; Liquor Traffic Local Option (England) * [119].

Ordered—*First Reading*—Land Tenure (Scotland) * [115]; Borough Funds (Ireland) * [116]; Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) * [118]; Mining Accidents Insurance (Scotland) * [120]; Bankruptcy (Ireland) * [121]; Land Law (Wales and Monmouthshire) * [122]; Foreshore and Fishery Rights * [123]; Agricultural Tenant's Improvement Protection * [124]; Vagrants * [125].

QUESTIONS.

—o—

POST OFFICE—DELIVERY AND DETENTION OF LETTERS.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Under what authority, and whether under printed and published Regulation, the Department claims to delay and detain letters addressed to a dwelling-house where the addressee habitually resides, until the name of the addressee is painted up or shown on a plate?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I think, though I am not sure, that the hon. Member refers to the case of re-directed letters?

Mr. BRADLAUGH: No, I do not.

Mr. RAIKES: In cases of re-direction of letters for a firm or Company, it has been the practice to require some indication of there being such a business. Indeed, experience has shown that in many instances some such precaution has been required for the protection of the public. If the hon. Member will give me the particulars of any case which has involved hardship or inconvenience, I will have inquiry made on the subject.

ARMY—BEDDING.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that jute fibre beds are used for the Indian Army; whether, as compared with the straw beds in use for the British Army, which require very frequent renewal, the adoption of similar fibre beds would involve a very large saving in expenditure; whether such fibre beds have been tried in this country, and whether, after eight months' trial, the War Office pronounced the experiment so far successful, and stated that the men were well pleased with the material; and, whether straw is still used for soldiers' beds, and why?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am informed that jute fibre is not used as a bedding material in the Indian Army. As regards the British Army, other considerations are involved besides the mere cost of the material for filling the beds; and, taking all things into account, it is considered that the substitution of jute for straw would not lead to economy. Jute fibre has been tried in this country, and, on the question of comfort, it was favourably reported on at first; but subsequent Reports have been adverse to its employment. Straw is still generally used, because it is considered the cleanest and, all circumstances taken into account, the most convenient material for the purpose.

GENERAL PRISONS BOARD (IRELAND)—BIBLES.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the very small print of the Bible usually supplied to prisoners in Ireland; and, if he could take the matter into his consideration?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: This matter has already engaged the attention of the General Prisons Board, who are causing larger-print Bibles to be substituted for those referred to.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—GALWAY DOCK.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, In what state the Wet Dock of Galway is at present; and, if this dock is under the entire control of the Board of Works; and, if so, when it will be fit to receive ships.

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The dock at Galway alluded to is not under the entire control of the Board of Works, whose position in regard to the harbour is that of receivers of the tolls. I learn, however, that new gates have been constructed, under the supervision of the engineer of the Harbour Commissioners, to replace those which were destroyed; and that engineer considers that the dock will be in working order in about two months.

BRITISH COLUMBIA—INTRODUCTION OF RABBITS.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is aware that a private individual has recently introduced a considerable number of rabbits into British

Columbia; whether he is aware that immense injury has resulted to the Australian Colonies from a similar introduction of rabbits into them; and, whether he can state if measures will be adopted, either by the Government of British Columbia or the Home Government, to put a stop to such importation as being injurious to the Colony?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I have received no information of the introduction of rabbits into British Columbia to which the hon. Member refers. I am, of course, aware of the great injury which has been wrought in the Australian Colonies by these animals; but, as in the case of those Colonies, so also in that of British Columbia, it rests entirely with the local Government to stop the importation, or take such other steps as may be thought necessary. I am not aware whether any action has been taken by the Government of British Columbia.

ZANZIBAR—LAND DISPUTES.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that there have been disputes between English and German settlers as to the ownership of property about Taveta; and, whether any steps will be taken to define the boundaries of the two spheres of influence with greater precision than was done by the Zanzibar Delimitation Commission and the London Conference?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have received no information as to any such disputes. In fact, neither side of the frontier in the neighbourhood of Taveta is as yet occupied by permanent settlers. Nothing has arisen to show that any further steps are required at present for the definition of the boundary, as to which the two Governments are perfectly agreed.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ATTACK ON A PROTESTANT CHURCH.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Before I put the Question which stands in my name to the right hon. Gentleman, it is necessary that I should supplement the first paragraph by asking him whether the Rev. Mr. Allen, who was the rector, had not previously sent an apology for not being able to attend a Unionist demonstration? I now beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that an attack has been made on the Protestant Church of Mulloughdun, County Fermanagh, and all the windows smashed; if a branch of the National League exists in the district; and, if any of the perpetrators of the outrage have been made amenable to justice?

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.): In connection with the occurrence referred to by the hon. Gentleman, and before the right hon. Gentleman gives his answer, I beg to ask him whether he is aware that the Catholic priest of the district, immediately on hearing of the outrage, wrote at once to Mr. Bloomfield—the party aggrieved—expressing his strongest condemnation, and declaring that every assistance to discover the guilty party would be offered by the priests and Catholics of the neighbourhood; and, whether it is a fact that some very active members of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union reside in this district?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: With regard to the supplementary portion of the first paragraph just put by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Belfast, I have no information beyond the personal knowledge that the rev. gentleman did not attend the meeting; but I am not aware whether he sent an apology or not. I have reason to believe that he is on good terms with his Roman Catholic neighbours. As to the Question on the Paper, the Constabulary reported that between the 29th of January and the 4th of February, 11 small panes of glass were broken in two windows of the church, which is situated in a lonely place. At present no persons had been made amenable for the offence. No branch of the National League exists in that district.

NAVY—DOCKYARDS, &c.—ACCIDENTS AT SHEERNESS.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that, in the case of accidents in Sheerness Dockyard, the patients are now conveyed to Chatham, whereby their sufferings are increased, and their relations put to considerable expense in visiting them; and whether the Admiralty will adopt some scheme by arrangement with the Military Hospital or otherwise by which they can be received and treated at Sheerness?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): It has been the practice to send accident cases occurring in Sheerness Dockyard to the Royal Naval Hospital at Chatham for treatment when the nature of the injury admitted of their removal. Injuries of a nature to render removal undesirable would be treated locally at the dispensary of the Royal Naval Barracks of the Dockyard. Under these circumstances, it appears to be unnecessary to ask the Military Authorities to receive accident cases. Since January, 1887, there have only been three cases necessitating removal.

NAVY—DOCKYARD ESTABLISHMENTS—SHEERNESS.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty will fill up the existing vacancies in the different classes of established smiths in Sheerness Dockyard, as has been done in other yards?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Proposals to modify the Dockyard establishments, including a re-arrangement of the various trades to meet modern requirements, are now under consideration. Pending a decision on these proposals, it is not intended to make any additions to the number of established workmen in the yards.

INSPECTION OF QUARRIES—LEGISLATION.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the intention of the Government, during the present Session, to introduce a Bill to provide for the inspection of Quarries?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, the Government did not contemplate at present the introduction of the Bill referred to by the hon. Member.

THE HAYTIAN GOVERNMENT—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. COLES.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any compensation has been demanded from the Haytian Government for the imprisonment of a British subject named Coles; and, whether the statement of the case for compensation, as submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown, can be laid upon the Table of this House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The case referred to by my hon. and gallant Friend has been carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government, in consultation with the Law Officers of the Crown, and they have decided that it is not one in which it would be justifiable to claim compensation from the Haytian Government. There will be no objection to present the Correspondence on the subject, if my hon. and gallant Friend chooses to move for it; but it is not the practice to publish the cases referred to the Law Officers or their opinions. The view taken of the case by Her Majesty's Government will, however, be shown in the Papers.

COLONEL DUNCAN gave Notice that he would move for the Correspondence, and would call attention to the subject on going into Committee of Supply on the Civil Service Estimates.

POST OFFICE—POSTAGE TO INDIA AND CHINA.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, as the Post Office saves £107,000 a-year on the new East India and China Mail Contract, he proposes to make any reduction in the postage on letters to India and China?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I may inform the hon. Member that the saving to which he refers is simply a reduction of the loss on the India and China Mail Services. The present postage rates will still leave a considerable deficiency between the expenditure and the receipts under this head, which will have to be made good out of the general Revenues of this country, of India, and the Eastern Colonies; and I am not now prepared, therefore, to propose any reduction of the postage rates to India and China.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN: Has the money been applied to the reduction of postal rates to Australia?

MR. RAIKES: No decision has been arrived at with reference to the postal rates to Australia.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—ALLEGED AGREEMENTS WITH EUROPEAN POWERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has seen the statement in *The Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna, that the Treaties which were signed last year between the Central European Powers—

> "Are supplemented by special arrangements between Italy, Austria, and Great Britain, having for their object the defence of the Austrian and Italian coasts against a hostile Country;"

whether any arrangements of this nature, or of any other nature, in regard to the contingent defence by this country of the Italian coasts, or of the coasts of any other Continental European State, were a matter of diplomatic correspondence during last year; and, whether, if so, this resulted in any arrangement; and, whether, if there was any such diplomatic Correspondence, he will lay it upon the Table of the House, and the arrangement, if any, resulting therefrom?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I have already stated to the hon. Member that we are under no engagements pledging the military—in which, of course, is included the naval—action of this country, except such as are already known to the House. In accordance with the uniform practice, I must decline to produce any Correspondence which has passed between this country and the various States of Europe in regard to the present condition of affairs.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that no arrangement of any sort or kind has been entered into with Italy, whether pledging the Naval or Military Forces of this country or not?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I am not in a position to give any further answer.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE INQUEST AT MITCHELSTOWN.

MR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the quashing, by the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland, of the coroner's inquisition, by which a verdict of wilful murder was found against a District Inspector and five members of the Royal Irish Constabulary on the 9th September last at Mitchelstown; whether it is a fact that the inquisition was quashed on account of irregular and improper steps alleged to be taken by the coroner in the conduct of the proceedings, and not on the grounds that the verdict found by the jury was wrong or improper, or unsupported by the evidence; whether the proceedings before the coroner having thus become void, it is the intention of the Crown to take any steps for the holding of a new inquest by special Commissioners or otherwise, as provided by the Law in cases of inquisitions so quashed; and, whether any prosecution before magistrates or other magisterial inquiry has yet been held, or directed to be held, into the facts disclosed upon the inquest, which has become abortive by the quashing of the inquisition above mentioned?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: My attention has been called to the quashing of the coroner's inquisition, by which a verdict of wilful murder was found against a District Inspector and five members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, on September 9, at Mitchelstown. It is the fact that the inquisition was quashed on the ground of the irregular and improper steps alleged to have been taken by the coroner in the conduct of the proceedings. The other grounds referred to by the hon. Member—namely, as to whether the verdict found by the jury was wrong or improper or unsupported by the evidence—were not discussed before the Queen's Bench, inasmuch as it has been settled by authority that it is not competent for that Court to review the verdict on any such grounds or to look into the depositions for that purpose. The Crown do not consider it necessary to take any steps for the holding of a new inquest. No prosecution before magistrates or other magisterial inquiry has been held, or directed to be held, into the facts disclosed upon the inquest.

IMMIGRATION OF DESTITUTE ALIENS.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, pending such legislation as may result from the Report of the Committee about to be appointed to inquire into the question of the immigration of destitute aliens, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will instruct Her Majesty's Consuls abroad that, as far as lies in their power, they should inform intending immigrants of the overcrowded state of the labour market in the Metropolis, and should warn them against coming to England?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Sir, the measures which the hon. Member proposes would be attended with considerable difficulties; but I will communicate with other Departments, with a view to consideration of their practicability.

SCOTLAND—DISTRESS IN THE HIGHLANDS.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is now in a position to state to the House what measures of relief are proposed by the Government to alleviate, as far as possible, existing distress in the Highlands of Scotland?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The matter is engaging the serious attention of the Government, and they hope to submit proposals on the subject to the House very shortly.

THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—THE POLICE.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, How many Police Constables and Police Officers of all grades, either in uniform or in plain clothes, are at present employed in and about the Houses of Parliament; and, what is the total cost per week of such constables and officers?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): About 155 constables and officers of all grades are employed in and around the House. Their cost is estimated at about £300 per week.

ARMY—ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT WOOLWICH.

Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) (for Mr. Howorth) (Salford, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the Regulations recently issued for the entrance examination at Woolwich by which, in the scientific branches of the Army, the marks allotted to scientific proficiency are greatly reduced in relative value and scientific excellence, and correspondingly discouraged among the candidates; and, whether these Regulations are final and permanent, or only temporary?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The new Regulations are intended to be of permanent application. By these Regulations the same marks are assigned as under the last Regulations to physical science; but a greater number is awarded to mathematics, history, and languages; so that proficiency in physical sciences will count for less in the competition. The subject has been very fully considered by a strong Committee, and the preponderance has been given to those subjects which are to the majority of officers of the greatest practical importance, while they are believed also to be those least easily crammed.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is the intention of the Government to introduce during this Session a Bill founded on the Report of the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Commission of 1882-3?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): It is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject this Session.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSION FOR COUNTY DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would allow me to supplement the Question which stands in my name, by inquiring whether he was aware that a large number of the applicants are tenants on the estate of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland? I beg now to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Sub-Commission appointed for County Down has not sat there since November last and is now sitting in County Donegal, and that it is likely to be occupied in the latter county till after Easter; whether the landlords in Down are enforcing payment of the old rents due at November, notwithstanding the fact that the tenants who applied before that time to have fair rents fixed are entitled to the benefit of the judicial rent from the six months previous to the November gale day; whether, considering the number of applications to fix fair rents entered from County Down, he will take steps to have sittings of a Sub-Commission in the county without further delay; and, whether he can state when the tenants may expect the next sitting of a Sub-Commission there?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: No, Sir. I have no information with regard to the inquiry of the hon. Member which is not on the Paper. With regard to the Question on the Paper, the Land Commissioners report that Sub-Commissions are not appointed for any particular county, and that in fixing the sittings of the Sub-Commissions due regard must be paid to the interests of all the districts concerned. The Commissioners hope to be able to arrange for the sitting of a Sub-Commission in Down during the month of April next. Neither the Government nor the Land Commissioners have any information as to the proceedings of landlords in the County Down in enforcing payments of old rents due at November. The hon. Member, however, appears to be under a misapprehension in regard to the date from which the judicial rent will take effect. The Land Act of last Session directs that the judicial rent shall be the rent payable by the tenant of the holding as from the gale day next after the making of the application; and therefore, in the cases he refers to, the rent for the six months previous to November is in no wise affected.

MR. M'CARTAN: May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman whether he is aware that the rent runs for six months previous to the 1st of April, and that, therefore, the date of the sitting did affect the tenants in question? Am I to understand from the answer of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that there is to be no sitting of the Land Commission until April?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I am afraid not before April next. The Commissioners cannot arrange for an earlier sitting.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman whether, in consequence of the friction that appears to prevail, the Government will not take into consideration the advisability of appointing additional Sub-Commissioners?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: This is the first intimation that the Government had of any friction of the kind; but if any is found to exist, the Government will do their best to alleviate it.

DISTRESS AMONG THE LABOURING CLASSES — APPOINTMENT OF A ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government will assent to the appointment of a Royal Commission, or a Select Committee, to inquire into the causes of the distress and want of employment recently reported to exist among the artizan and labouring population of many parts of Great Britain and Ireland?

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) inquired, whether the Royal Commission presided over by the late Lord Iddesleigh did not have the same object in view?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I was about to refer in my answer to the fact to which the hon. Gentleman alludes. The subject of the Question of my hon. Friend is one the importance of which is fully recognized by the Government;

and they feel that if it were possible to initiate any inquiry likely to be of service, it would be their duty to take the necessary steps to do so. It is, however, to be borne in mind that the main causes of distress are well known, having already been inquired into and reported on by the Commission on the Depression of Trade presided over by the late Lord Iddesleigh. Any further inquiry, such as that suggested by the hon. Member, might possibly have the reverse effect to that desired. The Government will, however, most carefully consider whether anything can or ought to be done. There are many signs of improvement in trade and of increased employment, which the Government hope will materially lessen the evils to which my hon. Friend alludes.

SCOTLAND—LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce this Session a Local Government Bill for Scotland?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): It is not anticipated that there will be time this Session for Parliament to consider a Local Government Bill for Scotland. Leave will be asked to bring in a Bill dealing with the question of local government boundaries in Scotland—as was done last year in regard to England—so as to facilitate the passing of a Local Government Bill for Scotland in the ensuing Session.

FACTORY ACTS—THE "SWEATING" SYSTEM AT THE EAST END OF LONDON.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the "sweating" system which is prevalent especially in the East End of London; and, whether the Government will introduce a Bill during the present Session to deal with the evils of such system?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Secretary of State, some time ago, instructed the Chief Inspector of Factories to institute special inquiries into this system at the East End of London, with the help of Inspectors drawn for the purpose from other districts. The Report of the Chief Inspector is daily expected; and it is hoped that it will materially assist the Government in deciding whether anything can be done by legislation to remedy the evils complained of.

MOTIONS.

MEETING OF THE HOUSE (ASH WEDNESDAY).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will meet To-morrow, at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) said, he rose to protest against this unnecessary waste of the time of the House, and, as he did last year, he would this year challenge a Division.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 161; Noes 91: Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 2.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day, and To-morrow of the other Orders of the Day.—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February].—[See page 64.]

And which Amendment was,

To leave out paragraphs ten and eleven, in order to insert the words—"Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session, which was of an ameliorative character, has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much to alienate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, AND LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE.—RESOLUTION.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I rise, Sir, as early as possible in the debate to accept my share of the challenge which was thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that we have an objection to criticize the Government in a place where we could be answered. It was certainly a taunt for which he had no ground up to that moment. It was to save the time of the House that we forebore from discussing the Irish Question at large on the Address. We thought we had the sense of the House with us—and I am bound to say I think we had the approbation of the Leader of the House—when we determined to defer our remarks about Ireland until there was an Amendment before the House which clearly raised the difference between the Government and their critics. We now have such an Amendment, and I hope that I, at any rate, shall be able to clear myself of having said anything outside the House which I am afraid to say within it. The right hon. Gentleman referred to our having spoken—I am not sure of his exact words—before excited audiences. Now, we are not responsible for our audiences; but we are responsible for the things we say to them; and not once or twice, but a dozen times, I, for my own part, have said that the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the manner in which it was worked was one-sided, misdirected, and out of sympathy with the great majority of the people of Ireland; that that Act has done little to suppress crime, but a great deal to alienate, and I think lately even to shock, public opinion; and especially that there was no sign that it was settling and pacifying the country, if to settle and pacify the country be to make the country acquiesce in the system of government that at present exists. I repeat those statements now. The Solicitor General for Ireland yesterday said that I, as Secretary for Ireland, spoke of the Crimes Bill of 1882 as a remedy for the worst of all evils, and that I claimed credit for its efficient working. If by "the worst of all evils" the hon. and learned Member meant crime actually committed, then I think that in the state in which Ireland was, tha Act was an efficient remedy. I thought so then, and I think so now, and it is by the standard of that Act and its results that I wish to judge whether or not the coercive policy of the Government has succeeded, as the Government claim, or not. With regard to the statistics of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, upon which he bases his claim, the right hon. Gentleman may remember that I had no opportunity of debating the Crimes Bill last Session in this House; but I wrote a letter to the newspapers which attracted a certain amount of attention, and I confined myself to the limited question of the difference between the main provisions of that Bill and the Act of 1882, and I predicted, and I think with some justice, that there would be a difference in the spirit in which the two Acts would be worked. Now, I will take the effect of these Acts exactly in the form in which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to the House to look at them. He takes the six months which include January, 1887, as a test of the state of things before his Act was passed, and he shows that 495 agrarian crimes were committed during that period. Then he takes as a test of the success of the Act the six months which include January, 1888, and shows that 364 agrarian crimes were committed during that period, and he says that there is a diminution of 26 per cent. Now, with regard to our own Act, I will take the six months which included January, 1882. During that time there were 2,903 agrarian crimes, or nearly six times the amount which the right hon. Gentleman found in Ireland. I will then take the six months which include January, 1883—that is to say, the first six months of the operation of our Bill—and I find that the outrages in these six months had fallen to 698; that is to say, less than twice as much as those to which the Act of the present Government has reduced them, so that our Act reduced outrages by more than 75 per cent in the period in which the Bill of the Government has reduced outrages by 26 per cent, and that in the period which the Government wishes to have taken as a test.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It has been three times stated that I have put forward these statistics as the test of the working of the Act. I have over and over again said that it was not the real test.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I quite agree that figures are not everything; but obviously this was one of his tests, and it was the test to which he specially referred. This result does not, I think, justify the satisfaction of the Government; but it justifies a comparison between the two Bills. The right hon. Gentleman says that our Government proceeded against three and a-half persons in the case of every agrarian crime, which was decidedly more than in the case of his Government. Now, I do not quite understand this calculation, because if we take the larger number of agrarian outrages we had to combat and apply that calculation, we should have had to proceed against about 10,000 people; while, if we take the smaller number, we should have had to proceed against about 2,400. I have a note taken at the Irish Office, by which it appears that we proceeded against 1,218 people; but I have no doubt that there is some discrepancy which the right hon. Gentleman can explain. I do not, however, care, because the question is not how many people we proceeded against, but whether we were proceeding against the right people. My main objection to the Bill of last year was that it contained a clause directed against unlawful associations, and that that clause was so drawn as to include the National League. The Act of 1882 had, also, a clause against unlawful associations specially framed to exclude such organizations as the National League, but to include such organizations as the Invincibles and the worst form of Ribbon Societies. Now, under this Bill, which has reduced real crime only by one-fourth, a very great number of persons have been punished for taking part in proceedings which were not unlawful before the Bill was passed. Under the Bill of 1882, which in six months reduced crime, not by one-fourth, but to one-fourth, of what it had been, how many people does the House think were punished for taking part in an unlawful association? According to the notes which I collected when I was Irish Secretary, during those six months only one person was punished. But the right hon. Gentleman will most rightly say that we had the 10th clause, under which we could prohibit meetings, and that his only power of prohibiting meetings, besides the very dubious one of forbidding them by Proclamation, is to proceed under the clause as to unlawful association. I will take that clause likewise; and I find that under the 10th section we proceeded against 16 persons. So that in the process of reducing real crimes from 2,900 to 700 there were 17 persons proceeded against in Ireland for taking part in associations and for attending meetings; but in the process of reducing crime from 490 to 360 the Government have placed in prison an enormous multitude of people, as I will show, solely for taking part in the work of associations and for attending meetings. Why, 19 people have been punished for publishing proceedings of suppressed meetings of the National League; and for that single new crime more people were punished in six months than we punished under the Bill of 1882 for all political crimes whatever. Now, there is a statement which I and others made outside Parliament which has been very much challenged, and that is that the Bill created a new crime. Now, I am no lawyer; but I have been brought into contact with a very unpleasant side of the Criminal Law largely, and I know perfectly well that when you can, and do, punish people for something you could not punish them for before you must have created a new crime. I have in my hand a list, not of unknown persons, but of Members of Parliament, in prison. I find that Mr. T. D. Sullivan, ex-Lord Mayor of Dublin, was punished with imprisonment for two months for publishing in *The Nation* reports of meetings of Irish branches of the National League; that Mr. Alderman Hooper, one of the Members for Cork, had two months for publishing reports of suppressed branches; that the Secretary of the National League, Mr. T. Harrington, was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment for publishing in *The Kerry Sentinel* reports of suppressed meetings; Mr. E. Harrington to one month for a similar offence; and Mr. Cox to four months for—I think I am correct in saying—inciting people to join an unlawful assembly which is called the National League; and the principal evidence, so far as I can make out, for that crime, which I am very much inclined to think he did commit, was that he was stated to have said that he hoped soon to be a paying member of the League. He has paid pretty dearly; but, on the whole, I think, not too high a price, because these are cases which will do more than anything else to bring about the settlement of the Irish difficulty. The Government of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) reduced crime by 2,200 in six months, and only imprisoned one Member of Parliament during that time; but now we have 12 Members of Parliament who are either imprisoned, or as good as imprisoned, during six months in which real crime has been diminished by the infinitesimal number of 120 or 130. But it is not only the case of Members of Parliament. Men are punished for printing these reports and for hawking them about the streets. Men are taken to prison literally in droves under circumstances which throw the most remarkable light upon the list of crimes which figured large in the end of the hon. and learned Member's speech last night—a list of crimes which, when I come to examine them, appear very much less criminal than they did before. There were about 370 persons convicted, and of these 275 were convicted for unlawful assembly, rioting, and resisting the police. Here is a statement of one of those crimes. A National League meeting was held in the house of a priest. The evidence of the main crime is that men known to belong to the National League were seen going to the house. Two of the police went into an outhouse and heard people talking loudly. There were several men playing at football in a neighbouring field. They gathered round the police, hooted them, groaned at and pushed them away, possibly with violence. A number of them were tried and sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment, and they were taken off in pairs handcuffed. The magistrate said he—

> "Considered the defendants were guilty of unlawfully assembling, but that they had no intention, in the first instance, of interfering with the police. The district had been very peaceable for a long time."

Now, I am not going to blame the magistrate; it was his business, I should think, to convict them. They had to be punished; but they were punished because in a district which had been peaceable for a long time the National League was forbidden to assemble. If ever there was a case of sin coming by the law this was a case. Six months ago, I earnestly warned the Government not to proclaim the National League. At Kanturk, nine men were charged with attending a meeting of the National League. There were no aggravating circumstances at all. It was a meeting with closed doors of an association which was legal before this Act passed. But the Resident Magistrate said—

> "There was not a shadow of doubt that there was a meeting of a branch of the National League, and that the defendants attended,"

and five of them were sentenced to two months' imprisonment. Now, my belief is that when these statistics come to be examined it will be found that the enormous majority of cases are caused by the fact that the National League has been proclaimed, which it was not before this Act passed; and if that is not the creation of a new crime, if it is necessary that every sound lawyer should say that no crime had been created—well, there are some of us here who may console ourselves for not being lawyers. On this point I would rather put what I have to say in the form of legal phraseology, and I happily have the means of doing so. On Friday last, Chief Baron Palles and Mr. Justice Andrews sat on a question as to the validity of the conviction of the proprietor of *The Wexford People*, which was argued on a case stated by the Resident Magistrates. The Lord Chief Baron asked if counsel proposed to argue whether the 7th section created a new crime or not. Mr. Carson said he did not. The Chief Baron said—

> "I think it is important there should be an argument in this matter. The publication of a meeting of the Irish Land League"—

he means the National League—

> "with the view of promoting its objects would be an offence at Common Law independently of the 7th section, provided the Irish Land League was at Common Law an illegal association. But it becomes a crime under the 7th section whether the Land League is or is not at Common Law an illegal association, so that in that sense, in my opinion, it creates a new crime. The section prevents a person from saying in Court that the association referred to is not an illegal association, and in that sense does it not make a new crime?"

Now, I do not for a moment mean to say that this will be the ultimate opinion of Chief Baron Palles—it would be hardly respectful to say so—but it puts happily into legal phraseology an opinion which is largely held on this side of the House; and when we consider that the enormous number of persons who have been punished criminally in Ireland have been punished in consequence of the creation by the Act of a crime which was not a crime before, and which never, in our opinion, ought to have been made so, then I think that the Solicitor General for Ireland is not justified in saying that the objections of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) to the administration of the Act were "trivial in the extreme." We are told you cannot properly punish poor men who commit crime, unless you punish those whose speeches encourage the opinions and feelings which make them commit crime. I see the Lord Advocate present, and he recently said—

> "You ought not to make too much of treating Members of Parliament as ordinary prisoners, when the victims of their speeches are treated in the same manner."

That is a common doctrine and a very plausible one, but it is one of the most dangerous doctrines that could be laid down. As to crime, there is no doubt about the nature of the Act, and there is generally no doubt as to the fact that a crime has been committed; but if you punish speeches on the ground that they lead to crime, you bring in a serious thing. You bring in private judgment as to whether the speech leads to crime; you bring in political prejudice, Party animosity, and a number of things that ought to be kept out of criminal jurisdiction. When a Government shows that it is punishing men for having made speeches leading to crime, then it is landed among some of the most melancholy deeds in history. What was it but this principle carried to an extreme which led to the execution of Gordon in Jamaica; and on our own soil what was it that led to the terrible and cruel persecutions in England and Scotland in 1793 and 1794, except that certain speeches were made at certain meetings? To this day those poor men are called martyrs. Those were the cases of which Mr. Fox said that it was difficult to think of such things calmly when you were alone, much less to discuss them calmly in public. I venture to say that those words were not at all too strong to express the sickening feeling which many have felt at the imprisonment beginning to be inflicted in such multitude and in such magnitude upon the Representatives of Ireland. The late Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) and the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) had been Parliamentary Colleagues of hon. Gentlemen opposite for many years, and they had been their Colleagues with the knowledge of everybody that they were members of the National League. They voted with them in the same Lobby; they were spoken to courteously by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, spoken to often even more than courteously. Now, all of a sudden, you tell them that all along they have been committing crime for which they have to be punished. It is a still more serious thing when right hon. Gentlemen take refuge in what I cannot but regard as a pretext that they have been encouraging crime. Now, we all of us view the outbreak of crime with regret—the Gentlemen of whom I spoke view the outbreak of crime with positive dismay. It is a shame to their country, a shame to their cause. It certainly would postpone the triumph of that cause, and perhaps ruin it altogether. I believe there is no man who, since the day the Coercion Bill was passed, has worked harder to discourage crime than the Secretary of the National League. No one who listened to the speech which he made last year on the proclamation of the National League will fail to remember how eloquent and how earnest he was in deprecating crime. What the hon. Member said he sincerely felt. No one who listened to the speech could doubt it, and even the Chief Secretary for Ireland acknowledged that, whatever their motives, the denunciations of Irish Members had done much to diminish crime. The right hon. Gentleman declared that the National League could make crime smaller in amount by exerting itself, and that it did so.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: And make it larger.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: Yes; larger. The power of Mr. Harrington was admitted by the Chief Secretary, and I ask is it right that you should cut off these Leaders of the Irish people, thereby in the long run incurring the danger of driving many of the Irish people back to the guidance of desperate secret societies? I have been charged with saying that the inhabitants of no other country in the world except Ireland can be arrested on English soil for a crime that is political and nothing else. I repeat that here. An Englishman cannot be arrested on English soil for such a crime; it does not exist by English law. A European foreigner cannot be arrested, because the Royal Commission of 1878 on the Extradition of Criminals—a Commission which included Lord Selborne, Lord Blackburn, Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, and my right hon. Friend (Sir William Harcourt)—reported that a criminal is not to be surrendered unless, in pursuit of some political purpose, some foul crime such as assassination or incendiarism has been committed and has been committed by him personally. But an Irishman can be arrested in England for a crime for which an Englishman would not be arrested, and on account of which we should not dream for a single moment of giving up a Continental foreigner to the tender mercies of his Government. It is quite true that crime has diminished, and so far as it has diminished I believe it is mainly due to the legislation of last Session with regard to land. I admit whatever share in the merit of the passing of the legislation the Solicitor General for Ireland thought fit to claim. The legislation itself is passed; that is what we care about; anyone may take credit for it. That diminution was due to the fact that the Government brought forward a Bill revising Irish rents—a Bill brought in a year too late, and which the Liberal Party urged on a year before. However, it was better late than never. When by that legislation Parliament pronounced that these unjust rents were no longer to be paid something was done to diminish crime. We are fortified in this opinion by the opinion of the County Court Judge of Cork, who said that the effect of the Act would be that all rentals in the South of Ireland would be reduced 30 to 33 per cent—a reduction which would bear heavily on the landlords. No doubt it would, as it had already borne heavily on the English and Scotch landlords who had made the reductions spontaneously. But the crime would have been still more reduced if the Government had allowed the Commissioners to do what was being done now in the North of Scotland—namely, to deal with arrears of excessive rent. I repeat here what I said elsewhere, that many men were being deprived of the homes they had built and the land they had reclaimed and improved because they cannot pay the arrears of unjust rents which Parliament had pronounced to be unjust. The right hon. Gentleman tried at a public meeting to convict me of an unfair statement, because he said in the three months I was Chief Secretary there were 835 evictions, whereas in the past three months there were only 132. Why, those three months were the three months that came close upon the Land Bill of last Session, which the right hon. Gentleman himself passed. Under the Bill, practically, notice of ejectment became possible, after which, on the lapse of six months, the tenant lost all part in his holding and his home, and I must say it is playing with words to draw any distinction between evictions and those notices of ejectment which have been falling so freely on many of the tenants in Ireland. But there is one way in which the right hon. Gentleman can falsify my words, and I hope he will take it. Let him bring in a Bill, even at this late hour, dealing with arrears of unjust rent. Now, Sir, I want to say a word as to the clause of the Amendment which speaks of the administration of the Act as being partial. In 1884 agrarian outrages had come down, under the Administration of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, to between 700 and 800. One main reason was that the Government had had an opportunity of showing their impartiality between different classes and parties in Ireland. That was the occasion when the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) spoke of the Government as having sailed on an even keel. At that time the popular Party were trying to hold meetings in the North of Ireland, and whenever they announced these meetings the Orange Party at once announced their intention of holding a counter-meeting, and urged the Government to suppress the Nationalist meetings. The course that the Government took was to refuse to be bullied by the Orangemen, and to send as many men as were necessary to see that the meeting of the Nationalist Party in Ulster was held without interruption, and the belief that the Government were trying to deal fairly between both Parties was much increased by the fact that they were roundly abused for doing so; and there was no one who abused them more roundly than a certain eminent lawyer, who praised the Orangemen as patriots for their conduct, and charged the Government with bloodguiltiness, because one life was taken among a crowd of armed men. This gentleman, who is in private life a kindly and honourable man, but who, after such speeches as that, ought never even to have held a Government brief, at such a crisis as the second reading of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, was actually made a Judge of the High Court. But something happened afterwards which proved that this was only part of a policy. The time came for the Government to show whether they were impartial or not. The Protestant Home Rulers announced that they were going to hold a meeting at Tyrone. The Orangemen adopted their old system of announcing a counter-meeting, and said there would be a riot; but the Government, instead of protecting both meetings, if necessary, proclaimed them both. They gave up that system which had been established in the North of Ireland by our Government with absolute success, and, we thought, for ever, that there was to be freedom of speech, unless the Government thought it would lead to actual crime. Some months later the Protestant Home Rulers announced a meeting at Dromore, and again the Orangemen announced a counter-meeting. Again they asked the Government to proclaim the Nationalist meeting, and again the Government proclaimed both. So that now this state of things has come about—that here is a county in the North of Ireland, where there is not any pretence that crime prevails, in which Parties are nearly balanced, but where all chances of political action is destroyed for both Parties, because the Government are afraid or unwilling to stand up to the Orangemen. I thought the other day, when the Government sent 700 men to arrest a parish priest in another corner of Ulster, that a very small fraction of that number might have enabled the Nationalists of Ulster to enjoy that right of public meeting which is exactly as much their property as the rents are the property of the landlord. Well, now, there has been a good deal said, both at public meetings and at City dinners, about the manner in which the Opposition have attacked the Ministers of the law, the police, and the Judges. So far as I am concerned, that charge cannot be made against me, if people will only quote the words and not take their own impressions. I do not believe that during the whole Recess I have said anything against the subordinates of the Government or its judicial officers. There is one exception—when I criticized the extraordinary latitude which Crown counsel, who are conducting these cases, have allowed themselves. I saw on Saturday that the Attorney General had to make an apology for what seems to me to have been a most heartless thing which he said against a man who, although he was nothing but a plaintiff in a civil action, was still a Government prisoner; and I must own that the cross-examination, as conducted yesterday, shows that the example of the leader was not lost upon his junior. But there is something worse than that, and that is the trial of the Secretary of the Irish National League. Now, I am not going to enter into that trial, but will only say this—that it was a trial which peculiarly required decency and care and moderation of treatment. Well, the Crown counsel actually taunted the gentleman who was conducting the defence because he had not committed acts which would place him inside a gaol. That I consider to be an utterance which is quite unparalleled in modern Courts. And I maintain that it is not offensive to the gentlemen of the Long Robe, but complimentary to them, to say that it is utterly contrary to the spirit of our Courts. It may be said that these are chance utterances; but it is these chance utterances which show the real inner mind. It is a very serious thing indeed to political prisoners when the inner mind, the real spirit, of the servants whom the Government employs, whom it honours, and whom some day it will place upon the Judicial Bench, is such as these utterances show. Now, Sir, to conclude, I come to the most important part of the Amendment, for it is a consideration which, in the long run, can alone settle this great controversy. Is this policy settling and pacifying and conciliating Ireland? Is it, or is it not, alienating the sympathy of Her Majesty's Irish subjects, as the Amendment contends, and decreasing their respect for the law as it now is? Outside two counties or parts of three counties which all lie together—that is, over nine-tenths of Ireland—the whole country is represented by gentlemen of one way of thinking. Such unanimity was never known in the world before, or in any part of it. Of these Representatives, in the course of six months, one out of seven is either in prison, or on his way to prison, or on his way out of prison. What has been the effect on the mass of the people? We have heard a good deal of the wonderful demonstration of the solid middle class, representing the thrift and diligence and backbone of the country, which took place when right hon. Gentlemen holding the views of the Government, though sitting on this side of the House, went over to Ireland. Now, Sir, it so happens, most unhappily for Ireland, that the municipal representation is purely middle class. The municipal franchise is fixed at such high figures that in large towns of 30,000 or 50,000 inhabitants there are only a few hundred voters. For every 1,000 Parliamentary voters there are only about 100 municipal voters. If, then, there is any test of middle class feeling, it is the feeling of the municipal voters, the Town Councillors, and the Mayors. I should much like to have a Return of the number of Mayors and Corporations and Commissioners of important towns which did not give a welcome to Lord Ripon and my right hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley). I think it would be a very cheap and short Return indeed. There is another test, one that seems to me a much more certain test, that this policy is not pacifying Ireland, which is borne out by reluctant witnesses. Two years ago those Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House, but who support the Government, not only were willing to give self-government to Ireland under certain conditions, but were quite unanimous that the panacea for Ireland was local government—extended local government. We were always hearing how we were to give a sense of responsibility to Irishmen by training them in habits of public and local business, and so guiding them to better things. That was two years ago. Two months ago the Prime Minister went down to Liverpool and stated that the Government were going to make great concessions in the way of extending local institutions in England, Scotland, and Wales. But Ireland was to have none of them, because the country was in a state in which she was not fit to receive them, and Members who sit on this side of the House accepted this position. That is to say, that six months of the government of Ireland by Lord Carnarvon and the then Chief Secretary (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who, for quite different reasons than his opinions on the Irish Question, I am glad to see has rejoined the Government, for I have always entertained a deep respect for him, and I am pleased to see him in his right place again—six months under Lord Carnarvon and that right hon. Gentleman, with a policy of no coercion and conciliation, produced such an effect that those who are now Liberal Unionists said that Ireland must have a great extension of local government. The Crimes Act has been administered by the present Government for six months, and it has brought Ireland into such a state that we are told that she cannot have equal laws with England, and that there must be no extension of local government in Ireland for an indefinite period. Now, I think that that is a very painful and rather humiliating confession. It is a confession which we, on this side of the House, for the most part, will never agree to make. We consider that Ireland cannot be governed by coercion, by unmixed coercion above all, but that she must be governed by a policy of concession. We consider that the hearts of Irishmen may be won by sympathy and confidence, and by an earnest desire to show that you understand what they want, what they wish, and what they need. They never can be won by such a policy as is now being administered by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. All I can say is, that if that announcement on my part is inconsistent with what the Liberal Unionists were saying two years ago when they called for local government for Ireland, and said that they should be able to govern the country with no coercion—if it is inconsistent with that, let it be inconsistent; but I am quite certain it is right.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said, that he had looked forward with great interest and considerable curiosity to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir George Trevelyan). He had listened with admiration to the lucid speeches which the right hon. Gentleman had frequently made in that House, and he had always regarded him as man endowed with a specially lucid and logical mind; and, therefore, he (Colonel Saunderson) had anxiously looked forward to the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman as to how it came about that he was on the present occasion supporting a Vote of Want of Confidence in Her Majesty's Government. Most of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, as far as he (Colonel Saunderson) could understand it, went to show that he had entirely changed his opinion as to the character of the National League. The National League, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, was far from being a criminal organization, and was an organization which, at the present moment, employed its influence in the repression of crime. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—and that showed the right hon. Gentleman's courage—that he was not afraid to make use, inside the walls of that House, of language that he had used outside. But that was not always the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman. In former times, the right hon. Gentleman held exactly the opposite opinion; and he (Colonel Saunderson) wished to learn from him why he had changed his opinion, and on what ground. The right hon. Gentleman gave them on that point absolutely no information whatever. He especially objected to the action of the Government in Ireland, on the ground that it was, according to him, a dangerous thing to interfere with freedom of speech, which he said this Act interfered with. Was that always the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman? He (Colonel Saunderson) should like, with the permission of the House, to refresh the right hon. Gentleman's memory. He would not quote anything with the intention of annoying the right hon. Gentleman. But it was perfectly fair, from his (Colonel Saunderson's) point of view, to try and learn how the wonderful change of opinion on the part of the right hon. Gentleman came about. The right hon. Gentleman made a speech on that very subject at Taunton, on the 17th of October, 1885. He then said—

> "Land-grabbers are denounced to the vengeance of the mob in printed notices and in violent language. When Lord Spencer was in Ireland this was a punishable offence. A meeting was held near an evicted farm for the purpose of intimidation. Three Members of Parliament denounced five men to the mob. Lord Salisbury took no steps to call these men to account, for they were part of the majority who put him in Office."

The right hon. Gentleman now held an entirely different view. Did the right hon. Gentleman believe that at the present moment the Government were justified in taking the steps which he thought Lord Salisbury ought to have taken, and which he and Lord Spencer took when they were responsible for the government of Ireland? Did he believe the National League was exactly the same as the Land League which went before it, or did he believe that it had changed? Were its Leaders the same, or were they not? Were the means taken to carry out the decrees of the League the same, or were they not? The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech, pointed out that there appeared to be a wonderful unanimity in the Irish population manifested by the fact that there were some 85 Gentlemen returned to that House unanimously in favour of the opinion expressed by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. But was that always the right hon. Gentleman's opinion? He would again refresh the right hon. Gentleman's memory. The right hon. Gentleman said in that House, not very long ago, when he held the same views as those which he (Colonel Saunderson) and his hon. Friends on the Ministerial side of the House held about the present situation—

> "It is not only the landlords and the red-hot Orangemen who feel apprehension; but it is everyone who has offended the Land League—or the National League, as it was afterwards called—by not taking an active part in its support; everyone who has asserted his legal right to work for whom he likes, or to take farms from whom he likes; anyone who has taken any part in bringing to justice those whom the organs of the now dominant Administration and Party regard as victims and martyrs; every quiet citizen and every member of that minority which would not be in a minority if both Parties would join in a determination that law and order should no longer be trifled with in Ireland any more than it is trifled with in Yorkshire or Somersetshire."

That was what he (Colonel Saunderson) had always contended. He could not deny the fact that 85 Members were returned in Ireland, and that they sat below the Gangway opposite, for he had ocular demonstration of it; but he did deny absolutely that they were returned by the free choice of the Irish people. He believed—and every man who really understood the Irish Question and who viewed it apart from Party issues held—that when law and order were established in Ireland and every organization, whatever its name might be, which now arrogated to itself the authority of laying down the law was got rid of, the Irish people would return a very different representation. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway had also changed their views in comparing the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken with the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). An extraordinary thing was that hon. Gentlemen opposite had suddenly fallen in love with the memory of Mr. Forster. "He was a man," said the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and the hon. Member compared the course pursued by Mr. Forster with the course pursued by his (Colonel Saunderson's) right hon. Friend, and remarked that it was like the scratches of a cat compared with the paw of the British Lion. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite had, in past times, drawn comparisons which were not very complimentary to the right hon. Gentleman. He would quote the remarks of a very eloquent and experienced orator, who sat below the Gangway opposite, who was one of the leading lights of the country, and to whom they always listened with great attention. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), in the year 1884, when the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was Chief Secretary for Ireland—so that it was not very ancient history—said—

> "In their time they had been told hard things of the Tory Government, and those hard things were, every one of them, well deserved. But they had not for some years a chance of seeing whether a Liberal Government was not as hard in its heart and as hypocritical in its professions. They understood being kept down by force by the iron rule of some man like Cromwell; but they did not understand being ruled by men of the mould of Earl Spencer and some of his Colleagues. Dean Swift had once said—'It was no shame to be conquered and held down by a lion; but no man should be controlled by a rat.'"

If that comparison was accurate, he (Colonel Saunderson) thought they on his side had the advantage; because when the rat fought with the cat it generally got the worst of it. It was to him a lamentable thing that the right hon. Gentleman, after all that he had done in the past when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and when he had repeatedly stood up in that House to maintain the policy from which, after all, the great bulk of the Liberal Party had never swerved, should now, without explanation, have turned his back on all his former convictions and professions. The right hon. Gentleman speaking not so very long ago, in 1886, as to the Home Rule policy, declared that until every Constitutional method, both inside and outside of the House, had been exhausted, he, for one, would never consent to it. It appeared to him (Colonel Saunderson) that the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and other hon. Gentlemen opposite, laboured under an extreme difficulty on the present occasion. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork was a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government. It asked them to condemn the policy of the Government. Why? Because Her Majesty's Government were carrying out and putting into effect an Act of Parliament which the House itself had passed. So that if the House were to accede to the Amendment, and pass a Vote of Want of Confidence, it would pass a deliberate Vote of Want of Confidence in itself; and he conceived that the House of Commons, as at present constituted, was not likely to do that. He had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) with great attention; and he might, in passing, say that some hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to have misunderstood some expressions from the Ministerial side. They were anxious to hear the hon. Member's remarks; and as he spoke in so very low a tone they thought there was no discourtesy in asking him to speak a little louder. For himself, when the hon. Member's speech concluded, he asked himself what had become of Home Rule? It was nowhere to be found. The hon. Member had no confidence in the Government, not because they refused to bring forward a Home Rule measure, but because they put in force the Coercion Act. Home Rule had fallen into the background. He (Colonel Saunderson) would like to know whether it was dead? The hon. Gentleman devoted part of his speech to an historical episode of which they had had very varying accounts—namely, the celebrated interview with Lord Carnarvon; and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was of opinion that Lord Salisbury was at that time inclined to grant Home Rule. Lord Salisbury, on the other hand, distinctly stated that that was not the case, and that there never entered his mind any idea of giving Home Rule. They thus had the assertion of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) on the one side, and the contradiction of Lord Salisbury on the other; and he (Colonel Saunderson) thought, from Lord Salisbury's position and the estimation in which the country held him, that his statement would be taken as a sufficient answer to the hon. Member's allegations. Then the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) went on to inform the House that it was not his intention, or that of his followers, to obstruct the course of Business. He (Colonel Saunderson) was very glad to hear it. They would no longer have those interminable debates, and those weary miles of walking through the Division Lobby till long after the dawn of morning. Both sides of the House would rejoice in that fact. The hon. Member was anxious to get on with the Business of the country that interested the whole Empire. He (Colonel Saunderson) could not say that he felt very grateful to the hon. Gentleman, because they knew his motives. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) had had an interview, which was published in *The Freeman's Journal*, and he concluded that it was authentic. In that interview the hon. Gentleman informed the correspondent of that newspaper why it was that he and his Friends did not intend to pursue a policy of Obstruction; and it was probable that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) understood the nature of the hon. Member's policy. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman, in his speech, appeared to sympathize with it. At the interview in question, the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), speaking of the condition of the Unionist Party, said—

> "These dissensions are more likely to arise out of questions connected with the proposed English legislation than upon the Irish Question. We may, therefore, expect a Ministerial crisis at any time during the Session, arising, as I have said, out of some English rather than the Irish Question. With these considerations in view, it will be politic, I think, for the Irish Members and the English Radicals to do everything that they possibly can to facilitate the Government Business during the coming Session."

So that it was not absolutely because the hon. Member and his followers were inclined to facilitate the progress of Public Business, but because he and his Friends above the Gangway opposite had the amiable hope that when they reached the County Government Bill the Unionist Party would be spread-eagled on the Serbonian bog of political difficulty. One could, therefore, understand the reasons which were to induce the Nationalist and the Radical Party to offer no obstruction to Public Business. The hon. Member had last night spoken evidently with great care and considerable preparation; but he (Colonel Saunderson) must say that in listening to the speech of the hon. Member he thought his attack on the Government was about the weakest that had ever been made in the House of Commons. They were asked to condemn the policy of Her Majesty's Government because it was harsh, unjust, and had been a failure. He did not think that the hon. Member had proved any one of those three propositions. The hon. Member thought the policy of the Government was harsh because an hon. Member had not been provided with food and drink on his way to Ireland. He (Colonel Saunderson) did not know where the hon. Member got his information; but he ventured to say it was incorrect. Nobody would keep food, much less drink, from the hon. Gentleman to whom the hon. Member alluded. Before the House came to a final decision as to whether they would approve or condemn the policy of the Government, it was absolutely necessary that the House should realize the position in which the Government found themselves in Ireland. The Government had to confront the deliberate action of the Leaders of the National League, and also the deliberate action of the allies of the National League—right hon. Gentlemen who sat opposite. Now, he could inform the House, in a very few words, the accuracy of which no hon. Member could deny, what the action of the National League in Ireland was. The National League in Ireland and its Leaders had openly stated, over and over again, that their object was, in the first place, to turn out the landlords, and after that to overturn the authority of the Crown. [*Cries of* "No!"] He had the quotations which proved this with him, and could read them to the House, if it desired; but he took that for granted, because they had said it over and over again. "We shall go on," said the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of the county of Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien)—who, he (Colonel Saunderson) regretted, was not now in the House—

> "We shall go on unconquered and unconquerable until landlordism is trampled into the last ditch, and then we will haul down the flag of British ascendancy in Ireland."

How did they propose to do it? The landlords were to go first. They were an unpopular class—they were supposed to be the butts for the shafts of all men who had nothing, and who wanted to get something. He was happy to say that they did not intend to shoot them, but only to starve them. And the National League proceeded thus. The Plan of Campaign dictated to the tenants on what terms they should deal with their landlord; the tenants were to give so much and no more; and then, if the landlord proceeded to extremity and evicted the tenant who could pay, and who would pay if he were allowed, the National League stepped in and said that no one should take the farm. So long as the National League could prevent land-grabbing, so long would they be masters of the agrarian situation. There could be no doubt of that. Hon. Members below the Gangway knew that as well as he did as an Irish landlord. Therefore, every attempt was made by hon. Gentlemen opposite to intimidate the Irish people, and to prevent them from taking an evicted farm; and, in fact, to prevent land from becoming a marketable commodity. Now, it gave him the greatest satisfaction in reading the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite —and he always read them with great attention and with great profit—it gave him the greatest satisfaction to see how persistently they denounced land-grabbing. They would not denounce land-grabbing unless they very well knew that the Irish tenants were inclined to come to terms. They would not hold up the land-grabber to public execration and denounce him as they did unless they knew, in fact, that the moment that the law was made supreme in Ireland the tenant would become just as amenable to it as any other subject of the Queen. He desired to point out what had been said on that subject by leaders of Irish opinion opposite. In August last year the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) went over to Dublin and made a speech which was reported in *The Freeman's Journal.* He (Colonel Saunderson) always quoted from *The Freeman's Journal* or *United Ireland.* In that speech the hon. Member held up to public execration those Irishmen who had ventured at any time to run counter to the law of the National League. That was the key of the whole question. If they could at once break down and destroy that organization which now terrorized the Irish people, the Irish people would become amenable to the law, and would rejoice in the concessions which had been made. The hon. Member for East Mayo said—

> "They say we have practised an insidious form of intimidation. I want to say plainly that I intend to practise the same form of intimidation in spite of all proclamations or persecutions they can enforce. If the operations of the League in the past can be correctly described by intimidation, then, I say, I intend to practise them and to preach them."

Then the hon. Member went on to say —and he (Colonel Saunderson) asked the House to mark these words, because, in one moment, he would show conclusively how they had acted in Ireland—

> "Now, let me say this—that if there be a man in Ireland—and I do not believe there is— base enough to back down and turn his back on the fight now that coercion has been passed, I pledge myself, in the face of this meeting, that I will denounce him from public platforms by name"—

they all know what denouncing a man from a public platform meant in Ireland—

> "and I pledge myself to the Government that, let that man be whom he may, his life will not be a happy one either in Ireland or across the sea."

They intended to dog his steps to the uttermost parts of the earth. They all knew what that denunciation meant; they dogged the steps of Carey.

"I know perfectly well," continued the hon. Member for East Mayo, "what I mean, and you know what I mean;"

and he (Colonel Saunderson) wished to show the House of Commons what the hon. Member did mean, and what was the result of what he said. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), in his speech of the previous day, made a candid admission to the House that the efforts of the Government to suppress the League were an absolute failure—that so far from suppressing those branches which the Government imagined had been suppressed, they were in full force, and carried on their accustomed work, and were duly reported in certain organs of the Press. That especially referred to two counties—the counties of Kerry and Clare—where the National League was suppressed. He thought it would be of interest to the House to learn what a branch of the National League in Kerry had done; how it carried on its work, and what had been its effect. The House would remember that land-grabbing at all cost, even at the cost of blood, was not to be permitted. He would like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), whom he was happy to see in his place, to some prophetic words which he had used in bygone days. The right hon. Gentleman said—

"What is meant by Boycotting? In the first place, it is combined intimidation; in the second place, it is combined intimidation made use of for the purpose of destroying the private liberties of choice by fear of ruin and starvation; in the third place, that being what Boycotting is in itself, we must look to this—that the creed of Boycotting, like every other creed, requires a sanction, and that the sanction of Boycotting—that which stands in the rear of Boycotting, and by which alone Boycotting can be made thoroughly effective—is the murder which is not denounced."

He would show the House that the words of the right hon. Gentleman, founded upon a knowledge which he had gained in the administration of Ireland, were absolutely justified by the facts which had since occurred. There was a man who had inherited, with his brother, a farm in Kerry. One of the brothers died and left his half of the farm to a son—Edmond Fitzmaurice—who was in Australia. A neighbour tried to get possession of the land; but one of the brothers—James Fitzmaurice—resisted the attempt, and spent a large sum in law costs defending his brother's rights. The brother Edmond came back from Australia, and he proved to be insolvent; he could not or he would not pay. At any rate, the landlord of the estate evicted both tenants, and put back in possession of the farm the elder brother. The National League interfered; it would not allow the two brothers to come to terms; and so the elder brother remained in possession of the farm. And now he would show, in passing, how the National League worked. There was a bog on this estate as to which there was a great deal of contention. The National League interfered, and the Lixnaw branch passed resolutions condemning any man who would venture to take any of it. But at last there was a meeting of the Lixnaw branch of the League, and this was the result—

"Mr. Michael J. Quilter read the report of last meeting, as published in *The Kerry Weekly Reporter*, and wished it to be distinctly understood that the first resolution had reference only to a particular portion of the Ahabeg bog—namely, the part adjoining Muckenagh and Clounlougher, and commonly known as the Lower Bog. Exclusive of this, there is an extensive area of bog in Ahabeg, and the League is not opposed to persons purchasing turbary there as usual. The public, therefore, will not suffer the slightest inconvenience from compliance with the resolution in reference to the portion above specified."

Therefore, in this country, which was supposed to be a civilized community, there was an organization which arrogated to itself the right of punishing or not punishing men who should freely deal in the matter of bog. They were not to be inconvenienced in any way—that was to say, they were not to be murdered. Three days after this the following notice appeared in order to emphasize the decision of the branch. The notice was posted up, and ran as follows:—

"Take notice that if any person takes bog at Ahabeg (S. M. Hussey's), near Fitzmaurice's evicted farm, he will be made to feel the weight of the invincible arm of Captain Moonlight."

The National League then proceeded to deal with this unhappy Fitzmaurice. A meeting was held on the 23rd of January last year, the Rev. P. Nolan, P.P., supposed to be a Christian clergyman, in the chair, and it was resolved—

"That as James Fitzmaurice acted the part of special constable to S. M. Hussey at Ahabeg on the 14th inst., we consider that his neighbours should hold no further intercourse with him."

That was to say, he was Boycotted. But that was not enough. Another meeting of the same branch was held on June 12 last year, and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

> "Resolved,—That as James Fitzmaurice, of Ahabeg, still persists in allowing his cattle to graze on the farm from which his brother Edmond was recently evicted, and refuses to give any explanation to the League in extenuation of his conduct, we hereby call on the public to mark him as a land-grabber of the most inhuman type."

What did the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir George Trevelyan) say to that? Now, he (Colonel Saunderson) came almost to the final episode which illustrated the action of the National League in Kerry and elsewhere, and which the right hon. Gentleman said was as active now as ever it was. An article appeared in *The Kerry Sentinel* of October 25, 1887, signed "E. Harrington." The hon. Member, whom he was glad to see opposite, signed his name to the article, and stated the reason why he adopted that unusual course—a very honourable proceeding on his part. The hon. Member said—

> "A land-grabber and a rack-renter are deservedly as odious at one side of the barony bounds as at the other. Samuel Murray Hussey, for instance, is no lovelier in Annascaul than he is in Ahabeg."

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he desired to explain that the article he had signed referred to the action of Mr. Hussey in going upon the estate in question, accompanied by the Sheriff, with purchase agreements in one hand and notices to quit in the other; and the other article referred to the action of Mr. Hussey in purchasing the estate after the tenants had combined to offer £65,000 for it, and were prevented from offering £75,000 for it. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman would read the whole article from the beginning to the end he was prepared to stand by every word of it.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON remarked, that, of course, it was not for him to impute motives to any man. He was only reading what the hon. Member wrote.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: You did impute motives. Read the whole article.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said, the hon. Member opposite might read the whole article if he wished to do so. What he himself wished to point out, what he had a right to point out, and what he would point out, was that this article appeared in *The Kerry Sentinel* three days after the resolution which condemned this unhappy man to death had appeared in that journal.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON said, that with regard to that resolution, he might say that the article was written and was signed in London at a time when he could not have seen the issue of this paper in which the resolution appeared. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He was as truthful as any man in that House; he had condemned the crime referred to as heartily as any one; he had done everything to denounce it; and he now repudiated the accusation of the hon. and gallant Member.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said, that he had made no imputation whatever upon the hon. Member.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Read the whole article.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said, he was stating what had taken place. An innocent man had been murdered. The resolution was passed by a branch of the National League on the 23rd of October, and the article he had quoted was written on the 25th of that month. Of course, he accepted the statement of the hon. Member, that he had not seen the resolution when he wrote that article; but the fact of the article appearing so soon after the publication of the resolution was a very unhappy coincidence. He wished to call the attention of the House to the terms of the resolution, as it was an illustration of the nature and character of the organization which the Government was bound to crush and destroy. The terms of the resolution were—

> "We again call upon the public to mark, by every Constitutional means, their disapproval of the conduct of James Fitzmaurice, who has been so base and inhuman as to grab his brother's land."

"Every Constitutional means!" What were those means? The effect of that resolution, which professed to urge the adoption of Constitutional means, was to condemn the man referred to to death. What was the result? Not very long afterwards—only last month—the man was done to death—was cruelly murdered—by the acolytes who carry out the law of this organization, and who understand too well the meaning of this resolution. While this unfortunate man was travelling along the road with his daughter he was murdered in the most cruel and shameful manner. And what was the crime which he had committed, for which he was so punished? He was a land-grabber. Was it to be supposed that that House and that this country would sanction the existence of an organization which took upon itself to decree a man to death for doing that which he had a perfectly legal right to do? He had just as much right to protection as the highest in the land. And it was because Her Majesty's Government were tackling this organization, and meant to destroy it, that they were attacked by those who were opposed to the true interests of their country, and to the integrity of the Empire. They deserved the support of every man who had at heart the safety of the Empire. He desired to say a word about the policy which had been pursued by the Colleagues of hon. Members below the Gangway. He was happy to say that the efforts of those whose policy it was to defeat the law in Ireland had not been successful; but a new morality had been propounded, principally by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt)—namely, that if the law was not liked, or pressed heavily, or was supposed to be unjust, a man had a right to break it. The right hon. Gentleman, in support of that proposition, had instanced the case of Hampden and the celebrated Boston tea case, which was the cause of the American War. The right hon. Gentleman, and those who thought with him, in propounding these views, were making an addendum to the Commandments, and giving a new version of the Decalogue by making it read—"Thou shalt not steal, except from a landlord." That was the policy of the new Party, which was now led by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). It was a very serious thing that English Gentlemen, who had occupied high positions in the State, were desirous of deliberately handing over the Irish people to those who disobeyed the law of the land. The success of the Separatist Party depended upon the fulfilment of two prophecies. They had two prophets. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) had prophesied that England could never be master of her own Parliament as long as Irish Members remained within its walls. Hon. Members below the Gangway ought to remember this—that if they acted throughout this Session with the courtesy and decorum which had distinguished their conduct at its beginning, they would ruin the reputation, as a prophet, of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman still held that view; but he had to deal with a far grimmer prophet, who had prophesied that the law could not be maintained in Ireland because it was dressed in a foreign garb. If that prophecy could be fulfilled—if it could be shown that that House was incapable of maintaining law and order in Ireland, he admitted that there was no other way out of the difficulty than by surrendering all authority in Ireland to the National League, which was able successfully to oppose the administration of the law. No effort had been spared to render it hard and difficult, and even impossible, for Her Majesty's Government to maintain law and order in that country. Hon. Members below the Gangway belonged to a nationality that had never been law-abiding, and never would be. He recognized the qualities of the nationality to which those hon. Members belonged; and any statesman who wished to settle this question must remember that an Irishman was not a man who naturally sympathized with law of any kind. He recognized the virtues of his countrymen; but this was one of their defects, which constituted the chief difficulty of governing the race to which he belonged. Her Majesty's Government had, however, to confront not only Irishmen, but the phalanx of 191 Scotch, English, and Welsh Members, which was led by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), who was supporting a policy which, he (Colonel Saunderson) ventured to maintain, had never been adopted by any responsible statesman in the history of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had taught them what his policy meant in his celebrated speech at Nottingham. That speech was not altogether fortunate. It appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman had embarked in the trade of romancing. This was very easy. A man had only to visit a country he intended to romance about, and on his return he had the enormous advantage of being able to say—"Oh, I have been there; and you have not.' The right hon. Gentleman had himself been made one of the first victims of successful romance by the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch (Mr. J. Stuart), who was not only a politician, but a Professor. He (Colonel Saunderson) did not know of what the hon. Member was a Professor; but he hoped it was not of any of the exact sciences. He rather hoped that the hon. Member was a Professor of some of those sciences which dealt with the imagination. The hon. Member came over fresh from Ireland and whispered into the ears of the right hon. Gentleman a story which had a foundation only in his fervid and vivid imagination, and which the right hon. Gentleman immediately seized the opportunity to repeat. He should not allude to the matter further, because the story had been withdrawn after the right hon. Gentleman received a lawyer's letter. The right hon. Gentleman, in the same speech, had also coined a motto and a watchword for his Party, and had inscribed upon the banner under which his Party were to march the words—"Remember Mitchelstown." The motto had not been very successful. "Remember Mitchelstown" simply meant—"Down with the police." He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that if "Remember Mitchelstown" appeared on one side of the banner, on the reverse should be inscribed the words—"Remember Dopping." The right hon. Gentleman went on to use language which he (Colonel Saunderson) hoped he had since regretted. In that speech at Nottingham the right hon. Gentleman, in trying to undermine the authority of the Government and the authority of the police, went on to take away their character, and to describe as a man worthy of universal execration a policeman who died bravely in the performance of his duty. The right hon. Gentleman, it was true, guarded himself in his denunciation. He said—

> "A sergeant of the name of Whelehan was wickedly and deplorably murdered."

And then he went on to say—

> "Well, that was in consequence of a raid, as it was called, made on the house of an obnoxious person—a person who was obnoxious, I believe, without crime."

He guarded himself even there—"I believe without crime." Proceeding, he said—

> "That raid was a crime, a gross crime, and it ended, whether designedly or not, by bloodshed, which by law, I apprehend, would be justly termed murder."

Of course, it would. The right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "How was that raid brought about? It was brought about by consultation, and who were the parties that consulted, and, if I may say it, so got up the raid?"

And then the right hon. Gentleman went on to show that this very Whelehan was the man who had conspired to get up this raid. [*Cries of* "Quote!"]

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Read my words.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said, he had every intention to quote, and he maintained that the words of the right hon. Gentleman absolutely bore out what he had said. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Among them was a man paid and employed by the police, and known to be, from his own confession, of the worst character."

With that he quite agreed. He went on to say—

> "The parties charged have no opportunity of speaking for themselves; but what appears, according to the facts before us, is that this informer was for a long period known as a man of worthless and base character—that he was paid by the police two sums of money immediately before the meeting at which the raid was arranged, and that he went to the meeting."

There, he thought, the right hon. Gentleman was misinformed. The meeting at the quarry, at which the raid was arranged, was not a meeting got up by a paid agent of the police, but it was a meeting at which this informer was, and like the ruffian he was, and like a scoundrel of the lowest type as he was, he sold his information. He (Colonel Saunderson) thought the right hon. Gentleman, when he was Prime Minister, must have had some experience in buying information with regard to his present Colleagues. Then the right hon. Gentleman described the death of Sergeant Whelehan, and, although he had condemned the act of killing

Whelehan, proceeded to give an instance in the last century of men who had been in a similar manner, as he said, induced to commit a capital offence. He stated that after they had received a very lenient punishment, the people took their punishment into their own hands, thereby instituting a comparison—an exact comparison—between this Sergeant Whelehan, who had died like a brave man in the execution of his duty, and these dastardly ruffians in the last century.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I never mentioned Sergeant Whelehan in connection with the payment of money.

Colonel SAUNDERSON said, he never meant to state that the right hon. Gentleman did mention Sergeant Whelehan——

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes; you did.

Colonel SAUNDERSON said, the right hon. Gentleman evidently meant to convey that Sergeant Whelehan was a means of carrying into effect an outrage for which money had been paid. Whether Sergeant Whelehan had paid——

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I did not mention it. Quote my words.

Colonel SAUNDERSON said, he never meant to insinuate that the right hon. Gentleman said that Whelehan was the man who paid the money; but what he said was that the right hon. Gentleman, in his Nottingham speech, held up Whelehan to public execration as the man who carried out a put-up job. What did the right hon. Gentleman mean at all, he (Colonel Saunderson) wondered? What did he mean by instituting this comparison? He went on to say—

> "A body of men entered into a conspiracy to induce two other men to commit a capital crime. The two men were executed for the crime. It afterwards became known that they had been induced to commit it by these four men, who conspired together for the purpose. These four men were tried and sentenced to be put into the pillory for the conspiracy. That was the sentence of the Judge and the Court upon them; but the sentence of the people was a good deal stronger than the law as administered by the Judge and the Court. I am not going to justify what was done. I am only going to show what materials we are dealing with, and what sort of view the people of England are likely to take upon matters of that kind; for the act of those men was, to my mind, very closely analogous to the action of the police in this instance. The police substantially conspired—"

he (Colonel Saunderson) supposed that included Whelehan—

> "after the manner of these four men, and in their case the public indignation burst out upon them. One was actually put to death by the people, and another was beaten and maltreated within an inch of his life."

How about this indication of the method of dealing with the police in Ireland? According to the right hon. Gentleman, the police in Ireland, if treated in a similar manner, would be killed or beaten within an inch of their lives. Then the right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "Do not suppose I justify this, but I am seeking to point out what might happen when such a case called forth such a manifestation, not among criminals, but, apparently, a fair average portion of the population in England."

So that if the Irish people, naturally understanding the obvious meaning of these words—whatever the real meaning might have been; no one ever knew the real meaning of the right hon. Gentleman—if the Irish people, a quick-witted, hot-headed people, who habitually acted in these matters without very much thought, acted on the broad hint which was naturally conveyed in this language, and did wreak their vengeance on the police, they would be acting, according to the right hon. Gentleman, not as criminals, but as respectable members of the population. He had already detained the House far too long; but, before he sat down, he wished to draw attention to one more point. The policy of Her Majesty's Government was opposed because, it was said, free speech did not exist in Ireland. He wondered whether right hon. Gentlemen opposite ever read *United Ireland*. Did they ever read the speeches made by hon. Gentlemen who sat below the Gangway? He read *United Ireland*, and he must say that the way in which they had ransacked the dictionary for words and phrases of vituperation to apply to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland did great credit to their ingenuity. They appeared to have got at last to the end of their tether, for they had now adopted two expressions which he had never before heard as applied to any statesman, or, indeed, to a Member of the House of Commons. They called the right hon. Gentleman "Ventriloquist Balfour" and "Sleuth Tiger." Why, freedom of speech, so long as it was not employed to hound on the Irish people to break the law of the land, was absolute. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway knew perfectly well that they could devote all their eloquence and all their ingenuity of research, for which they were so celebrated, to abusing and holding up to execration the present Government and in maintaining their own political opinions. But now they devoted all their eloquence, not to the advocacy of the national aspirations of the people, but to abusing the Government, and especially the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and, therefore, so far as the charge of freedom of speech having been taken away was concerned, it fell to the ground. Then the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) had told them, or had implied, that there were signs of a union of hearts. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) went to Ireland recently, and had a very pleasant time. He wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman would really tell the House that he was of opinion that the Irish were now a loyal people. He was very much struck by an utterance of the Mayor of Waterford, who waited upon the right hon. Gentleman to present him with an address. In his speech that gentleman said—"We are born rebels, and we will always remain rebels." A union of hearts! Well, he (Colonel Saunderson) had seen it sometimes. He saw it the other day. A very remarkable circumstance occurred which indicated that there was a union of hearts—a union which in former times he should never have conceived possible. A Club was established in South Tipperary, and, if he remembered rightly, the members chose the names of two distinguished men as Patron Saints—they called the Club "The Tanner-Gladstone Athletic Club." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) appealed to the speeches made in the House, and said that they could judge by those speeches that a great change had taken place. They could not judge by speeches made in the House of Commons. To find the union of hearts let them go beyond the Atlantic. Did hon. Members who spoke in the House of Commons with great caution and care observe the same language when they appealed to the passions of their countrymen? He would take one case. The hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was remarkable for the able speeches he made in the House on subjects which he thoroughly understood, and he was always listened to in the House with the respect which his abilities deserved. But the hon. Member was the last man they would imagine would be willing, if necessity arose, to wage open war with the British Empire; and yet when the hon. Gentleman went over to America the other day, just at the time when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was saying at Nottingham that his Irish allies were conspicuous for their moderation, he made a very remarkable speech, and a quotation from it was the last quotation he (Colonel Saunderson) would make. He wished to quote from the speech of the hon. Gentleman in order to show that he did not believe that the union of hearts had as yet been completed. Speaking at New Jersey on the 16th of October, 1887, the hon. Member said—

> "I thank the purely American portion of the audience; because for the rest, or those who, like myself, have the blood of the Irish race in their veins, it is a matter of course, almost, that they should be here: and it is almost a matter of course that my countrymen, whom I now see before me in varied uniforms below—bearing arms in a manner which I am not accustomed to see in Ireland—it is natural that they should be here. Their martial ardour is the same as it has been in all ages, and they are able to manifest the feeling that is deep in their souls, that if only they had the chance to rescue Ireland from the present position, every man of them would be ready to serve. I know that there are within the United States emissaries of the British Government anxious to earn, or prepared to earn, the pay which is drawn from the Secret Service Fund of the Government. If such a man is here, I invite him to report that here in public I state what I know to be a fact—that in whatever war Great Britain may be involved, that whatever Power she may have to struggle with, that Power can count upon 100,000 Irish arms to fight under her flag against Great Britain."

And the hon. Member went on to point out that there was a remarkable peculiarity about these men, and that was that they intended to fight without pay.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): May I ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman to be good enough to keep to the quotation.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had not spoken in the debate as yet; and, therefore, he (Colonel Saunderson) would leave it to him to re-deliver the speech in the House of Commons if he thought fit. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He thought his speech had been quite long enough; and, if he were to quote all the speeches of all hon. Gentlemen whom he might quote, his speech would occupy many more hours. What was the position of the Government now? And with this point he intended to conclude. They were confronted by a Party who had done for themselves the worst thing that any Party could do—they had covered themselves with ridicule. No Party could survive ridicule. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) went over to Ireland and told his followers that in former times the Irish people were not afraid when the shadow of the gallows fell across their path, and asked whether they would now be afraid of the plank bed. It appeared to him (Colonel Saunderson) that they were very much afraid of prison clothes. As a result of this agitation, people had learned how any man could become an Irish martyr. All a man had to do was to be put in gaol, and to refuse to wear the prison clothes; or he had to wear the prison clothes, and then refuse to take them off. No course had ever yet succeeded which had been founded on the contempt and the ridicule of mankind; and he believed for this reason that the cause of hon. Gentlemen opposite was doomed to failure. The hopes of the Government's opponents were entirely founded on the possibility of the disruption of the Unionist Party. Majorities equally great had faded away; but no majority of the present kind had ever yet been seen in the House of Commons. Former majorities were Party majorities. Party majorities were liable to disruption and to failure; but the majority in that House was not a Party majority—it was a patriotic majority. The Party opposite very nearly succeeded in carrying their policy; but they failed because they found themselves confronted by men who loved their country more than their Party, and who loved the allegiance they owed to the State more than the allegiance they owed to a Leader. The Party opposite was bound to fail in the future for that reason; and in looking forward—as he now looked forward—to a resolute Government in Ireland, he saw the only foundation that could be made, and that foundation was respect for law and order; and upon that foundation he trusted and prayed he might live to see his country happy and contented.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that the speech which they had just listened to was a very important one, because the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Saunderson) spoke, not only in his individual capacity as a Member of the House, but also as the head of an important Party. No doubt, most Members had seen that the previous day the hon. and gallant Gentleman was elected Sessional Chairman of what might be called a new Fourth Party on that (the Ministerial) side of the House. That Party was supposed to be composed of Gentlemen from Ulster; but they could not get two good enough men to act as Whips without getting an English Member—the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald)—to act as one of their Whips. He did not know what were the intentions of this Party; but he heard with surprise the peroration of the hon. and gallant Gentleman when he said that the Unionist Party would never be divided, and that they were the really patriotic Party. If so, why had the hon. and gallant Gentleman moved his place to below the Gangway and put himself at the head of a separate Party or "Cave" on the Conservative side of the House? For his own part, he (Mr. Labouchere) could only see one reason, and that was that the hon. and gallant Gentleman represented the landlords of Ireland, who were afraid that the Conservative Party would not give sufficient care to their interests. The object in view in forming this Cave was to put pressure on the Government in order to induce them to bring in some sort of a Land Purchase Bill, or to rob in some way the British Empire for the sake of that pack of drones which existed in Ireland still. He wondered the hon. and gallant Gentleman did not consider it was an ill bird that fouled its own nest. Although the hon. and gallant Gentleman was an Irishman, yet he was never tired of describing the majority of his countrymen as murderers and scoundrels. [Colonel SAUNDERSON: Never!] Surely the hon. and gallant Gentleman could find some Englishman to do his dirty work for him? What would he have thought of an Englishman who should go to Ireland and describe the majority of his own fellow-countrymen in that way? Why, English people would despise him, and he was not surprised that Irish Gentlemen utterly despised the hon. and gallant Member when he made such statements in this House.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON explained that he had never said anything of the kind. He said it was the minority, not the majority.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman would be unable to convince that side of the House on that point. Two and two made four, and three was more than two. He should have thought that even a Conservative intellect would admit that. The hon. and gallant Member had read a number of extracts from speeches showing that the Leaders of the Opposition had changed their minds in reference to their political opinions. He (Mr. Labouchere) honoured them for it. It was the business of a statesman, when he found he had pursued a course in governing his country which proved a failure, to change his mind. Well, let it be admitted, once for all, the fact was recognized, and so waste no more time upon the matter. But he was surprised at the charge from the hon. and gallant Gentleman. When he (Mr. Labouchere) first sat in that House as a Radical the hon. and gallant Member sat near him. He sat there as a Radical, and now he complained that it was utterly monstrous for politicians to change their minds. With regard to the charges brought by the hon. and gallant Gentleman against the Land League, he (Mr. Labouchere) would refer to the murder of Fitzmaurice in Kerry. The hon. and gallant Gentleman accused the Land League of being responsible for that murder. An anonymous proclamation was put out; but was the League to be held responsible for every anonymous proclamation that was put out in Ireland? Then a branch of the League passed a resolution to the effect that they desired that the disapprobation felt against Fitzmaurice for having taken an evicted farm should be shown by Constitutional means. The hon. and gallant Gentleman asserted that this was an incitement; but it appeared to him (Mr. Labouchere) to be just the reverse. Was the hon. and gallant Gentleman not aware of what they all knew, that the National League was less powerful in Clare and Kerry than in any other counties in Ireland? These counties had been honeycombed by secret societies; but the League had done its best to prevent murder and outrage from taking place by those societies? It was, however, in these counties that the Government suppressed the League, which stood between the landlords and the authors of outrage. Was it thought that there were no murders in Clare and Kerry before the League existed? If there were, why on earth should any that occurred since be put down to the League? No matter what crime had occurred in Ireland, the hon. and gallant Gentleman read a series of garbled extracts, and said the League was responsible for everything. Declaring that the aim of the Irish was to undermine the authority of the Crown, the hon. and gallant Gentleman was asked for quotations, and then he said he had them, but he would not read them, and would take them for granted. That was an old trick of his, and it was a characteristic one; he was always taking things for granted, which was what his opponents would not do. Judging from his speech, the hon. and gallant Gentleman might have been expected to support the Amendment rather than the Address, because he did not seem to think that coercion had succeeded. But, of course, no Ministry would ever come before Parliament and say that the policy which they had initiated had been unsatisfactory. The hon. and gallant Member wanted more coercion, however; but he was not likely to get it, for the Government were not absolute idiots—he would grant them that—and they must know that coercion as they practised it would not be allowed to last for ever. During the Recess there had been a conspiracy on the part of the Press to delude the English public with regard to Ireland. The papers said everything was going on smoothly; evictions would quickly cease, and the Government would have the people believe that if only the Tories remained in power a little longer the Irish would give up Home Rule, and would probably raise a statue to the eminent uncle and nephew who had originated the new policy. But he (Mr. Labouchere) asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the position in Ireland was what Marshal Radetzky said the position of Austria was in Italy; he said the Austrian Empire ceased beyond his camp, and so in Ireland the power of the Government ceased beyond the powers exercised by the Courts of the Resident Magistrates and the localities occupied by the police. The Government were quite right to denounce the alliance between the English and the Irish democracies, for it had only to continue for Home Rule to be certainly granted to Ireland. The Irish people would not give up Home Rule as long as the English Liberal Party were united with them; and it could be carried only by the continued alliance of the democracies of the two countries. The Amendment stated that the action of the Government had been harsh, partial, and mischievous. No one could have studied what had taken place during the Recess without seeing that the Act had not only been so applied, but that it had been perverted to uses that had not been intended. The Government seemed to have come to the conclusion that any attack upon the Executive or upon the Tory Party was an attack upon the very principles of government, and they had sought to put down all Constitutional opposition and all political agitation against the ruling powers in Ireland. The difficulty in bringing this home to the English people really arose from the overabundance of the material; while, whenever the action of the Government was called in question, the Chief Secretary confined himself, in reply, to vague generalities and clap-trap about law and order, the sort of thing that Caiaphas and Pilate would have said if they had been accused of their crimes; they would have said they were the instruments of law and order, and if there had been a Press in Jerusalem the organs of the Pharisees, and Sadducees, of the moneyed classes and the publicans, would have said that they represented the rich and the intellectual, with whom mere miserable artizans and the scum of the population were not to be compared. With regard to the Mitchelstown affray, the last Session came to an end without the possibility of bringing home to the right hon. Gentleman what had really occurred. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had said, "Remember Mitchelstown!" The Chief Secretary could do nothing, or was afraid to do anything, with the right hon. Gentleman; but when the words were repeated by a little boy in Ireland he clapped him into prison. The Chief Secretary had asked—"Where is the enthusiastic telegraphist who said, 'Remember Mitchelstown?'" There he sat (pointing to the right hon. Gentleman), and he would be able to defend that advice. [Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] These Mitchelstown proceedings took place, not under the Coercion Act, but under the Common Law, and that showed what went on in Ireland; the Government commenced in violation of the law, culminated in murder, and instead of bringing the offenders to a fair trial, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and his Friends had done everything they could to shield them from the consequences of their acts. Of the events at Mitchelstown the Chief Secretary gave a version in that House. It is so long, and he did not see exactly how much to give. He had therefore referred to it thus, and that account, received from the instrument of his policy, was absolutely and entirely incorrect.—(See 3 *Hansard*, [321] 230-1-2.)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), interposing, said, in his recollection his impression was that his statement had consisted of quotations from *The Freeman's Journal.*

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he had yesterday referred to *The Times'* report, which did not contain any mention of *The Freeman's Journal.* What the Chief Secretary had stated in the House about the matter was absolutely incorrect. He had always thought that the right hon. Gentleman would be especially careful in matters of evidence, for, as a philosopher, he was his (Mr. Labouchere's) favourite philosopher. He had sat at the feet of that Gamaliel. He had read his *Defence* of *Philosophic Doubt* until he almost doubted of his own existence. Yet when the right hon. Gentleman became Irish Chief Secretary he forgot all his philosophy. The reason was that there were exigencies required of an Irish Secretary which were not to be found in the calm fields of philosophy. It was a melancholy thing for a philosopher to be plunged by the exigencies of his position into matters like this—to have vile instruments to carry out his orders, and to believe them, or rather to pretend to believe them. The Government had placed Mitchelstown in the charge of Captain Seagrave, who had been appointed by a Tory Government a year previously a Resident Magistrate in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had pledged himself in that House that no Resident Magistrate should adjudicate under the Crimes Act who had not satisfied the Lord Chancellor of his legal knowledge. It was well known that Captain Seagrave possessed no legal knowledge whatever, and yet he was every day adjudicating under the Crimes Act. The other gentleman in command at Mitchelstown was Mr. Brownrigg, a County Inspector. He had come across that gentleman, and he was bound to say that he was one of the most outrageous ruffians he had met with in his life, and that, whether with excitement or with wine, he had the manner of being intoxicated. Soon after the commencement of the meeting in the market place, a reporter was seen, wedged in with 16 policemen, to approach within a few yards of the wagonette in which were the speakers. He invited the Chief Secretary to inform the House under what law the Government claimed the right of forcing a reporter through a crowded meeting. He admitted that the police might claim to occupy positions in a crowd in order to maintain order; but there was no right to push the people aside in order to put a reporter in their place. He would admit for a moment that the Government had the right to force the reporter in; but he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that in September, 1880, an Order was issued to the following effect—that in cases where Constabulary shorthand reporters attended meetings permission should be asked of the chairman. Why was that Order so distasteful to the right hon. Gentleman? It was because of his arbitrary instincts. The right hon. Gentleman wished to pose in Ireland as a firm man, and did not care sixpence whether people were killed or not. The right hon. Gentleman went in for maintaining the divine right of policemen in Ireland. They had heard a great deal about the bravery of these police; but they were only brave when they had bayonets and batons in their hands. He (Mr. Labouchere) distinctly accused the Government of having violated the law by having created a disturbance in their endeavour to force a reporter through the crowd, and afterwards of making a gross and unprovoked attack upon the people in trying to do what District Inspector Irwin had said it was impossible they could do—namely, effect an entry into the meeting. Was it then surprising that the people should defend themselves? He contended that if a man was wrongfully attacked by a policeman he was justified in defending himself and in knocking the policeman down if he could. Eventually the police ran away, and of course a few stones were thrown after them. It was only natural that that should be so. An attempt was made by the police at the inquest to show that they fired in order to protect their comrades who were returning to the barracks. But it was proved that Sergeant Leahy, the only one of the police who was at first left outside, had returned to the barracks before the firing began. Then, one of the policemen who was said to be injured admitted that the mark disappeared from his face in a week. Only one of them, Sergeant Leahy, was at all seriously injured. The police fell out at the inquest, and contradicted themselves with that wonderful readiness which persons of the character that these men had been shown to possess could do when they wanted to shift responsibility of their actions on others. Their animus was shown by the answers of the men, who stated that they deliberately fired at individual persons, and tried to kill. He did not think that in any case that had ever been investigated a soldier had stated he had aimed and hoped to kill. The hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. Timothy Harrington) had been accused of having used strong and abusive language to the witnesses. Well, there could be no doubt that he did use strong language; but it was equally true that the language addressed to him by the witnesses was outrageous. Sergeant Ryder said—"You know the side the murderers were on, you and your colleagues."

He (Mr. Labouchere) would like to know what would be thought in London if such language was addressed to his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) when he was defending the persons accused in connection with the riot at Trafalgar Square? A District Inspector who had been 44 years in the force, after listening to the evidence given by the police and brought forward by the Government, was driven to say that they were nothing but a pack of perjurers. With reference to the action of County Inspector Brownrigg in inducing the unfortunate men under him to swear that he had not given them the order to fire, Irwin need not have dreaded responsibility if he had remembered the good friend he had in the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who said—"Let them commit what they like, let them commit murder, let them perjure themselves, let them swear black is white, let them get up evidence in their own barracks, and let them produce those perjurers." The right hon. Gentleman would say — "They are right. I applaud them; if they only kill a sufficient number of men, I will give them some mark of my favour." He (Mr. Labouchere) would ask whether Irwin was still in the police force? For Irwin, who was second in command, had brought a distinct charge against County Inspector Brownrigg of endeavouring, by means of perjury, to alter the evidence to be given before the Court. Was Irwin still in the force? He thought it very possible that he was. If such things had taken place in England, the people would have insisted, as in the case of Endacott, that an investigation should be held to discover the guilty man; and either District Inspector Irwin or County Inspector Brownrigg would have been dismissed. He accused the police, when they went back to their barracks, of having deliberately fired with the intention of killing, for it should be remembered that the plea for the firing was that the barracks was attacked, and that the police fired only at those who were throwing stones. The facts, however, were that an old man and a boy were killed 129 feet from the barracks, and a carman, who it was admitted had nothing to do with the stone-throwing, was shot 297 feet, or 99 yards, from the barracks. If the right hon. Gentleman had ever played at cricket, he must know that it was impossible to throw even a cricket ball 100 yards. For his own part, he (Mr. Labouchere) would be satisfied to stand at a distance of 100 yards, and allow the right hon. Gentleman to throw stones at him all day long. District Inspector Irwin swore that he particularly ordered the police not to fire at a house opposite the barracks, as there were women and children at the windows; but the marks afterwards found on the walls showed that the police actually did fire at the house. With regard to the breaking of the windows of the barracks, how many panes had been broken by stones as a matter of fact? Three only. He asserted, further, that at the time this took place there was no attack being made on the barracks, and that it was childish and ridiculous to say that any reasonable person could have dreaded that they would have been taken by assault, or that the police were in any sort of danger of their lives. No doubt, some men had followed the police when they retired; but they had been called back, and perhaps a few boys had thrown some stones, but no assault had been made upon the barracks; and it was in a state of panic and desire for vengeance that the police had fired out of the windows. His hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) said that the police batoned men who were cowering on the ground, and one of them was only prevented by an officer from thrusting his sword-bayonet through a man. Then came the inquest at Mitchelstown, and a verdict of murder was brought in against Brownrigg and five policemen. The Government had done their best to quash it by legal chicanery. One ground was that jurors had conversed with others during the trial. For his own part, he doubted whether in London a single Coroner's inquest took place without this happening, such inquests being held in the most loose and ramshackle fashion. Other grounds were that the Coroner and his clerk were with the jury when they retired, and that the Coroner had not conducted himself impartially. That was a matter of opinion, and for his own part, he thought that the Coroner had acted with impartiality. Then it was said that Mr. Harrington had abused some of the witnesses, and that 12 of the jurors were Nationlists, so that because "Peter the Packer" was not allowed to come down to Mitchelstown and pack the jury, the whole proceedings were quashed. Another ground alleged for setting aside the verdict was that no sworn officer was in charge of the jury when they retired; but, as a matter of fact, the Coroner said that he had put the jury in charge of Head Constable Sullivan. Sullivan had seen the jury to their room, but had not remained there, having got certain directions from his officer. It was evident that this had been done, because the police, expecting a verdict against them, wanted an opportunity of quashing it. As a matter of fact, the Court had set aside these grounds, and although they had quashed the verdict, had done so on the ground that the jury had not been properly summoned. He (Mr. Labouchere) had himself been present and had seen what took place, with two other hon. Members of that House; and they in that House openly accused the police of deliberate murder in this case. He wanted to know what would have happened if this had taken place in Trafalgar Square? Things were done in Ireland which would not be permitted here. In that country a man if he was on the side of the Government was protected from the consequences of his own acts. The criminal classes there were the Executive and their myrmidons and instruments. He had stated the facts of the case; he had nothing extenuated, naught set down in malice. He had taken the police evidence, and had rather toned it down than exaggerated it. To sum up the charges he made, he accused the police distinctly of having violated the law by sending a reporter to this meeting, and of having created a disturbance by forcing the reporter through the crowd in front of the speakers, instead of sending him round at the back; he accused the police afterwards of making a gross and unprovoked attack on the people, in endeavouring to do what Mr. Irwin had said it was impossible for them to do; and he accused the police when they had gone back to their barracks of having killed an old man, a boy, and a car-driver, who was admitted to have had nothing to do with the affair, when there was no attack upon the barracks going on. It was childish to assert either that the barracks could have been taken by assault, or that the police were in any danger at that time. He also accused the police of having tried when they were in the barracks to concoct evidence and to induce Mr. Irwin to withdraw a statement which was true, and to swear to the contrary in a Court of Law. Finally, he accused the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. J. Balfour) of not only condoning this conduct, but of making himself a party to it by the subsequent action he had taken. What he claimed was that a certain investigation should be made into the whole case, and he and his Friends said—they had a right to say—that until this investigation had taken place the Government, while attacking men every day and dragging them before Resident Magistrates for selling newspapers and so forth, were condoning and encouraging murder.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): I do not rise to take any part in the general discussion of the subject matter of the Debate on the Address on the particular Amendment before the House; but I ask the permission of the House to make some observations upon a reference made by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) respecting what is known as the "Dopping" incident. The hon. and gallant Member, in a manner which was almost, if not quite insulting, and which was certainly ungenerous, stated of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) that he had made an apology to Colonel Dopping, on which account he (Colonel Saunderson) would not dwell further on the incident, but that it was to be noted that such apology was made by my right hon. Friend after he had received a lawyer's letter, and not before. In other words the statement of the hon. and gallant Member was this—that my right hon. Friend, finding himself in a position in which he ought, as an honourable man, to make an explanation and apology, did so only under stress and threat of legal proceedings. As I am conversant from my own personal knowledge of the facts of the case, I think it right to state what those facts were. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, before any question of legal proceedings, consulted me in reference to this matter, and he stated that his strong impression was that he had not used with reference to his account of the Dopping incident, the word "loaded" in connection with the gun which Colonel Dopping is supposed to have carried, and he was also able to point to the fact, which had been corroborated by statements made to myself, that other persons present at the Nottingham meeting were of the opinion that that word had not been used. But I pointed out to my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian that in my judgment the use or non-use of the word "loaded" made no material difference in the matter, and that unquestionably the inference that might very fairly be drawn, and would, in my judgment, be naturally drawn from the context was that, whether the word "loaded" was or was not used, my right hon. Friend had intended to convey, or at least that the words were susceptible of conveying, and so it would be understood, that the gun was in fact loaded. In those circumstance I suggested to my right hon. Friend that the proper and honourable course for him to pursue was this—to omit altogether from the republication of his speech the passage, some statements in which were in question and disputed, and to append as the reason for not republishing in full what he had said at Nottingham, a statement that he should regret being a party to the publication of any statement affecting any man which was in any material respect impugned in fact. Upon my making that communication to my right hon. Friend, he at once said that if the view which I had presented was the correct one, which he was quite willing to assent to, he ought not to stop at merely the omission of a particular passage or at any explanatory or apologetic note. He said he thought he owed more to Colonel Dopping, and that if the impression which I thought naturally conveyed by the speech was one generally entertained, he thought he owed it to Colonel Dopping to address a personal explanation and apology to Colonel Dopping himself; and he did so express his intention of so communicating in that sense with Colonel Dopping, as I know, before there was any question or threat of a letter from the solicitor or any suggestion of any legal proceedings whatever. I think it is due to my right hon. Friend that this statement should be made by someone who knows the facts—and I know them myself—in answer to the ungenerous allusion of the hon. and gallant Member, and I thank the House for allowing me to make this explanation.

Mr. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) said, the Amendment before the House traversed the statement in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech that agrarian crime had diminished in Ireland altogether with the power of conspiracy and coercion. The Amendment traversed that statement, and declared that if there were an amelioration in the condition of the country it was owing to the remedial legislation of last Session, and that the repressive legislation, so far from tending to diminish crime, had done much to alienate the sympathies of Her Majesty's subjects, and that the administration of that oppressive legislation had been harsh, brutal, oppressive, cruel, and mischievous. He did not think the proposition in the Amendment was one at all difficult to make out. It had been pretty well made out in the arguments of the speakers who had preceded him in this debate, and, what was more, in the answer of the Government to those arguments. Whether the Government would change ground and make a different answer or not as the debate went on, he did not know; but he took it that the general lines of their answer had been indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden). Both these Gentlemen tried to make out their case by giving the House certain statistics; and he (Mr. Commins) had a few words to say with regard to those statistics. It was odd that these statistics should have been presented to the House and discredited, at the very moment they were presented, by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary who produced them. The right hon. Gentleman told them that he placed no reliance, or, at any rate, very little reliance, upon statistics. That was a feeling which was shared by both sides of the House, particularly with regard to statistics made up, as the Chief Secretary told them these were made up, by the tools of the Government in Ireland. The case that the right hon. Gentleman had made out from the statistics had been entirely discounted by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), who had told them that, so far from this repressive legislation bringing about a better state of things, little or no progress had been made in securing either obedience to the law or respect for it. If that were the fact, it was difficult to see what was the good of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary's statistics, and what value was to be placed upon his argument on the propositions stated in Her Majesty's Speech. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury admitted the whole case set up by the Amendment. But it was not enough that the case should be admitted by the First Lord of the Treasury. The country should be made aware of the fact, and should be told how it came to be a fact. He (Mr. Commins) must complain of these statistics which had been furnished. There were no statistics produced in the first instance; and it was only because of an observation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) that any were furnished at all. The House would have been left in the dark, and the statistics which have been produced—meagre as they were—would not have been given had they not been called for—he would not say by the taunts of the right hon. Gentleman, because he was not given to taunting anybody, but by his justifiable statement that it was odd that the Government should come into the House without a scrap of evidence in support of the necessity for the continuance of the Coercion Act. Well, as he (Mr. Commins) had said, he complained of these statistics. They afforded them no information. The House had experience of other Coercion Acts, and of what had been done by another Chief Secretary for Ireland—namely, the late Mr. Forster—who when he brought in his Coercion Act in 1881, and afterwards during its administration, always fairly and honestly produced statistics to the House to let them see what were the real facts and allegations by which he sustained his position. They were able to judge by the statistics furnished by Mr. Forster whether the things which were called "Agrarian offences" were agrarian offences or not. They were able to tell whether a certain crime ought to figure as one crime or as 400 crimes, but they were not able to make that distinction in the case of the statistics produced by the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary. Mr. Forster had always given them the names and the places in each case, and also the date of the occurrences. He had given particulars of every case he included in the statistics which he brought forward in justification of his administration, and in that way the House was enabled to form an adequate idea of the sort of things relied upon as outrages. It had transpired in the course of a debate that one "outrage" in the Government statistics was a case in which a man was detected nailing up a threatening letter to himself on his own door. If the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary gave them names and dates, how many cases he relied on would turn out to be fictitious offences such as this? It would be interesting to know how many of the "outrages" consisted of setting fire to furze bushes on the roadside, pushing the coping-stones off a wall, and things which would be considered of such an exceedingly trivial nature that one would not whip a small boy for them. Things of this kind used to figure in Mr. Forster's returns as outrages, and it would be interesting to know how many of the 373 offences, upon which the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary, relied now for the justification of the present procedure would turn out to be duplicate, triplicate, and quadruplicate offences committed at one and the same time. It would be interesting to know how many of the offences consisted of making wry faces at policemen—and they knew that offences of that kind were complained of, and that people had been punished for them—and the House would also like to know how many of the "outrages" were slanders such as that which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had fallen into inadvertently, and how many of the offences consisted of people shouting for joy because the hon. Member for North East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien) had come home from gaol, or because of their admiration of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. All these things came under the category of "offences" in Ireland. How many of these offences were included in the statistics mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary? In those statistics it was at present difficult to say under what head the offences would come, whether they would be classed under "unlawful assemblages," "rioting," or "inciting to conspiracy." If the right hon. Gentleman would only give them the names it might enable them to show that the offences were perfectly ridiculous, and that it was absurd to have special legislation to deal with them. This being the case the House was not assisted in any way, nor was the right hon. Gentleman's argument assisted in any way, by the Returns he had given, and the House was thrown back on the consideration of the accounts they saw in the public Press for forming their judgment on the state of Ireland, although those reports were sometimes incorrect and wild, and not always perfectly reliable. But before passing from the statistics he should like to know whether, in the list of crimes, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary included cases where there had been no convictions—such as the case of the Mitchelstown murder, and the murder of Hanlon by the police at Youghal? These might be given; but if the House were furnished with the names and dates of the cases the state of things would be different. If murders of this kind were considered crimes by the Government they should be so treated; and yet how did the Government treat these cases? In the case of the Mitchelstown murder the House was aware that the inquest took a considerable amount of time, and they knew that a Coroner's inquest was practically the only procedure of a criminal nature in Ireland which did not entirely depend upon the initiative of the Government. The Coroner was one of the remnants they had in that country of the old institutions. The Coroner was the people's officer, and he was the only man who did not depend either on Government sanction, Government instigation, or Government support. If the Coroner were a Government official, they probably would not have inquests at all in Ireland; but as he was not under them, and derived his powers from the old Common Law, one of the old liberties of the people still remained. When public massacres took place like that at Mitchelstown, and that of Belmullet, and that of Ballyragget—cases that they were too familiar with—the Coroner, of course, instituted an investigation into the cause of death of the victims. The Coroners in Ireland might not have much to do. They were not perfectly *au fait* with the technicalities of procedure as Coroners were in England, where they had a great deal to do in inquiring into death because of railway accidents, colliery accidents, the execution of criminals, and so on. Coroners get a great deal more practice in England, and were more clever in doing their work, and were more familiar with those technicalities than they were in Ireland; yet he (Mr. Commins) would venture to say that there was not one inquisition out of 20 which took place in England the verdict of which the Government would not be able to set aside if they urged such pleas as had been urged in the case of the Mitchelstown inquest, for the reason that Government officials were inculpated. Verdicts of Coroners' inquests had been set aside in numerous instances in Ireland, the latest of which was the Mitchelstown case. They had had from an eye-witness the particulars of what had occurred in the Coroner's Court on the 9th of September last at Mitchelstown, and this occurred within the six months to which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary's statistics referred. Anybody who read the story of the Mitchelstown massacre would see at once that there was, at any rate, a *primá facie* case against the police, not only of murder, but of a most aggravated form of murder. It was a case which involved not only the destruction of human life, but an outrage upon public liberty, and the guilt of the police was brought home, not only by the evidence of partial witnesses, but evidence extracted from the unwilling lips of members of the force itself who were participators in the affair. The finding of the jury upon that evidence was not impeached, but the verdict had been upset on a question of some formality such as occurred as the locking up of the jury—the jury holding its inquiry in an hotel parlour where there was no jury box and no material appliances to separate the jury from the public, in consequence of which members of the jury spoke to somebody during the progress of the case. The Government pleaded also such technicalities as this, that their own officer, who was in charge of the jury, walked out of the jury room during the course of the proceedings, and also some irregularity in the summoning of the jury. These were the sort of things on which the verdict of the Mitchelstown jury was impugned; and there were a lot more small irregularities which could be found out, not only in Ireland, but in England were it necessary for the Government to attempt to upset a verdict in order to procure immunity for their tools. The verdict of the jury to which he referred, however, was unimpeachable so far as the evidence was concerned —it was unimpeachable to the mind of every impartial man. Suppose such a thing as the quashing of a verdict had occurred in this country. Suppose the meeting had taken place in Trafalgar Square; they had no reason to doubt the integrity of the law in this country; and what would the law have done—what would the Court of Queen's Bench have done? Why they would have directed two or three commissioners to hold another inquest without further examination of the bodies of the deceased persons; the evidence which would incriminate or exculpate the police would have been heard, and a new verdict would have been returned. Did the Government intend to do anything of that sort in the Mitchelstown case? He had been told to-day across the Floor of the House that the Government intended to do nothing of the kind. Well, what was invariably done in this country when a Coroner's inquisition returned a verdict against anyone of murder, or manslaughter? The Coroner issued his warrant as he was bound to do, that warrant was put in the hands of the police, and the accused party was taken before the magistrates. Depositions were also taken before the magistrates with a view of prosecuting so far as the Coroner's jury had found anyone guilty. Had anything of the kind been done in connection with the Mitchelstown case? Nothing of the kind. No magisterial inquiry had been held and no depositions had been laid before the magistrates or taken by the magistrates, and the answer he had received, when he had put a Question to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) as to whether it was the intention of the Government to take any such steps, was in the negative. It was open to the Government still to do something; but that was the way in which they treated occurrences which took place in Ireland —occurrences which were stigmatized solemnly as murder. The Government condoned these offences. They considered it a crime to commit what he might call a contraction between a boo and a cheer, and boys were sent to gaol for it; but the homicide of a man in the public streets was considered no offence whatever, and on technical grounds an inquisition of a jury was quashed and the tools of the Government were exculpated. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had himself told them that it was exceedingly difficult to distinguish what were agrarian offences and what were not. But an agrarian offence meant an offence that arose out of the condition of the country, and although the right hon. Gentleman had said that the case referred to was not an agrarian offence, he (Mr. Commins) would like to know on that supposition what was an agrarian offence. The statistics which the Government put forward could be sent upwards or downwards, just as it suited the purpose of the Government to show a large or small amount of agrarian offence in Ireland. When it suited their book, they could return three quarters or one quarter of the whole number of offences in Ireland as non-agrarian or otherwise, as the case might be, and when, as now, it was necessary to show that agrarian offences were decreasing, they could simply appropriate what offences they liked to the category of ordinary offences, reducing thereby agrarian offences to a minimum, and pointing to their figures as an evidence of the success of the Coercion Act. But he and his hon. Friends contended that the Government claim with regard to the good effect of the Coercion Act had not been made out, and, on the other hand, that they had by their own admissions shown that they had no case to bring forward. He was afraid that if they looked at the number of persons convicted, it would be found that the Act had very considerably inflamed the minds of the people. They were told by hon. Gentlemen opposite that all offences emanating from the National League were agrarian offences, and that the National League had no basis except the discontent arising from the holding of land. The Government told the House that they had put down the National League in two counties of Ireland, and suppressed 200 branches of that organization; but why had they not furnished the statistics which would have given them the names of those branches? They had not thought fit to do that; and he (Mr. Commins) had thrown out a challenge to the Government a few days ago to tell the House the name of a single branch of the National League which had discontinued its operations. That challenge had not been taken up, and the Government had not been able to give the name of any one branch, while the fact remained that the branches of the National League continued to hold their meetings, and the newspapers to publish reports of the proceedings. When he heard the talk about the suppression of 200 branches of the National League, he could not help thinking of the story of a very ferocious man in Ireland who, being offended with another man to whom he did not venture to offer physical violence, said to him, "Sir, consider yourself horsewhipped," whereupon the other, taking him by the nose, raising him, and then laying him down, replied, "Sir, you may consider that your nose has been pulled." In the same way as this the Government were making fools of themselves, because they were holding out to the world what was not the fact at all, and they had themselves found out that in endeavouring to suppress a nation they had undertaken a task far beyond their strength. It was on the Government's own showing an offence for everyone of the 200 suppressed branches of the National League to meet; why then did they not give the House statistics with regard to that particular kind of agrarian offences? These branches continue to meet, and the Government are aware of the fact; they prosecute one or two here and there, but as to suppressing the League, they knew they might as well try to stop the course of the River Shannon. So much, then, for the diminution of crime in Ireland. His hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) confirmed the statement that crime in Ireland had diminished, and his contention that if there was amelioration it was not owing to the Coercion Act, was a matter which needed not much argument. It was due to the changed feeling in England produced by the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. When conciliative measures came to Ireland from either Liberals or Tories they were perfectly ready to accept them with thanks. The decisions of the Land Court in revising rents had done more for the diminution of crime in Ireland than any Coercion Act that had ever been passed. The Plan of Campaign had also done much, and he would not weary the House by dwelling on what had done more than anything else to prevent breaches of law in Ireland—namely, the awakening of the consciences of the people of England to the wants and aspirations of the Irish people. That sympathy could only arise from the people of this country becoming acquainted by their own personal observation and the narratives of others with the misery which the people suffer and the slavery that exists in Ireland. It was that growing sympathy between the two peoples that the Government were doing all in their power to prevent, and that is the reason why they are prosecuting the newspaper proprietors for publishing accounts of the meetings of the National League; that was the reason why they pounced upon Englishmen like Mr. Blunt, who had shown sympathy with the Irish people. But that sympathy could no more be checked by the Government than they could prevent the return of Spring.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) said, The speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) reminded him of one of those successful pieces which had a long run at a London theatre. The speech they had heard to-night was, to his knowledge, running now for three seasons, and it did not fail to draw an audience of his Tory Friends, who laughed as heartily as ever at the old jokes and stories. The only portion of the speech of the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Saunderson) that he should refer to was that which related to the murder of the man named Fitzmaurice, in Kerry. In connection with this, the hon. and gallant Member had read resolutions of a branch of the National League in the months of June and January last. This man had been murdered within the last two or three weeks, but the hon. and gallant Gentleman had never stated the fact that the branch had ceased to exist for more than four months. It had not ceased to exist because of the prosecutions of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), but it had died from inanition owing to its moderate counsels and its denunciation of Moonlighting, which were distasteful to certain persons. The two men who had been arrested on suspicion, and had been identified by the daughter of the murdered man, had never been members of the National League. On the contrary, they had often gone into the neighbouring town of Tralee for the purpose of disturbing the meetings of the National League there; and, therefore, so far from any connection existing between the League and the murderers, the reverse was the case. It was in cases where the National League was not strong and did not comprise the bulk of the people of the district that murders of this kind took place. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had quoted from an article in *The Kerry Sentinel*, written by his hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington). That article was written and signed by his hon. Friend at a time when he could not have seen the resolution which had been referred to. It was written in consequence of the suppression of the League in the barony of Kerry, and it stated that until all the branches were suppressed in the county he should continue to report the meetings of the branch; it also referred to the purchase of a certain estate over the heads of the tenantry, in the year 1879, by Mr. Samuel Hussey, with the particulars of which he (Mr. Murphy) was personally acquainted, as he himself had made an offer to purchase the estate at the time, and to give the tenants their holdings under the Bright Clauses of the Land Act of 1870. These were the allusions of the article, and the garbled extract which the hon. and gallant Gentleman had read would not bear out in any way the contention that the National League or his hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington) were in the least degree responsible for the crime which had been perpetrated. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that hon. Members who had spoken in the country in reference to the conduct of the Government were afraid to repeat in that House, where they could be answered, what they had said outside, and he had especially referred to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). Now, after the Motion of Amendment to the Address which had been moved by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), he thought it was not likely that the right hon. Gentleman any longer retained the illusion that his policy in Ireland would not be discussed in that House. He would be likely to hear more on the subject from the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The Speech from the Throne described the result of the recent legislation in Ireland as of a satisfactory character. He fancied that the paragraph must have been penned by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because he had no doubt whatever that the state of affairs in that country had been satisfactory to the right hon. Gentleman himself. He felt, no doubt, that kind of satisfaction which was scarcely a Christian virtue, but which was not uncommonly felt when they had their enemies in their grip, and could inflict punishment on them. In no other sense, and to no one else, was the condition of Ireland satisfactory So far from the state of Ireland being satisfactory, he (Mr. Murphy) maintained that the Crimes Act had increased the contempt for the magistracy in Ireland, and created greater disrespect than before existed. It was idle to tell them or the country that the Resident Magistrates were in any sense independent; that they did not take their cue from Dublin Castle, as surely as a band of musicians took their lead from the baton of the conductor. In 1885, when the Conservative Government were in power, and made that partial alliance described by the hon. Member for Cork, with Irish Members, the Resident Magistrates were as gentle as sucking doves, and quite different in their practice and manner from what they were at the present time. The statistics which had been produced to them as evidence of the success of the Coercion Act, were, to his mind, evidence of its failure, because, if it had succeeded as it was calculated to do in exasperating the people of Ireland, it would have tended to an increase of crime; but the National League had been a powerful antidote to that tendency, and to that organization was chiefly due the diminution in the number of crimes. He said that the list of various prosecutions under the Coercion Act given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) last night did not convey to ordinary minds the smallest idea of the nature of the offences for which prosecutions had taken place. It had been stated that when the Bill of last year was passing through the House that what was known as the Secret Inquiry Clause would be certainly useful in dealing with serious crimes; but he could only find that the clause had been put in force in two instances. He (Mr. Murphy) said that the Crimes Act had not been of use in this respect, and that when serious crimes had occurred, they had been dealt with under the ordinary law, and the juries had convicted. But they had been told by the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland that the Government claimed that their policy was a success, and justified the Act of last year on the ground of putting down the Plan of Campaign and Boycotting in Ireland. He (Mr. Murphy) had looked at the list of cases given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), and out of 373 he could not find more than about 20 cases which could in any way be considered as relating to or affecting cases of Boycotting or the Plan of Campaign. The hon. and learned Solicitor General had also given them statistics of Boycotting cases, which statistics might be right or wrong; but such statistics were certainly tainted with suspicion, because formerly they were intended for one purpose, and now they were intended for another, and every sub-constable in Ireland who collected those statistics had his finger on the pulse of the Castle, and knew what was wanted from him at any particular time. On the other side of the account; while the Crimes Act had done nothing but irritate the people—while it had produced nothing but unnecessary prosecutions—while it had not affected Boycotting in any shape or form, it had created a great amount of contempt of the law and distrust of the magistracy. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland attempted to justify his harsh treatment of prisoners in Ireland by stating that they were not political prisoners but politicians who had committed crime. What was the crime which the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) committed? That hon. Gentleman had simply told the people to resist by every legitimate means an eviction raid which was being organized to deprive them of the benefit of the Land Act which was to become law a few days later. He (Mr. Murphy) desired to know how the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary justified his statement that newspapers had not been prosecuted for political offences? There was a provision in the Prisons Act, making it obligatory that every person under sentence for seditious libel should be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. If a man were found guilty of the comparatively trivial offence of publishing the proceedings of a proclaimed branch of the National League, he was not only imprisoned, but imprisoned with all the degradation attaching to the meanest prisoner in the land. It was only lately that the Government had taken up the prosecution of Boycotting cases. They claimed that the Crimes Act was to put down Boycotting; but it was only within the last month or two they had taken proceedings in respect to Boycotting. The first conviction which was obtained was reversed on the ground that the evidence did not sustain it. In cases which could not be sustained by any sufficient evidence, it was now the practice of Resident Magistrates to require the accused to come up for judgment when called upon. He could not resume his seat without referring to the treatment which some of his personal friends had received in prison. The hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin—and late Lord Mayor of Dublin—(Mr. T. D. Sullivan) was sentenced to imprisonment as a first-class misdemeanant. He was committed to the Richmond Prison, which was situated in Dublin, where he was committed, and where under ordinary circumstances he would remain. There he could not receive visits from his friends and members of his family; but he had not been in the Richmond Gaol more than 24 hours when he was removed to Tullamore. What was that for except for the purpose of minimizing the privileges attaching to him as a first-class misdemeanant? Mr. Mandeville was also imprisoned in Tullamore. He (Mr. Murphy) visited that gentleman frequently. The last occasion on which he saw him was about 24 hours before he was released. Mr. Mandeville was then in a cell which was almost totally dark. He had been there for 48 hours, and his diet had consisted of bread and water. In order to commit Mr. Mandeville to a punishment cell it was necessary to have a magistrate's order made after an inquiry in the prison; and in this case the Government passed over the Visiting Justices and the local Justices, and imported a removable magistrate to inflict this disgraceful punishment. As the object of all punishment was to deter persons from repeating the offence for which they were punished, this was not punishment, but persecution, seeing that Mr. Mandeville's term of imprisonment expired the next day. That was about the 10th time he had been punished by bread and water. Such treatment of political prisoners was resented by the people of Ireland, and revolted the people of this country; but they took hope in the fact that the day was not far distant when it would be a thing of the past, and be remembered only as an ugly dream.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he had followed the course of this debate with the closest attention, and he must confess with some disappointment so far as the Opposition side of the House was concerned. Scarcely a speaker had remembered Mitchelstown. They had heard little or nothing about the tortures of Tullamore, and he had only heard one passing remark made about the conduct of the Irish Land Commission in decreeing what the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) declared outside the House to be an entirely inadequate reduction of the judicial rents. Judging from newspaper articles, and from platform-oratory, he had expected that the lath and plaster Cromwell, the niminy piminy Bismarck who was now strutting on the stage of Dublin Castle, would have been arraigned and all his misdeeds exposed to the House. The articles in question were printers' ink, and the oratory was mere declamation for the groundlings in the Provinces. Instead of that they had had a mild demand from the Front Bench for statistical information. They had had from the Leader of the Party below the Gangway a rehash of the ancient history concerning Lord Carnarvon. They had had a furious attack upon Resident—or, as they were now called removable—Magistrates, and they had had a doleful complaint concerning appeals under the Crimes Act. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had got his statistical information, and what use had been made of it? Why, no sooner was it given than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) declared in his place that so far from the improvement being due to the working of the Crimes Act, it was due to what he called the "union of hearts." He (Mr. T. W. Russell) was not prepared to put the theory of the union of hearts aside. Great things had been accomplished in that direction. He was not very sure whether the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was in his place, but he wished to say that the hon. Baronet paid them a visit to Ulster not long ago in pursuance of the mission of uniting the hearts of the two peoples. His hon. Friend once had a very high opinion of the Province of Ulster, and of its people in those dark days when he was as a voice crying in the wilderness, and when a wicked House of Commons positively refused to listen to him. That Province of all the country gave a clear majority in favour of his project, and he had never ceased until recently to boast of it. Well, he went to Ulster the other day in pursuance of the policy of uniting the hearts of the two peoples. He deliberately cut all his old friends, and was received with open arms by the publicans of Ulster. There was a humorous cartoon extant in that Province which pictured the hon. Baronet in a drizzling snowy night, standing on a platform opposite the gaol of Enniskillen, the platform being composed of porter barrels, calling on Balfour and his minions to come on, and licensed victuallers holding tallow candles to illumine the darkness. Surely, the union of hearts had gone a long way when it had caused the hon. Baronet to be received with open arms by the Ulster publicans, and when it had caused the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne to be publicly blessed by the Church. But what he (Mr. T. W. Russell) wanted to know was why did the general interest in the union of hearts policy allow the hon. Member for West Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington) to put his foot in it on Friday night, as the noble Earl the Member for South Somerset (the Earl of Cavan) did on Thursday night. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) had paid attention to this debate during the dinner hours, and during one of those hours the hon. Member for West Kerry, dealing with the statistics produced by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, told the House that no sane man in Ireland would pay the slightest regard to those statistics—that they were worthless. If that be so, what became of the success of the union of hearts? It, too, must be written down a failure. Whatever hon. Members might say, the figures given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary held the field. The Government were in the position that they were able to say that they had not only diminished crime by the working of the Crimes Act, but that they had been able to get evidence of crime which they were totally unable to get before the passing of the Act. Now, during the Recess there had been three brutal murders in Ireland. All three had been committed in the counties of Clare and Kerry. He was told that the National League was an organization for the protection of tenants and for the prevention of crime. He was told that the leaders of that League were the men who really prevented crime being committed. Now, let them examine that statement. A few minutes ago he heard the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Dublin call in question the statement made by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) regarding the Lixnaw branch of the National League. He thought the hon. Gentleman said that that branch of the League had had no existence for three or four months. The resolution quoted by his hon. and gallant Friend to-night was taken from *The Kerry Weekly Reporter* of the 29th of January, 1887, and the meeting of the branch at which the resolution was passed was held on Sunday, the 23rd of January.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): That is a year ago.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL asked what were the facts? An orator went down into the neighbourhood, and he denounced land-grabbing and land-grabbers. He was an orator of great repute in Ireland. There was a land-grabber in the immediate vicinity — a land-grabber who had as much right to grab land, according to the testimony of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), as any farmer in Ireland had to hold land. A week after that speech was made that land-grabber was shot dead on the road to the fair of Listowell. His hon. and gallant Friend went over that case, and he was not going to trouble the House with the particulars of it. But he would take another case.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Who made the speech?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway knew very well who made the speech—[*Cries of* "Who?"] It was a public speech reported in the newspapers—[*Renewed cries of* "Who?"]—by a member of the National League—[*Cries of* "Name!"]—Mr. Davitt.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): He was not in that county.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he would take another case—the case where Head Constable Whelehan lost his life. What happened there? Another orator—a Member of Parliament—the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—went into County Clare. He denounced land-grabbing. No meeting was ever held without land-grabbing being denounced, because it was the pivot upon which the whole agitation turned. The hon. Gentleman denounced land-grabbing. A man named Sexton, who had taken a farm in this way, was immediately visited. The police had received information, and they were there in waiting for the visitors. They were arrested; but instead of Sexton losing his life, Head Constable Whelehan lost his. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) was told that the police conspired to bring about this crime. He should answer his informants by a letter from Lord Spencer on that point. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway pinned their faith to Lord Spencer now. He remembered when they sneered at him as the "Red Earl," and when they had the unutterable meanness to refer to his childless home. Lord Spencer—dealing with their assertion—used these words in a letter he (Mr. T. W. Russell) held in his hand—

> "I was very badly reported at Aberystwith. I spoke very strongly about the murder of Head Constable Whelehan, and referred to the accusation against the Government of concocting a Moonlight affair. This was, I said, to my mind, impossible. I knew many of the officers at the head of the police in Clare. They were highly honourable men, incapable of tolerating anything so wicked, and I do not believe any Government of any politics would care to protect men guilty of such wickedness."

Those were the words of an honourable man. [*Cheers.*] Gentlemen below the Gangway cheered the statement that the Government connived at this crime, and that the police paid men to go and commit it. He asserted it might lie in their mouths to say that, but that it did not lie in the mouth of anyone above the Gangway to say so. He would give his reason. Who was it who sent Head Constable Talbot in the early days of the Fenian conspiracy to Carrick-on-Suir, and sanctioned his becoming a Roman Catholic, although he was a Protestant—who allowed him to go and partake of the Sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, and allowed him to swear in Fenians, he, while he was doing this, being in communication with Dublin Castle? [*Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway cheered that; but his hon. Friends around him were silent, because they knew that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was in power at the time. Every Government had to deal with informers. It was impossible to do without them. No Government liked to do it; but he, at all events, respected the silence of his hon. Friends, who knew how deeply tarred their own Leaders were with this very brush. Crime-preventing agency, forsooth! He asserted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian never used truer words than when he said, in the year 1881, that crime dogged the steps of the Land League with fatal and painful precision. Those words had never been withdrawn. Hon. Gentlemen said that the Land League was not in existence now—that it was the National League. Hear what Mr. Davitt said on the 22nd of October, 1887, on that point. Mr. Davitt, speaking at Queenstown on that day, said that what was known in Ireland to-day as the "National League" was, to all intents and purposes, precisely the same as the "Land League." Who was the President of the National Land League, the steps of which were dogged with crime? Who were its officers, who were its leading spirits, who had their hand on every spring of the machinery and could direct it as they chose? Why, the men who represented Irish constituencies and were sitting below the Gangway. Standing there as he did in the name of a great constituency, he told those Representatives of the organization that until they could purge it of the leprosy and crime which the right hon. Gentleman had attached to it in 1881, the Loyalists of Ireland would never consider their claim to govern them. Now, he thought the House must have been considerably relieved—all sections of it—when they heard the statistics showing the decrease of Boycotting. Those figures spoke more eloquently than words could do, and if hon. Members would go into what the figures represented they would think of the homes of thousands of Irish people who had been relieved from the terrorism to which they had been so long subjected. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian persisted in misunderstanding or in mis-stating the whole case regarding Boycotting in Ireland. Once more they had had paraded before them the case of the rector and the curate of Donnybrook. Now, he (Mr. T. W. Russell) happened to know both the rector and the late curate. The late curate was a personal friend of his own, and he could bear testimony that he was an upright and honourable gentleman in every respect. But what were the facts of the case? The facts were that the curate, instead of holding the same views as his rector, professed openly that he was in favour of Home Rule, in a district where Home Rule politics were abhorred; whereas his rector held an opposite view. It was absolutely necessary for the benefit of the parish that a rector and his curate should be at one in such a matter as that. He saw the hon. Member for Wednesbury (Mr. P. Stanhope) laughing. Would he deny that the rector had serious duties regarding his parish to perform and——

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury): Yes; I do deny it as a political guide.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he accepted the hon. Gentleman's denial, but what man would agree with the hon. Member? The rector of the parish had serious responsibilities cast upon him. His first duty was to see to the spiritual welfare of his parishioners, and if he found his work marred or hindered by anything whatever—by the religious or political views of his curate, or by anything else—[An hon. Member: Who is the Member for that district?]—he was bound by his duty to the people of the parish to get rid of that difficulty. Dr. Ryder parted with his curate, Mr. Sandys. They parted as friends, however, and Dr. Ryder did not enter into a conspiracy to prevent Mr. Sandys being employed anywhere else; and what he (Mr. T. W. Russell) wanted to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was this—exclusive dealing was one thing; but a conspiracy to starve people into subjection and destroy them was an entirely different thing. Now, the Resident Magistrates had been very seriously assailed, both above and below the Gangway, during this debate. He could understand the position of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and could not expect them to have very kindly feelings towards Resident or "removable" Magistrates; but he thought that hon. Members above the Gangway ought to be very chary in bringing charges against these gentlemen. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had complained that the whole Irish agrarian question had been sent to be dealt with by the Resident Magistrates; but the right hon. Gentleman forgot that he himself had sent the whole question of the reduction of rents to a tribunal which was vastly inferior. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), later on, had said that the question of seditious libel had absolutely been sent to this tribunal. There was no foundation for these charges. Why were these men assailed? Complaint was made of Mr. Cecil Roche; but did hon. Members complain of him when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian appointed him a Land Commissioner? He was quite fit to reduce rents; but when he laid his hand upon Moonlighters it was an entirely different thing. [An hon. Member: He never had a Moonlighter before him yet.] He (Mr. T. W. Russell) asked those hon. Members who sat around him to remember this—that these same Resident Magistrates were assailed in 1882 precisely as they were assailed now; and they were defended by the late lamented Mr. Forster, by the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and by Earl Spencer, as they were now defended by the present Government. When did they become the depraved characters hon. Members represented them to be now? He must not be taken as saying that they were the best instruments, or that the system was the best; but again he wished his hon. Friends round him to understand that it did not lie in their mouths to complain of the system. They had had the government of Ireland practically for 40 years, and they had stuffed the ship with incapables from stem to stern. They had appointed this man because he was a Catholic, that man because he was a Protestant, another because Bishop So-and-So recommended him, and another because Lord So-and-So recommended him, altogether oblivious to the man's qualifications. [*Cheers.*] It was all right for hon. Members from Ireland below the Gangway to cheer; but again he said he respected the silence of Members above the Gangway. But he was told—he supposed by the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), who had been cheering — that his hon. Friends around him had opened a new book now—that all these things were past, and were to be forgotten, and that, like Naaman the Syrian, they had been cleansed of their leprosy. But the cleansing of Naaman was nothing to the operation which had been performed on the Liberal Party. It was not until Naaman had dipped seven times in Jordan that his flesh became as the flesh of a little child, and he got rid of his leprosy. But one solitary bath in that odorous fluid, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) had declared was enough to make a politician stink in the nostrils of the English people, had been sufficient, not only to purge these Gentlemen, but to make them absolutely believe that everybody else was tainted with political leprosy. These men who were so furiously assailed in this House—and still more violently assailed on public platforms, where the speeches could not be answered — were the officers of the law. They were human beings. They were subject to appeal. ["No, no!"] He heard an hon. Friend who represented a Scotch constituency say "No!" Well, what he had to say was this—that the Irish Court of Exchequer had constituted itself a Court of Appeal in such matters in cases where the sentence inflicted was less than one month's imprisonment, and the County Court Judges had also the power of hearing appeals; and what had been the result? Why, the decision of the Resident Magistrates had been reversed by the Court of Exchequer in one instance, and by the County Court Judge in another. [An hon. MEMBER: Up to the end of the year.] Now, he did not complain of hon. Members below the Gangway holding these opinions. They did not confine their opinions to Resident Magistrates. When it suited them they applied the same language to the County Court Judges. In *United Ireland*, the other day, the Queen's Bench Judges were called "tyrannical hirelings." The Mitchelstown Coroner and a jury of Moonlighters was their ideal of a Judge and jury from which there should be no appeal. Now, the House had heard a good deal about political prisoners, and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) had drawn a comparison between the treatment accorded to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) and that meted out to Mr. Blunt. But what were the facts? The meeting attended by the right hon. Member was a perfectly Constitutional meeting to petition Parliament on behalf of the Clanricarde tenants. Without the slightest reserve, he (Mr. T. W. Russell) would state that it was a meeting which he would have attended himself had he been asked. So far from any difficulties being placed in the right hon. Gentleman's way, it was desirable to assist him, for the man who did anything to bring about a settlement in the county in question deserved not only very well of the House, but of the country. But what was Mr. Blunt's position? He went over to Ireland a representative of the union of hearts' policy, and attended a proclaimed meeting held at midnight, at which the Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant was burnt by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien).

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): I rise to Order. These matters are now being investigated before a Court of Law. Is the hon. Member allowed to refer to them in this way?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is entitled to proceed. It is a matter for his discretion.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that as these matters were all sworn to by Mr. Blunt himself, he had no scruple about referring to them. Mr. Blunt had acted in the way he had described, and therefore had no claim to be considered as a law-abiding and law-respecting citizen. On the whole question of the treatment of these prisoners, he (Mr. T. W. Russell) honoured the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for having made no difference between priest and peasant, between Members of Parliament and the ordinary citizen. It was said that the right of public meeting and a free Press had ceased to exist in Ireland. He found it difficult, within the bounds of Parliamentary Forms, to characterize such language. The freedom of the Press gone!—when *United Ireland* was published every week! Had a single newspaper been suppressed? Were not the newspapers as free to write of the Government and their political opponents as they had ever been at any time in the history of Ireland, and did not they make as full use of their freedom as ever was made? What did this purified Liberal Party in its unregenerate days do with a free Press? He had lived in Ireland nearly all his life, and he remembered how a Liberal Government dealt with the Press. He remembered Lord Kimberley sending down three waggons from Dublin Castle and a number of detectives to the office of *The Irish People*, and seizing everything and arresting everybody; yet no one was summoned to any Court, nor were any legal proceedings taken. Then, again, under Lord Spencer, the publishing offices of *United Ireland* had to be removed from Dublin to Paris, and detectives were employed in hunting down the street newsboys for attempting to sell *The Irish World*, not a single copy of which was allowed to cross Queenstown Bar for years. The hon. Member for North-East Cork did not spend three months in Tullamore Gaol for anything he wrote in the papers. His offence was entirely different. The House should remember that it was no use assailing the Government for things like these; the House had passed an Act of Parliament, and it was the duty of the Executive Government to enforce it. The hon. Member for North-East Cork went down to Mitchelstown—a neighbourhood now so studiously avoided in debate—[An hon. MEMBER: You will hear enough about it!]—and counselled the tenants there to resist the law and the officers of the law. Now, what had that resulted in elsewhere? That advice had been freely given elsewhere by hon. Members, and for taking that advice and acting upon it more than 100 men were now in gaol in Ireland. He should like any of his Radical Friends to say, or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, to tell him whether he thought that the man who went about the country giving advice to ignorant peasants—which peasants were sent to gaol—ought to be allowed to run away and escape the consequences? He maintained that if a Member of Parliament gave that advice, the greater was his responsibility, and he honoured the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for refusing to ask whether a man was a Member of Parliament or not. In saying this, he (Mr. T. W. Russell) was only speaking old Liberal and Radical doctrines. Before Liberalism became a mass of mawkish sentiment and diluted Socialism, no speaker would have ventured to get up and say that different treatment ought to be meted out to a Member of Parliament than to other men. [An hon. MEMBER: We do not say so.] No; they did not say it there, but they said it on platforms outside. It was the same thing with regard to newspapers. There was no question of seditious writing. The newspaper editors had deliberately defied the law, and had announced their intention to defy it, and unless the Executive Government was to mete out different treatment to men in their position from the peasant who took their advice the Government had no option but to proceed fairly. He could conceive of a case where it might be his clear duty to break and defy the law. If the Irish tenants had been asked to face the dreadful times since 1879 without that protection which the House had given them, he did not know what, representing them there, he might not have found himself justified in doing so as a last resource. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members should not laugh until they were out of the wood. But if he had chosen the *rôle* of standing between the living and the dead, he would have studied to go through with it with something like dignity. He would have blamed Parliament for passing the Act, not the Executive Government for enforcing it. He would have faced the officers of the law, and not run away, and he certainly would not have swung himself, like Mahomet's coffin, between earth and Heaven. He would have borne with prison discipline as best he could, and the country would never have heard from him or his friends that he had a weak heart and delicate lungs; and, above all and beyond all, he certainly would never have claimed the Privilege of Parliament. These men wished to play at rebellion without the risks. They desired to pose as martyrs, without an atom of the martyr's spirit, and he was bound to say that he thought the hon. Member for North-West Lanark (Mr. Cunninghame Graham), in his lonely cell at Pentonville, was a hero compared to these men who prated of their wrongs on every platform. He was told that the Government, and especially the Liberal Unionists, had broken faith—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division had accused them of breaking faith—on the matter of local government. He wished to make the matter perfectly clear. As a general principle, he desired that Ireland should be governed as Great Britain was governed. But what kind of bodies were they going to set up to govern in Ireland? They made a slight experiment a few months ago which he should like to bring to the notice of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, when Chief Secretary, found six scheduled Unions in the West in a state of dire distress. He passed an Act, and took £20,000 from the Church surplus for the purpose of relieving the distress by means of outdoor relief. The normal number of persons receiving outdoor relief in those Unions before the Act came into operation was between 500 and 600. But when the news got about that there was a gold mine in Connemara even more profitable than a Welsh mine, the number who obtained relief rose to 36,000, and who got the relief? He was quoting from the evidence of a sworn inquiry. The Guardians themselves received it; his old friends the publicans received it; police pensioners receiving £60 a-year from the Crown received it; and in one parish more people were marked for outdoor relief than there were people in the parish. These Guardians of the Poor—these officials of the Local Government Board in the West of Ireland—instead of confining themselves to £20,000, ran up the bill to £36,000, and only stopped because there was no more money to be got at the bank. Now, he wanted to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow—were these the people to whom the owners of property were to be handed over? Before they did any such thing they would have to think a good deal about it. He, for one, desired that Ireland should be governed like Great Britain; but he was content to wait until local government was established in England and Scotland before he took the step of extending it to Ireland. [*Laughter.*] Of course, hon. Members below the Gangway laughed. Most of them had nothing to lose. [Mr. FLYNN: More than you have.] Taking everything into consideration, he thought that they had made a start with a Session full of hope. They started with a public declaration from the Head of the Irish Party—a Party, perhaps, more skilled in Parliamentary warfare than any Party that had ever sat in the House—that, after 11 years of effort in the Obstruction line, the game of Obstruction was up. They were to have a Business Session. He rejoiced that the Government meant business in Great Britain as well as in Ireland. He thanked the Government for what they intended to do with regard to land purchase in Ireland, and to the development of the resources of the country. There was one point which he should like the Government to consider. Nearly all the troubles that had arisen in Ireland since the close of last Session—all the mischief he saw brewing in the immediate future—arose out of the question of arrears. He knew all the difficulties which attended the question. He knew that it was unfair to the honest man, who struggled and paid his own rent, to find that his neighbour, who made no struggle to be honest, should have his paid for him. He knew all the difficulties; but just as was done in the Crofters' Act, so he thought the Government would have to look this question in the face. Necessity knew no law, and whilst he rejoiced in the promise of an extended purchase scheme, believing, as he did, that the Act had worked well in Ireland—worked as few Acts had ever worked—that repayments were being punctually made, and that the people were being rooted to the soil. That being the programme in the House, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would keep his hand firmly at the springs in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman was denounced now, but let him be of good courage. He remembered the hon. Member for Cork hurling the words across the House at Mr. Forster—"Unstable as water, thou shalt not prevail." He did not think the hon. Member had found the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary unstable. As the hon. Member went on speaking last night, he thought they would have heard a good word for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). When the right hon. Gentleman became hardened to his new situation, and when his Friends felt quite certain of him, then his reward would be sure. Let the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland go straight forward; let him have neither eyes nor ears outside the four corners of the law; let him resolutely shut his ears to the pestilential fallacy that a Member of Parliament or a priest ought to be treated differently to a peasant; let him ponder the words of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who in September last, speaking in Dublin, said—"Either the League must be beaten or the Government." There was no mistake about it. We had come to the time when the one or the other must go down. Let the right hon. Gentleman remember what *United Ireland* said the other day—namely, that it is now or never with the Government and the League. The right hon. Gentleman had done good work during the last six months, for which in the name of his constituents he thanked him; he had set free many oppressed men—he had planted hope where hope had expired. He bid him fear not, and in due time he would reap the reward.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. T. W. Russell) commenced by remarking that they had not heard much of Mitchelstown or Tullamore; but let not the hon. Gentleman be too sure that they had heard the last of those two subjects. The Session was young, and he (Mr. Clancy) could promise that a good deal more would be heard about them. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) as being received by the Ulster publicans with open arms. He thought that remark came very badly from the hon. Member, because, if he had read aright the report of his proceedings during the last six months, he had been standing on beer barrels in England, and had more than once declared that as much as he cared for the temperance cause he cared more for the Unionists in Ireland. The hon. Member's reference to the reception accorded to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) by the Catholic Prelates and Clergy of Ireland was an admirable instance of the religious toleration of the loyal minority. Three-fourths of the speech of the hon. Member had been composed of insults to the people of Ireland; he had referred in disparaging terms to the courage of his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), in whose little finger there was more courage than in 50 bodies like that which covered the noble soul of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He had heard the hon. Gentleman say a good deal before on the subject of the infamous practices at Dublin Castle in the creation of informers, and yet he had now the impudence to blame the Irish Members for referring to a new instance of that infernal manufacture. The hon. Member said that had been the work of Lord Spencer or of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan); but that only showed that honest men could not go into Dublin Castle without being contaminated, and his (Mr. Clancy's) opinion was that no honest men would go there in future; nor would any honest men be contented to stay there. In those remarks of the hon. Member he admitted the whole of the case of the Irish Members. He had now done with the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and he would pass to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) delivered earlier in the evening. The hon. and gallant Member had given them an old tune—the twentieth variation on the oldest of all possible tunes. The hon. and gallant Member pointed to the Front Opposition Bench, and said the occupants had done so-and-so in the past. But what answer was that to Irish Members? If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) committed mistakes in the past, it was because he had been misled by the infamous agents in Dublin Castle. The Leaders of the Opposition had abandoned the old ways of Dublin Castle; they had admitted that they had been mistaken; and they had adopted a new policy. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh had, for the second time, made a garbled quotation from a speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), although he had been on a former occasion corrected. He did not quote the whole of the sentence; and on the last occasion the hon. Member for North-East Cork was in his place to answer him. What that hon. Member said was—"They would never rest until they had struck down landlordism and British misrule;" and that was quoted as if the hon. Member had spoken only of British rule. He would leave it to hon. Members to say what sort of tactics were being pursued by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. But the hon. and gallant Member's speech of this evening contained a new element—there was in it an account of a murder. He (Mr. Clancy) thought that after the speeches of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh and the hon. Member for South Tyrone they could have no doubt in whose interest that crime had been perpetrated. When he recollected the manner in which he had elaborated every detail—how he had dwelt on the subject with fondness and delight—he (Mr. Clancy) began to think that it was for his interest, and not for Irish Members, that crime should be committed. Irish Members said that they detested, deplored, and denounced the crime in question, and every other crime, just as much as the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh; and their complaint against the Government was that, instead of putting down the men who committed that crime, they had let every single man go, and had struck at their political opponents, who had committed no crime whatever. The hon. and gallant Member then sought to make the National League responsible for this crime, and that also had been the cue of the hon. Member for South Tyrone; but he (Mr. Clancy) submitted to the judgment of the public and impartial men whether it was not the height of injustice and absurdity to fasten the character of crime on an organization like that of the National League because of the commission of a crime in a county which had been notorious for crime and the causes of crime—namely, evictions—for not a solitary crime had been traced to any member of the National League? It was not for him to give characters to the members of the National League; but he would read evidence upon the subject. The evidence of Mr. Hamilton, Recorder of Cork, when sending a number of men to prison in the county of Cork, was to this effect—"I agree with the solicitor for the accused when he says that his clients are respectable men. Thousands of respectable men are members of the National League." He did not think after that any Member of the Government, including even the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), would get up and denounce the members of the National League as a band of assassins, and he wished to point out that that was the testimony of the Recorder of Cork, who was a Tory, and one of the staunch reformers of the Constitutional Club, as well as a staunch Unionist and Loyalist at the present day. A very curious Return had been issued that morning, which seemed to him to be the ground for that most important paragraph in the Queen's Speech in which the Government asserted that crime in Ireland had diminished. For his own part, he had been prepared to accept that statement; he believed it was true; but the Return of that morning showed the reverse to be the case. The Return of crimes just issued had been unfairly used by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who compared the first half of 1887 with the last half of 1886; whereas he should have compared the last quarter of 1886 with the last quarter of 1887. That was the proper mode of comparison; and he (Mr. Clancy) found that in the last quarter of 1886, when the Plan of Campaign was in operation, the number of crimes was 589, as compared with 611 in the last quarter of 1887. Again, with regard to particular crimes which he compared on the same principle. In 1886, for the December quarter, there was no murder; for that quarter in 1887 there was one murder. In 1886, aggravated assaults, 1; in 1887, 4; incendiary fires, 17 in 1886; in 1887, 21; robbery, in 1886, none; in 1887, 2. Threatening letters, in 1886, 82; in 1887, 60; intimidation, in 1886, 13; 1887, 17; and so on. In every category of more serious crime there was an increase in the quarter in which the Coercion Act had been in operation, as compared with the quarter in which the Plan of Campaign was in operation. He left it to the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to reconcile those figures with the remarkable statement in the Queen's Speech. If any improvement had been made—and he was inclined to think, notwithstanding the figures he had given, that some improvement had been made, because, in his opinion, all Government statistics were a mass of fraud—he contended that that improvement was due to the land legislation of the last few years; and that contention was based, not on the opinion of Irish Members alone, but upon that of the Judges in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had quoted the opinion of Judge Curran, who had said that Glenbeigh was one of the most happy and prosperous districts in Ireland. Now, a person who would say that was a liar from top to bottom. Against the opinion of Judge Curran, he would quote the opinion of Judge Fergusson, who said that he had reason to believe that respect for law and a disposition to obey the law, without which no social freedom, safety, or happiness could exist, was steadily increasing in the district, and he believed that the forces then in operation were calculated to extend those features and render them permanent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I am quite aware that Judge Curran is not a Judge of a Superior Court; but I think that all those who are in the position of Judges ought to be spoken of with common decency and respect. If the hon. Gentleman has any charge to bring against this Judge, of course he can take the course prescribed by law, no matter what his position may be.

Mr. CLANCY said, if he had said anything against the Rules of Debate, he would withdraw his remark. They had it that some Resident Magistrates had been appointed by Lord Spencer and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). But what answer was that to Irish Members? They contended that the appointment of these men to discharge the duties of Resident Magistrates was a gross abuse and infringement of the will of Parliament. The Government had abolished trial by jury in certain cases and established trial by Judge, which was the gravest change of procedure that any Government had ever made in this country. He was told that Mr. Cecil Roche had been appointed by Lord Spencer to administer the Land Act. No wonder, then, the rent reductions were small. It was men like Mr. Cecil Roche who killed the Land Act, and rendered necessary the agitation of the last two years. Another of these magistrates, in sentencing Mr. Doughty, an Englishman, to a month's imprisonment, said—"We want no English agitators here." He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take these words to heart, seeing that he had been agitating in Ireland in company with the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) during the Recess. Then they had a gentleman named Carew in Ireland administering the Act. That gentleman was recently engaged in a case in which he declared from the Bench that he represented the Crown; that he had his directions from Dublin Castle; and that he would carry them out. They had also a gentleman administering the Act in Ireland of whom he would relate an anecdote. A case came before him in which the solicitor for one side said—"Your Worship, there is a parole agreement in this case," to which Mr. Connolly replied—"A parole agreement—then let it be produced." Reference had been made to Mr. Dillon, Resident Magistrate, who had a judgment for £2,000 entered against him the very day he sentenced Mr. Blunt. The reason of the reference was that he was, in a sense, totally dependent upon the Castle. Take the case of Mr. Eaton. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was probably not aware—although he ought to be—that some time ago Mr. Eaton was charged by the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly) with having, in the case of the hon. Gentleman, agreed with two other Resident Magistrates upon a certain sentence on the last day of the trial, which lasted three days. The sentence thus agreed upon was eventually inflicted upon the hon. Member for West Cork. A man who was accused of such a disgraceful transaction as that, and who listened to the charge without contradiction, was fit for the dock instead of the Magisterial Bench. Last night the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) contradicted him in regard to the statement he made concerning Captain Stokes. He remarked that Captain Stokes committed an illegal act in forcibly arresting Mr. O'Brien in the Court House after the Recorder had declared Mr. O'Brien to be a free man. The Solicitor General for Ireland stated that what the Recorder meant was that, as far as he was concerned, Mr. O'Brien was free. As a matter of fact, the Recorder said—

> "I am anxious to treat Mr. O'Brien with consideration, and not have him suffer any indignity. I do not know that there is any warrant filed yet, and I think until that is done Mr. O'Brien may be permitted to go out."

There was no qualification such as suggested by the Solicitor General for Ireland; and, notwithstanding the express declaration of the Judge, Captain Stokes jumped up and said—"I take the responsibility myself of detaining him." The act of Captain Stokes was nothing but a gross and violent act of illegality. Now, what had the Government been doing? They had not caught the Kerry Moonlighters. Not one perpetrator of a serious crime had yet been brought under the operation of the Coercion Act. What had they been doing? They had been prosecuting their political opponents. The hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) was had up under the Corecion Act for making a speech in the county of Kilkenny. In the course of his speech he took up a glass of water, and said—"Here's to the downfall of Smithwick"—Smithwick being a local landlord. The Resident Magistrates said there was one expression in the speech of the defendant which convinced them that they ought to arrive at the conclusion at which they had arrived—that was the portion where he said—"Here's to the downfall of Smithwick." The Chairman remarked that if that expression were used in another county not so peaceable and well-conducted as Kilkenny he would be slow to limit the damage that would be done. The magistrates went on to say that they did not mean to insinuate or suggest that the hon. Member for North Monaghan intended anything wrong. But, although the speech was made in a peaceable county, and although it was made by a man whom the magistrates were convinced had no bad intentions, they sentenced him to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. Such a monstrous perversion of justice, he (Mr. Clancy) supposed, had never been heard of in criminal records. He believed his hon. Friend was prosecuted because he told the tenants that they should not pay 17 years' purchase for their property. In introducing their Land Bill the Government believed it was required partly in order that a Land Purchase Bill might be made to work smoothly. Here they had the key to the real nature of the prosecutions. During the Recess the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) congratulated the country on the working of the Crimes Act and its result. The noble Lord said that the rents were being better paid. The whole thing was got up for the landlords—it was devised for the landlords to get in their rents. The view which the landlords took of the matter was clearly shown by a letter which a land agent in Cork addressed to one of 11 tenants who had applied for a reduction of rent by 35 per cent. The writer said—

> "As there is clearly a combination or conspiracy to defraud the landlords of their lawful debts, I have placed the letter in the hands of the authorities; and the result will be that you will all be prosecuted under the Crimes Act."

The letter only showed that that Act was introduced to benefit the landlords. It had been carried out in order to enable the landlords to get in their rents; but he (Mr. Clancy) was afraid the result would not be beneficial in that direction. In the Returns of crime, when they noticed the dreadful words "conspiracy, assaults on the police, intimidation," and the like, they came to the conclusion that some awful crimes were being committed in Ireland. They could not get at the real nature of the offences without having a glossary to all those words. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland based his case entirely on Boycotting. What were the Boycotting cases which he had prosecuted? Take the case of Leader, a landlord in County Cork, who had disputes with his tenants. Leader alleged that he could not obtain goods; but in cross-examination he admitted that he did not require the goods that he had asked for in the town of Kanturk; that he could have got them without difficulty in two other establishments; that he had never before crossed the thresholds of the alleged Boycotters' establishments; that he hated the men, whom he looked upon as local Nationalists; and that he entered their establishments with a view to enmesh them in the toils of the Crimes Act. The defendants were convicted by removable magistrates, and their sentences were confirmed by the Recorder of Cork. Take another case. A clergyman named Greer in the county of Galway was said to have been Boycotted. It was alleged that people would not sell him goods, and on one occasion he told the dreadful story that he was so terribly Boycotted that he could not get a single person to nail down the coffin of a deceased person, and that he had to nail it down himself. In cross-examination, however, the rev. gentleman admitted that he had asked no one to nail the coffin down, and that he had been refused by no one. Some men, however, were now in gaol for not selling him goods which he did not want, and which he could have procured in another shop. Unlawful assembly was a fearful term. Just see what it came to under the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman. Three men were charged with unlawful assembly on the 22nd of September at Killarney. The District Inspector stated the case, and Sergeant Roe gave evidence that the police were followed and "booed" at, and some stones were thrown at them. In cross-examination he stated that the stones might have come from someone from the outskirts of the crowd. He saw no stones thrown except two, and heard no threats of violence used towards the police except "booing." He considered it illegal to "boo" for Mr. Balfour, but did not consider it illegal to "boo" for Mr. Harrington. That was an unlawful assembly, and the men who "booed" for Mr. Balfour and did not "boo" for Mr. Harrington got a month's imprisonment with hard labour. Then they heard of intimidation. Intimidation was the great groundwork of the Act. What did it mean sometimes in Ireland? Mary Anne Lawlor, a girl of 14 years of age, in company with another girl of 12, and two boys, each of 14 years of age, whistled and "booed" at a man aged 45. They were brought up on the charge of intimidation, and, to the shame of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mary Anne Lawlor was sent to gaol for a fortnight. Intimidation, forsooth! The Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) charged harshness and cruelty against the Government, and he (Mr. Clancy) desired to refer to some of the proofs of that statement. The hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy) was now undergoing four months' imprisonment. That hon. Gentleman was remanded without bail, although at the very time his wife was ill with scarlatina, to the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman. When the fact was commented upon in the Press, the Government offered to release the hon. Gentleman on bail, provided he submitted to the degrading condition of not opening his lips in public on a single topic. The hon. Member, considering himself an innocent man, refused to comply with such a condition. He was tried, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. He appealed, and the authorities then went through the farce of accepting bail for his appearance three months hence at the Quarter Sessions. When that formality had been gone through, he was re-arrested on leaving the Court, carried off to a distant part of the country, tried there on another charge, and sentenced to a month's imprisonment, which compelled him to go to gaol immediately, and which prevented him from seeing his wife, then in the crisis of a most dangerous illness. In gaol he was forcibly stripped of his clothes by five warders who held him down, tying his hands behind his back and spraining his thumb. He was kept on bread and water for seven days, including Christmas Day, for refusing to do menial offices in his cell. When brought up as a witness in another case, he was compelled to go in prison clothes, and when he refused to wear the prison head-dress he was driven 15 miles in wind and rain without anything on his head. That was a disgraceful record for any Government. Furthermore, the Amendment charged the Government with partiality. The Government had been grossly and flagrantly partial during the past 12 months. They professed their admiration for the law, and yet they refused to execute a warrant against policemen found guilty of murder at Youghal. Instead of the men being had up for murder they had been promoted. During the last 12 months the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had been very ready to dismiss Nationalist Magistrates. The hon. Member for East Waterford (Mr. P. J. Power) was deprived of the Commission of the Peace because he was supposed to have joined in working the Plan of Campaign. How had magistrates of another type been treated? Mr. Stoney was entrusted with the distribution of funds for the relief of destitute people by way of emigration. He diverted the money into his own pocket, and yet he was retained in the Commission of the Peace. The man was guilty of embezzlement, and last year the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland solemnly promised in the House that his case would be brought before the Lord Chancellor, and, if necessary, he would be dismissed. Mr. Wyse was found guilty by a jury—a special jury to boot; a jury of his own "pals"—of attempting to swindle tenants out of

£30 by falsifying the receipts. The Lord Chancellor took six months before he could bring himself to dismiss the gentleman. Major Leadwell, of Tipperary, blew up a bridge leading to a tenant's house. The matter was brought before the House, and reported to the Lord Chancellor. Major Leadwell was still on the Bench, and, no doubt, the next thing they would hear would be that he had been placed on the list of removables to try cases under the Crimes Act. Mr. John Barrett, another magistrate, was convicted of manipulating the dates on legal documents. Barrett was still on the Bench. The administration of justice at the Cork Winter Assizes last year afforded a pretty demonstration of the working of law and order in Ireland. In one case an Emergency man named Robert Bell was tried on a charge of firing at a man with intent to disfigure him. If the prisoner had belonged to the other side, the Crown would have packed the jury by excluding every Catholic. As it was, they did not challenge a single man, and amongst the persons they allowed upon the jury was a cousin of the man's employer. Of course, Robert Bell, although the evidence was conclusive against him, was acquitted without a stain upon his character. Take the case in Wicklow. At Wicklow the Clare Moonlighters were tried. They were, he believed, properly convicted. He believed that any jury of Catholics or Nationalists must have found a verdict against them. Nevertheless, the authorities could not trust the Catholic landlords and Justices of the Peace in Wicklow; for they challenged no less than 23 of them, and thus stigmatized them as sympathizers with crime. What did they do in the case of the Emergency man who was tried for shooting a poor peasant? Not a single man did they challenge. Their jury was made up of special jurors of the Orange persuasion, and on the jury there was not a single man who was not of the religion and the politics of the man in the dock. Of course the prisoner was set free, although most overwhelming testimony was given of his guilt. Such a travesty of justice was never seen in any country. While these things occurred it was totally impossible to expect any sympathy with the law, or any respect for its administration. What did the Government expect to gain by all this? They had not even put down the Plan of Campaign. If anybody challenged that statement, he was prepared to prove that within the last six months the tenants on 100 estates had joined the Plan of Campaign, and in every case except about 10 or 12 the landlords had fallen on their knees to the tenants. Every week there was evidence that the Plan was in full operation, and that it fully deserved the epithets of "immortal" and "invincible." What had the Government done in the way of gaining over the electors of Ireland to their policy? The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) said last year that as soon as the League was proclaimed they would find the electors joining the loyal minority wholesale. Two Parliamentary Elections, one each in Kerry and Carlow, had taken place since the Crimes Act was passed, and what had been the result? Strong Nationalists had been returned in both cases. An election would take place next week in Limerick, and he invited the right. hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to send down a loyal and patriotic candidate to see whether he would get a vote more than was recorded for the Jubilee Knight, Sir James Spaight. He remembered that last winter the noble Marquess the Member for the Brixton Division of Lambeth (the Marquess of Carmarthen) went down to Cork and commented largely upon the fact that five Nationalists had been rejected at the Queenstown municipal elections. On the following day a letter had appeared in *The Cork Herald* clearly pointing out that the question of politics had never for an instant been introduced into the controversy, which was settled on a question of water supply and reduction of rates.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton) said, he had seen, in a paper with which he had been supplied, that it was on political grounds that the contest was fought.

MR. CLANCY said, he did not know what the noble Marquess referred to. He did not know what any paper had to do with the question, though, perhaps, if he were a Marquess, he might understand what was meant. As it was, the contradiction of the noble Lord did not affect his (Mr. Clancy's) statement. The noble Lord had pretended that his

Party had secured a victory which, in reality, they had not achieved. The Government had not degraded the men whom they had imprisoned. They had often tried to do it, as other Governments had tried in the past, but without success. The men they had prosecuted for political reasons were the heroes of the people, and the men whom they were now prosecuting would come out of prison stronger than they went in in their influence on the people; and he hoped they would, and believed they would, overthrow right hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite and their despicable Government. In conclusion, he would merely say that the efforts of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to suppress the Nationalist Party would be a complete failure in every respect. He cordially re-echoed the opinion which had been expressed on those (the Home Rule) Benches that the feelings of the people of Ireland towards the English nation and the British people had greatly changed of late years —more so than any of them could have anticipated in so short a period. For the mass of the British people the Irish Members had nothing but feelings of the warmest friendship, and they had no other intentions than to consolidate with them a real union and alliance for the future. But as for the minority, the wilfully ignorant minority, the deliberately oppressive minority in England and Scotland—all he could say to them was that they flung at them their contempt and their defiance.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, there appeared to him to be two or three points very clearly brought out in the important Amendment submitted to the House by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The Government, in referring to the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in previous years, neglected to observe the fact that when the right hon. Gentleman had spoken crime was rife in Ireland, and that his observations had been directed not against political offences, but against crime. The right hon. Gentleman had clearly pointed out how the admitted wrongs of Ireland were to be righted; but no suggestion of the kind had come from the Government, who seemed altogether oblivious of the fact that statesmanship built on repressive legislation could never last. No Government that rested itself on force could last. Every Government of the past that had so rested itself had gone. The remedial legislation that they had passed had proved successful, and there could be no doubt that if there were more of that kind of legislation there would be an increasing improvement noticeable in the condition of Ireland. It was a great pity the Government did not take into account the wishes of the people they were called on to govern, for they might depend upon it that no permanent legislation would tend to the benefit of the country which had not the sympathy of its inhabitants. He would emphasize the remark which had fallen from the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) to-night, to the effect that a great part of the troubles Ireland was suffering from arose from the neglect of the Government to adequately settle the question of arrears of rent. He ventured to hope and believe that the Government in time would think over that, and would endeavour to bring their minds to bear upon the question, so as to remove one great cause of discontent. He had listened with a great deal of attention to the remarks of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and had been struck with two things in connection with them—in the first place, with the remarkable manner in which the right hon. Gentleman made statements of fact without giving any proof of their correctness. The right hon. Gentleman was wonderfully economical with his facts, much more so than he was with his statements. Then the right hon. Gentleman had attempted to show that a great part of the difficulty the Government had to contend with came from the Opposition. He did not succeed in this endeavour; for the Opposition, after all, though they opposed the coercive policy of the Government, had done more to cement the people of Ireland to this country than all that coercive policy had done. He (Mr. Cossham) had had the honour of going to Ireland as one of the English Representatives. [*Laughter.*] The Chief Secretary laughed at that; but he (Mr. Cossham) ventured to say that English Members sitting on the Opposition side had done quite as much to conciliate Ireland as the right hon. Gentleman had. The more frequently meetings between English Members and the Irish people took place the more certain they were to have a real instead of a sham Union. A great deal of the unpleasantness of feeling which existed formerly between the two peoples had been removed, owing to the action of the English Liberal Members, and he was satisfied that the democracies of the two peoples were getting near to a reconciliation. The policy which the Liberal Members were carrying on would in the end be ratified by the people of the two countries, and he ventured to say that the first day that policy was submitted to the people of this country would be the last that the present policy of the Government would exist. The present policy of the Government had never been submitted to the people; in fact, the people were originally told by the Government that repression was not a part of their programme; therefore, it was correct to say that it had been undertaken in defiance of the constituencies. He maintained that in building their policy on coercive measures the Government were building on the sand, and that, as sure as the sun would rise, that policy would fall. The men who had suffered, and were suffering, under the Crimes Act were called criminal; but it must not be forgotten that some of the noblest men in history had been men whom the law had made criminals. He had, the other day, passed the town of Bedford, and he could not help seeing the gaol in which John Bunyan was confined two centuries ago. That man had been looked upon as a criminal; but was he not now a good deal more thought of than the men who had put him in gaol? The dreams of John Bunyan were worth more than the waking thoughts of his persecutors. [*Laughter.*] He knew it formed a subject for laughter to the Tory Party that men who occupied the highest positions in Ireland were cast into gaol; but, from his point of view, it was no laughing matter. If men sent to Parliament to represent a country were treated in the manner in which the Irish Members had been treated—were subjected to outrage, in fact—representative government must be weakened in that country. Whatever might be said about it, the Government could not break down the right of public meeting and the liberty of Parliamentary Representatives without destroying the value of all the representative institutions of the country. What good were representative institutions if the Press did not retain power to publish their proceedings? And how could they have representative institutions without a free platform? Even if the Press were sometimes guilty of excesses, they had better bear those excesses than carry on such a policy as that the Government had initiated. Ministers could no more carry on in England the policy they were carrying on in Ireland than they could fly. Let them try it, and see how the people would agree to it. We had had government by the King, then government by the aristocracy, then by bribing the constituencies, and now it seemed we were to have government by the Executive, irrespective of the wishes of the people; and he warned the Government that there was no more dangerous course than that they were embarked upon, which was nothing more nor less than setting the Executive above the rights of the people, even above the rights and powers of the law. He ventured to hope that the Government would stop in this course before it was too late, for every step taken in that direction was dangerous both to peace and to the future of the country. He should support, with all his heart, the Amendment which had been proposed by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. He was sorry the Government did not accept that Amendment, for they could do it without the slightest derogation from duty, and without the slightest fear of censure. The Amendment was worded in the mildest manner. It said that remedial legislation had done more good than coercive legislation, and he should hope the Government would agree with that. It said that the carrying out of exceptional repressive legislation was rash and mischievous; and so it was. Take the case of the ex-Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan)—than whom a more gentle-spirited man did not come within these walls. He was a man whose whole life had been spent in the endeavour to break down everything that was evil in his country, and he (Mr. Cossham) believed that by putting a man like that into gaol the Government were doing more to weaken the law and lessen its hold on the people than anything which could be imagined. Therefore it was that he ventured to hope that Her Majesty's Government would stop in the course they were pursuing, and would depend more on remedial policy than on coercion. On these grounds, he had great pleasure in supporting the Amendment.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

LAND TENURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Barclay, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Barclay, Mr. Mackintosh, Sir George Balfour, and Mr. William Hunter.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 115.]

BOROUGH FUNDS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Murphy, Bill to amend and extend to Ireland the Municipal Corporations (Borough Funds) Act, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Murphy, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. T. Harrington, and Mr. E. Dwyer Gray.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 116.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable owners and occupiers in Wales to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Richard, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Bryn Roberts, and Mr. Carew.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 117.]

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Motion made, and Question put, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for regulating the Police and Sanitary Administration of towns and populous places, and for facilitating the union of Police and Municipal Administration in Burghs in Scotland."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

The House *divided:*—Ayes 122; Noes 19: Majority 103.—(Div. List, No. 3.)

Bill *ordered* to be brought in accordingly by The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, and Sir Herbert Maxwell.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 118.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL OPTION (ENGLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House that leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable ratepayers and others in towns and districts to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors within said areas.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Allison, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Burt, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Caine, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Henry Wilson, and Mr. Octavius V. Morgan.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 119.]

MINING ACCIDENTS INSURANCE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Baird, Bill to provide for a system of National Insurance against accidents in mines in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Baird, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Vernon, Mr. Hugh Elliot, and Mr. Bruce.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 120.]

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Peter M'Donald, Bill to amend the Laws relating to Bankruptcy and Bankruptcy proceedings in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. John Barry, Mr. O'Hea, and Mr. M'Cartan.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 121.]

LAND LAW (WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryn Roberts, Bill to amend the Law relating to the tenure of Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. John Roberts, Mr. Warmington, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 122.]

FORESHORE AND FISHERY RIGHTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Bill to amend the Law relating to Foreshore and Fishing Rights, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Hunter.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 123.]

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS' IMPROVEMENT PROTECTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to amend "The Agricultural Holdings (England) Act, 1883," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Thomas Ellis, and Sir Bernhard Samuelson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 124.]

VAGRANTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Charles Acland, Bill to amend the Vagrant Act, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Charles Acland, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Harry Davenport, and Mr. Caine.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 125.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 15*th February*, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Bristol (Western Division), *v.* The Right honble. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, baronet, President of the Board of Trade.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Resolution in Committee* — Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [Salary, &c.], *debate adjourned.*

Ordered — First Reading — Personal Property (Exemption)* [126]; Housing of Working Classes (London)* [127].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[FIFTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February].—[See page 64.]

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out paragraphs ten and eleven, in order to insert the words — "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session, which was of an ameliorative character, has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much to alienate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, AND LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE.—RESOLUTION.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he thought it would be acknowledged that the debate on the previous evening was opened by two speeches, the different tone of which was most significant. The House would never forget that the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had administered the Office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at a time when Ireland was a seething cauldron of discontent and disaffection. The difficulties of the present Chief Secretary were very slight indeed compared with those which Lord Spencer and the right hon. Baronet had to confront during the years they administered the affairs of Ireland. He ventured to render his humble tribute to the speech of the right hon. Baronet on the previous evening, and to thank him, not only for the generous sympathy running through his speech, but more especially for the high level at which he opened and maintained the debate during his remarks. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) had made what he (Mr. Ellis) had no doubt was felt by hon. Members opposite to be a very effective contribution to any Party debate. ["Hear, hear!"] He had expected that that remark would meet with a responsive cheer. He (Mr. Ellis) had been asked by hon. Members who sat on the opposite side of the House whether that speech was not an amusing one, and his reply was that these were not times when hon. Members came down to the House to be amused. If the highest tribute to a speech in the present crisis was that it was very amusing, it was certainly not a speech that was appropriate to the circumstances of the moment. The hon. and gallant Member was a master of the art of innuendo. He contrived, after long practice, to convey to the minds of those who listened to him insinuations of their complicity in things of which he did not accuse them in a straightforward manner. Several hon. Members had to rise on that side of the House, including the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), in order to repudiate that which was conveyed to their minds in the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member. He (Mr. Ellis) ventured to say that any Member of the House, be he who he might, and sitting where he liked, should convey what he had to say in clear and unmistakable language, and should not go behind the backs of hon. Members to insinuate charges of the basest description against them. He promised, for his own part, not to be guilty of the same offence, and he did not think that he had ever been guilty of it during the time he had had the honour of a seat in that House. He might, however, remind the hon. and gallant Gentleman that only last Session he had initiated one of the most painful episodes which ever occurred in Parliament. The tone and temper of the speech of the hon. and gallant Member last night was such that, if the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was really anxious to secure the honour and dignity of the debates in that House, he (Mr. Ellis) would venture to appeal to him to put some pressure on the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh to restrain his remarks of a provocative character, so that they might not during this Session be led into any of the painful scenes which were due primarily to the hon. and gallant Member last year. In one part of the hon. and gallant Member's speech he endeavoured to connect a particular murder with a local branch of the National League. [Sir ROBERT FOWLER: Hear, hear!] The hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) evidently approved of the course taken by the hon. and gallant Member; but the hon. and gallant Member absolutely failed to connect the two together, for the very good reason, as pointed out by the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin (Mr. Murphy), that there was no local branch in existence at that time, the local branch of the National League which had been in existence having died. [*Laughter.*] The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) smiled at his observations; but he ventured to maintain that it was a grave matter for the hon. and gallant Member to connect what was held to be a perfectly Constitutional situation with such awful crimes as murder. Certainly, in an attempt to connect what they on the Opposition side regarded as a perfectly Constitutional association with such crimes, the House should demand as strict a sequence of proof as would be demanded in a Court of Justice. No hon. Member had a right to attribute such terrible crimes to local branches of the National League, unless he was prepared to produce every link that connected the League with the actual crime itself. The House had to debate the reply to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech under somewhat grave circumstances. It had been the lot of the Speaker to read to the House already, although this was only the fifth day of the sitting of Parliament, letters informing the House that no less than 10 of their Colleagues had been, or were, in Her Majesty's prisons. Now, he did not regard that as a very light matter—namely, that 10 Members of the House of Commons should have been committed to gaol. He had listened with astonishment to the remarks which fell from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) the other night. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, towards the conclusion of the speech in which he tried to come to the aid of Her Majesty's Government—although whether he did so or not was not quite so certain—the right hon. and learned Gentleman, referring to the complaint of the imprisonment of the Irish Members, said that those who complained did not take a democratic view of the matter. To his (Mr. Ellis's) mind, the question was not what was a democratic view or an aristocratic view, but what was the right view, and he would venture to submit to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the advice of an old philosopher, that he should clear his mind of cant. It was a favourite device of Conservative orators on public platforms at the present moment, and it had been made use of in the somewhat hysterical harangue of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell)—it was a somewhat favourite device of hon. Gentlemen to say that there was but one treatment for everybody, and that no difference was to be made between a Member of Parliament and anybody else. He entirely agreed with that, nor did he ask that Members of Parliament should be dealt with in a different manner. They would, however, take care, whenever an opportunity came to remind the Conservative Party and their allies, that that doctrine must be applied all round. On that side of the House they certainly did regard the fact that a constituency so deprived of the services of its Member in the Commons House of Parliament as a very important matter. By imprisoning a Member of Parliament, the Government were depriving a considerable number of persons of the only effective voice they had in the government of the affairs of the country. He did not care whether the Member imprisoned sat on that side of the House or on the other, the fact remained that Her Majesty's Government were imprisoning a Representative of the people. He was not at all surprised that a number of those who were returned last time to the House by Tory votes, but who called themselves Liberals, should undervalue the principle of representation, because no one knew better than they did that a good many of them were not now truly representing their constituencies. He had no desire to enter into that point at the present moment, but he could give name after name of Members sitting on those Benches who never dared to go among their constituents. Since their election in 1886 some of these hon. Members had not visited their constituents at all. No wonder, therefore, that they were shy of the principle of representation. The circumstances under which the House met were grave, not only because several hon. Members had been imprisoned, but also because, by putting persons into gaol who were not believed to be criminals or law-breakers, the Government were striking at the very source and fount of respect for law in the community which furnished the only real security that the law should be observed. What was the offence for which the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) was arrested? In that constituency there was a certain estate owned by the Countess of Kingston, upon which there were a number of leaseholders. Those leaseholders, as the House well knew, were, unfortunately, against the remonstrance of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), excluded from the benefit of the Act of 1881. A measure to remedy that defect was introduced last Session by the Government, and these leaseholders asked the hon. Member for North-East Cork to give advice as to what they were to do under the circumstances in which they were placed. Their landlady was proceeding to eject them, and, as he (Mr. Ellis) held, to deprive them of the property which the Act of 1881 ought to have given to them, and which it did give to the other tenants in Ireland. The hon. Member for North-East Cork told them that there was a Bill before Parliament promoted by the present Government, and that that Bill, if passed into law, would procure them access to the Court. "Therefore," said the hon. Member, "I advise you to hold your holdings against all comers by all honest means." The tenants did so. The Bill became law, and received the Royal Assent during the third week of August, and within some three weeks after that time, Mr. W. O'Brien, the hon. Member for North-East Cork, who gave them that advice, was arrested and suffered imprisonment. Now, he (Mr. Ellis) maintained that, in the ordinary sense of the term, the hon. Member for North-East Cork was not a law-breaker, and was not a criminal. He had been guilty of no breach of the moral law. No doubt, he had suffered under the provisions of an Act passed by this House; but did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland uphold the doctrine that they must not look into the circumstances under which an Act had passed through that House? That Act was passed through the House of Commons as no other Act was ever passed. Of no other Act could it be said that a similar circumstance had happened to one which he had witnessed in connection with the Act of last year. Hon. Members on that side of the House all passed through the House washing their hands of all responsibility. The Chairman of Committees, the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) rose in his place and put 14 clauses of the Bill without debate. Now, he maintained that that was not legislation. Would it be contended by the hon. and learned Attorney General that this House—of course, the hon. and learned Gentleman would say it could—but would it be contended that an Act of Parliament passed in the way he had described should be binding on the people on whom it was intended to apply. Suppose, by way of illustration, that a Bill was introduced by Her Majesty's Government imposing tremendous penalties on the county of Nottingham, of which he (Mr. Ellis) was one of the Representatives, and that it was ordered that the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, at a particular moment, should interrupt the debate and put the whole of the clauses of the Bill without any hon. Member being able to touch a single line or word in the Bill. He contended that that was suspending the representation of the people by a side wind, and in the interests of the dignity of the traditions and the Privileges of the House, he considered it was the duty of every Representative to watch carefully the progress of a Bill as it was passing through the House. There was a great deal of nonsense talked about the law at the present time. One would fancy, to judge from the utterances of many hon. Members on the other side, and some who were sitting on the Benches below him, that the law was a kind of fetish or mumbo jumbo. That was not the idea which prevailed in other days, nor ought it to prevail now. Even the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) said last night that he could conceive circumstances under which it might be proper for him to disobey the law, but he should take care to do it with dignity. That admitted the whole question. There were many laws on the Statute Book at the present moment which he (Mr. Ellis) should feel it his duty to disobey. What was said by a London police magistrate only very recently? It was that if any attempt were made to induce him to put into operation a certain Act, he should entirely decline to do it, until he was compelled by a mandamus from a higher Court. All this nonsense about obeying the law without inquiring what the law was would not hold water for a single moment. It was opposed to the highest principles of the English Constitution, and he protested against it in the strongest manner. They were told in Her Majesty's Speech that agrarian crime had diminished. He was not going to enter into the figures at any length, but he noticed that the Chief Secretary was very shy at any allusion to them. More than once since the debate began the right hon. Gentleman had got up at the Table to explain away any allusion that was made to them. He (Mr. Ellis) wanted now to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to one or two serious discrepancies in the figures which had been given to the House. The right hon. Gentleman had made use of this expression—"that the amount of known agrarian crime in 1886 was 2,195, in 1887 it was 1,837." He wanted to know where these figures came from, as they were not contained in any Return presented to Parliament last year. Then, again, the right hon. Gentleman said — "Agrarian crime, without threatening letters, was 1,056 in 1886; and in 1887 it was 883." But the Returns given by the Chief Secretary included threatening letters, which were surely a very important matter. His (Mr. Ellis's) point was this—that the Chief Secretary said that agrarian crime, without threatening letters, was 1,056 in 1886, and 883 in 1887. Now, from Return 55 handed to the House yesterday morning, the figures 1,056 included, and did not exclude, threatening letters. As everybody knew, this diminution of outrages was going on long before the Coercion Act was brought into the House. He did not intend to labour the point. The Chief Secretary had attempted to do that which every amateur chemist knew was a very dangerous thing to attempt. He had attempted to show that a particular effect had followed from a particular cause, when, as every man knew, that effect had been produced by a multitude of causes. Take the last six months of the years 1886 and 1887, and it would be found that there was nothing in the argument of the diminution of agrarian crime. In the last six months of 1886 the agrarian crimes were 473, and eliminating threatening letters, were 291. In the last six months of 1887 agrarian crimes were 399, or 285 without threatening letters—that was to say, that agrarian crime fell in the last half of 1887, as compared with the last half of 1886, by six cases only. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary referred to Boycotting, and there was a long Return which, as far as he could discover, was the first Return ever presented to the House of Commons in regard to Boycotting. He (Mr. Ellis) submitted, however, that this Return was absolutely valueless, and would remain so until they had the names and dates and the whole particulars which went to make up the return, so that they could be investigated. He ventured to say that it was a little too much to ask the House to accept a Return like this on the mere *ipse dixit* of a Minister at the outset of a debate. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to supplement the Return by the names, dates, and particulars, so that hon. Members might have some means of investigating the matter and putting themselves in a position to discuss it. It must be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman did not come into Court with very clean hands in this matter. They had not forgotten Mitchelstown. The right hon. Gentleman was in such a hurry towards the end of September to accept the verdict of his subordinates with regard to that unhappy incident, that he made at least six statements which within a few days were absolutely contradicted by his own police witnesses. He would not go through them after the very exhaustive examination which had been made of those statements by the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). Nor had they forgotten the curious incident of the Galway midwife. The right hon. Gentleman got up at the Table and, in a theatrical manner, declared that a horrible state of society must prevail where such things could occur; but when the right hon. Gentleman was challenged to make good his assertions, he ran away from them. He (Mr. Ellis) maintained that it was not worthy of a Member of Her Majesty's Cabinet to traduce the character of humble people in Ireland, and then refuse to substantiate his accusations by facts. They were told that the measure which was passed last Session for the benefit of the Irish people had been carefully carried into effect. Who were the principal agents of the Government who were carrying the Coercion Act into effect? He might mention the Lord Lieutenant; but the principal agents in carrying out the policy of the Government were the Resident Magistrates. He would preface what he had to say of the Resident Magistrates of Ireland by the testimony of a very competent observer, who was not one of the Supporters of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), but one who had filled the position of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—namely, Earl Cowper. What was it that Earl Cowper said of these men? In a letter written to *The Times* in January, 1886, Lord Cowper said—

> "In Ireland all local matters are really managed through the instrumentality of the Resident Magistrate, and the Resident Magistrate is in constant communication with the Castle. This state of things has partly arisen from the helpless nature of the Irish, and has partly contributed to prolong that helplessness. A hateful system of bureaucratic government is the result—hateful in itself and only rendered tolerable in my time by the large-mindedness and fairness, as well as industry and skill, of the eminent man who then filled the post of Permanent Under Secretary."

What had the Government done with that individual? [An hon. MEMBER: It was not Sir Robert Hamilton.] Whether Sir Robert Hamilton was Permanent Under Secretary or not in the year 1882—when Earl Cowper was Lord Lieutenant—someone, at all events, was Permanent Under Secretary who blended the relations of the Resident Magistrates with Dublin Castle, and made things tolerable, and it was quite certain that the same man was not there now. Therefore, Earl Cowper's words must be true if they admit his authority that the position is no longer tolerable, because the only person who rendered it tolerable had been removed. One remark of the Chief Secretary the other night, when the Return of Resident Magistrates was spoken of, seemed in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman and of hon. Members opposite to settle every question as soon as any criticism in regard to the Resident Magistrates was raised. It was quite enough to say—"Oh! Lord Spencer appointed them." But that argument might soon be disposed of. Lord Spencer said distinctly that he took the utmost pains that no confusion should arise between the action of the judicial and executive functions of the Resident Magistrates. That was no longer the case, but there was confusion from top to bottom. At one time a man was Judge, and at another an Executive Officer. The position of a Resident Magistrate under Lord Spencer was entirely different from what it was under the rule of Lord Londonderry. The House knew very well, as Earl Cowper said, that the Resident Magistrates were in direct communication with Dublin Castle. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary summoned them to Dublin to meet him in order to be interviewed by him, and to receive, as one of them said, his orders. Now, who were the Resident Magistrates? The House had a Return of them, and he found that out of 76 names there were 32 appointed from the Army and Navy, and 21 from the Constabulary, making 53 out of the 76 directly connected with the forces, because the Royal Irish Constabulary were nothing else than an armed force; of the remainder, 11 were barristers, and there were 12 others. Take the case of Mr. Eaton. Something was alleged with respect to that gentleman last evening by the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Dublin which demanded explanation on the part of the Government. The matter he (Mr. Ellis) was going to mention was a very simple and significant one. In the case of the trial of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), when the first charge was concluded, Mr. Eaton said, before the hon. Gentleman opened his mouth in his defence, "We are perfectly ready to give our decision." That was a most significant commentary on the administration of justice in Ireland. He would appeal to any hon. Member in that House who was in the habit of acting as a magistrate, what would be thought of a magistrate in an English Court, if he were to say, before an accused person had an opportunity of offering his defence, "I am perfectly ready to give my decision." When that case was mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) at Halifax, and reported in *The Times*, Mr. Eaton sent a letter to *The Times* absolutely denying the fact; but he little knew that among the persons present in Court was the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Rowntree), who took down the words in his pocket book at the time. The hon. Member for Scarborough wrote to *The Times* corroborating the statement of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley), and Mr. Eaton had not ventured again to deny the fact. He came now to the case of Captain Seagrave. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had mentioned two or three of the incidents which transpired in connection with this magistrate at Mitchelstown. He was nowhere to be found when he was most wanted, but he was the responsible Executive Officer in charge both of the military and police. What did Captain Seagrave admit in his cross-examination? He was asked by the council for the Accused, who represented the relatives of the deceased—

"'Would a politician be guilty of a direlection if he did not give your message to the County Inspector?' Answer, 'I don't know; I suppose he would; but I know nothing about Constabulary duties.' Mr. Harrington: 'That is another revelation. You don't know anything about Constabulary regulations. You had the command of the Constabulary on that day?' Captain Seagrave; 'Yes, I was in charge of them.' Mr. Harrington: 'Did you ever see the Police Code?' Captain Seagrave: 'I never saw the Police Code.' Mr. Harrington: 'Where you in ignorance of the Police Code as to firing?' Captain Seagrave: 'I was.'"

Consequently, they had Her Majesty's executive officer in command on that occasion declaring that he was absolutely ignorant of the code which should govern the conduct of the police in case they were ordered by him to fire. He (Mr. Ellis) should wait with some curiosity for the answer that would be given to this case from the Bench opposite. He came now to the case of Mr. Cecil Roche, in regard to whom the Government attempted to stop all discussion by flinging at that side of the House the fact that Earl Spencer had, upon one occasion, appointed him a Special Commissioner under the Land Act. No doubt that was an important position; but Mr. Roche did not hold it very long. Mr. Cecil Roche told one gentleman, when he came before him, that Her Majesty's Government did not want English agitators in Ireland. But what was Mr. Cecil Roche himself? He was an itinerant political agitator at the General Election of 1886, in the pay of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union; and he went about defaming the Liberal candidates, and aspersing the character of his own countrymen on that occasion. This was one of the men who was now employed by Her Majesty's Government to administer the Coercion Act — a man who sat one moment on the Bench, and went outside the next to order the Constabulary ruthlessly to charge the people. Another magistrate was Mr. Meldon, at Limerick. He (Mr. Ellis) knew nothing of that gentleman's character; but Mr. Meldon had done that which would not be tolerated in England for a single moment. Certain persons were charged before the magistrates in Court. The case was heard, and the accused were discharged. Mr. Meldon, however, went outside the Court, and gave instructions in regard to particular persons that they should be again arrested. He then took his seat upon the Bench, and the prisoners were brought before him as a magistrate under the Coercion Act on the same charge as that upon which they had been acquitted by the magistrates a short time before. Now, he (Mr. Ellis) maintained that that was repugnant to all notions of fair play or justice. He was, however, coming now to a much more serious matter. In Tipperary there was a magistrate named Colonel Carew. This Colonel Carew was sitting in the Court on the 15th of September; and the report of the proceedings from which he (Mr. Ellis) was about to quote was contained in *The Tipperary Nationalist*, published in Clonmel on the 17th of September—

> "Certain persons were brought before Colonel Carew under the Coercion Act. Mr. Higgins, counsel for the prisoners, said: 'The position of my clients is this—they are brought here to be charged under one mode of procedure, and when they come they are told that the whole thing is to be altered, and they receive no summons to that effect. I wish to know, does the Crown withdraw its first proceeding?'—Colonel Carew: 'I represent the Crown here.'—Mr. Higgins: 'Pardon me, Sir, but you no more represent the Crown than I do. You ought as much to represent the prisoners as the Crown, as your business is to hold the balance evenly between the two.'"

That was a very fair observation for any counsel to make. Did the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) think that if an English magistrate so far forgot his duty as to say, on the Bench, that he represented the Crown, his conduct would not be immediately and justly questioned in the House of Commons? After that observation on the part of the prisoners' counsel, Colonel Carew said—

> "'But I am the Resident Magistrate here, and as such represent the Crown. The prisoners will be tried under the Crimes Act.'—Mr. Higgins: 'And I suppose the first proceedings are abandoned against them.'—Colonel Carew was understood to say that they were.—Mr. Higgins: 'Then I ask that the prisoners be discharged. There is no charge against them now that the Crown withdraws the charge of assaulting Constable Power, on which they were brought here.'—District Inspector Knox: 'But the charge is not withdrawn. It is on that we go.'—Colonel Carew: These men will be brought up under the Crimes Act this day fortnight.'—Mr. Higgins: 'I think the Crown ought to give their reasons.'—Colonel Carew: 'I have received orders from the Government which I cannot disregard, and I do not feel called upon to give any other reason.'"

Certainly not; the 76 Resident Magistrates received their orders from the Government, and did not feel called upon to give any other reason. That was called justice, and the way to win the sympathy of the people on the side of law and order—

> "Mr Higgins: 'I would again remind you, Sir, that you no more represent the Crown here than you do the prisoners.'"

The prisoners were then removed to the railway station in charge of a strong force of police. Colonel Carew suspended the business of the Petty Sessions for nearly an hour in order to accompany the prisoners to the railway station. These were proceedings which were not tolerable. The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) said, the other night, that someone on the Opposition Benches—he forgot whom—had made an ungenerous attack upon the Resident Magistrates. The word generous or ungenerous came with a very bad grace, in this Irish matter, from any man who sat opposite. The Government must act, in this matter, with a little more generosity before they claim generosity from the Opposition. Well, such were the men who were carrying out what he should always call this most infamous legislation. In all gravity and seriousness he warned the Resident Magistrates of Ireland that when the Opposition crossed the floor of the House of Commons, as cross it they would in a very short time, every detail of their administration would be carefully scanned, as it was at the present moment, and if it was found that they had performed their functions in a manner for which they could justly be held responsible they might rely upon it such a course would be taken. He advised them to be careful. They could not shelter themselves behind the plea that they were merely carrying out orders. In times gone by Ministers of the Crown, even Speakers of the House of Commons, had not been allowed successfully to urge the plea that they had acted in a Ministerial capacity, but had been tried and punished accordingly. Let not these Resident Magistrates think they could escape being called to the strictest account. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) invited the House to say—

> "That the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland has been harsh, partial, and mischievous."

Some members of the House, and many, perhaps, out of the 400 or 500 persons who had been condemned, had received their sentences in consequence of words they had uttered in public. He invited the attention of the House to the mode in which proof had been tendered as to the language for which men had suffered. Take the case of Father M'Fadden, of Gweedore, an upright priest, a man who had preserved the peace of his district much more satisfactorily than the armed forces Her Majesty's Government had thought fit to send down. The Rev. Mr. M'Fadden was tried at Londonderry on the 28th of January. The first witness called was a police shorthand writer, Sergeant Mahony, who, in reply to Mr. Ross, said—

> " 'I am sixteen years in Gweedore district, and I am well acquainted with Father M'Fadden.' 'Are you able to write shorthand?' 'I am.' 'Did you take a note of the speech of Father M'Fadden?' 'I did.' 'Produce your notes and read from them?' Witness then proceeded to read from his notes as follows:—'My good friends,'—Mr. Adams: 'I presume those are the only original notes?' 'Yes. I did not report this—" First, that the cause is just." ' Mr. Adams: 'What do you mean by saying that you did not report it?' 'I mean that I curtailed it.' "

It seemed to him (Mr. Ellis) a very dangerous thing to curtail the report of a speech on which a man was about to be tried.

> "Mr. Ross: 'Read what you have there?' Witness continuing: 'I may state that there was a whole lot that I did not report.' Chairman: 'You must read what you have.' Witness: 'I don't profess to be a verbatim reporter, and it might not make sense all along.' Mr. Adams; 'Read your broken sentences.' Witness: 'After some other remarks he says in Irish'—Mr. Adams: 'Have you notes in Irish?' 'I mean to say I translated it into English and then wrote it down.' "

Such was the way in which evidence was given against men tried under the Coercion Act. He (Mr. Ellis) supposed that in that case the magistrate had received his orders from the Government. Take the case of the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy). The shorthand writer was examined—

> " 'Did you ever study shorthand?' 'I did not. I might look over the book; but that is all. As far as I know, shorthand is not studied by any man in the barracks. There was no constable to my knowledge in French Park on the day of the meeting who knew shorthand. I think the day on which the meeting was held was a fine day. The meeting lasted from three o'clock till a quarter to five, and Mr. Sheehy was speaking the greater part of the time. When Mr. Sheehy spoke a sentence, or a sentence and a half, I took down all I could remember at the time. I took no note of what he would be saying while I was taking down the two sentences which I remembered at the time. I consider Mr. Sheehy a slow speaker.' 'While you would be writing a sentence, how many sentences would he get ahead of you?' 'He might get two or three.' 'Then, when you would complete your sentence, would you skip over what he had said in the meantime and then catch him up again?' 'Yes; I would try and remember what he would say in the meantime.' When you say that you would try and remember, what do you mean?' 'I mean that when I heard a sentence or two, I would take that down and pay no attention to what he would say in the meantime.' "

He asked the House whether that was a system which ought to prevail in the case of prosecutions of Members of Parliament. What occurred at the trial of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien)? The police reporter admitted that the notes were not written out till next day. The reporter who took the notes was not called till the Counsel for Mr. O'Brien insisted upon him being called, and then, on the production of his report, it was found that someone had written across the report, "Not to be used." There was a very strong suspicion that those words were in the handwriting of Captain Plunkett. Why was the report not to be used? He ventured to think it was because this loosely taken report differed in three particular points from the charge against Mr. O'Brien, and each of those points more favourable to the accused than the words in the charge actually preferred against him. This was a mockery of justice, and he made no apology for dwelling on such things. They were worth a good deal more than some of the amusing parts of the statement of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson). The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) made a dignified and weighty protest which he (Mr. Ellis) hoped would be felt by members of the Bar on the opposite side of the House, against the conduct of Crown Counsel in Ireland. He hoped that rebuke would go home to the learned Attorney General for Ireland in regard to the case he was now conducting. The conduct of the Crown Solicitors in Ireland could hardly be characterized in Parliamentary language. A case was brought before Mr. Cecil Roche, and Mr. Morphy asked for a short adjournment. Even Mr. Cecil Roche said—

> "I am not inclined to give the Crown any facility; they have come into Court in a very curious way."

It was then arranged that the further hearing of the case would be taken up on Monday three weeks, when Mr. Morphy said, "Oh, won't you hear our side?" He was astonished that one of the Resident Magistrates, a removable, one of the men who received and took their orders from the Government, would not hear his side. Mr. Cecil Roche replied, "I think you deserve no consideration." That was a pretty strong observation for Mr. Roche to make. What took place in the case of Brosnan, the newsagent? In the first place, the man's demand for an appeal was refused by the magistrates. In the next place, the Queen's Bench decided that they would not grant an appeal as frivolous. But the Court of Appeal granted it on the express ground that there was substantial matter for argument. What was the position of the prisoner? He was in gaol, bail having been refused. The Queen's Bench refused to admit him to bail, but his indefatigable counsel, the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), went to the Castle, and pointed out to the authorities what the exact facts were. The Castle Authorities liberated the man. That was a case in which the Chief Secretary used the dispensing power. Would it not be better that the state of the law should be such that no dispensing power would have to be used by the Chief Secretary? The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) passed very lightly over the case of John Sullivan, in which judgment was given by Chief Baron Palles. He (Mr. Ellis) could not mention the Chief Baron without saying that in this grievous crisis in Irish history, it was a good thing that on the Bench of Ireland there was a man absolutely fearless, whose mind was saturated with the traditions of law, and who would recognize no authority guiding his conduct but law. In the case of John Sullivan, Chief Baron Palles decided that there was no evidence to justify his imprisonment. The Solicitor General for Ireland said that the evidence should have been given in a different way.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said, he stated that the Court of Exchequer held that there was no evidence sufficient to justify the imprisonment, and then he had pointed out how that occurred.

MR. J. E. ELLIS was much obliged to the hon. and learned Gentleman for his explanation. He now supposed the hon. and learned Gentleman wished them to understand that the want of evidence occurred through the evidence not being presented in the right way. Did he mean to say that there was evidence, if the evidence had been presented in the proper way?

MR. MADDEN said, he did intend to say that. There were five cases tried, but separately tried. That was to say, each person accused had the benefit of a separate trial. The evidence was given in the first of the cases, but it was not separately given and reduced to writing in the following cases. [An hon. MEMBER: Oh, oh!]

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, the explanation of the hon. and learned Gentleman was challenged by an hon. Gentleman below the Gangway, and therefore the case remained where it was. The fact of the matter was, that Sullivan had been illegally put in prison, and had been liberated by the Court of Exchequer. Again, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) asked them to declare that the action of the Executive was partial. That was a very serious charge against the Executive. He (Mr. Ellis) did not propose to dwell long on the case of Mr. Stoney, which was mentioned last night by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy). The case of Mr. Stoney was brought up on the 1st of September last, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary admitted that Mr. Stoney was guilty of very grave neglect, and in some cases, of even more than that—namely, wilful neglect and misapplication of public money. If the right hon. Gentleman would refer to *Hansard*, he would see that those were the exact words he used. Now, when a man had been declared by a Minister in the House of Commons guilty of such an offence, surely he ought no longer to remain in the Commission of the Peace, especially when the Lord Chancellor had removed from the Commission Mr. Byrne, whose only offence was that he travelled by train a few miles out of his own Petty Sessional district. Every member who held Her Majesty's Commission of the Peace for a county knew perfectly that, although a magistrate entered his name for a particular Petty Sessional district, the Commission covered the area of the whole county. The only possible explanation of Mr. Byrne's treatment lay in his Nationalist sympathies. He (Mr. Ellis) asked that the offence of misapplication of public money in this case should be followed by the condign and proper consequences. But he was going for a moment to deal with an instance of partility on the part of the Government, much more important than this, relating to a particular magistrate. A very interesting deputation waited on the Prime Minister the other day. Last year Lord Salisbury said there was a land war in Ireland, and that it must be put an end to. The noble Marquess added that Her Majesty's Government had laid before the House a Bill to put down certain combinations. Upon the confession of the Prime Minister of England, the Coercion Act was an Act to put down the combination of tenants. The deputation which waited on Lord Salisbury a few days ago consisted of a near relative of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), and a number of other noble Lords, or their cadets. After all, the Irish Land Question reduced itself into a very small family matter. The whole force and power derived from the people of this country was being placed by the Government at the beck and call of a handful of families in Ireland. What did the Marquess of Salisbury say to these men? He told them that if they had been as united in former times as they were upon that occasion, much of the evil would not have happened. He significantly informed them of his continued dislike to the Land Act of 1881, and reprobated it as flagrantly unjust. In other words, the noble Marquess told the landlords of Ireland that they must strengthen their trades union as against the tenant. That was an instance of impartiality on the part of the Government. That illustration alone ought to be sufficient to win assent to the declaration of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). Illustrations of character of the policy carried out by the Government in Ireland were abundant, and of every sort and kind. They were of daily occurrence, and the one difficulty was to avoid so multiplying them as to overload a speech. They found that Justices of the Peace illegally refused access to prisoners; they found that the proper formalities were not observed in proclaiming the National League; they found that evictions proved to be illegal had been carried out with the aid of the Government; they found that even in the case of the murder of Kinsella, the criminal, Freeman, was a trespasser, He would not dwell upon the minor indignities heaped upon prisoners under the Coercion Act. Particular clergymen had been refused access to prisoners, and the late Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) was removed from the Richmond Gaol to the gaol at Tullamore, without the Government having the courtesy even to inform Mr. Sullivan's wife of his removal. In Loughrea, John Roche, a man of the highest character, was laid hold of the other day by an officer of Constabulary. He was a well-known man, and he said—"Kindly let me send a message to my wife." "No," said the policemen, and took him off at once. He begged for a cup of tea, but was refused, and kept sitting all night on a bench, not being allowed even to stretch himself on a hard deal table by way of change of posture. In the opinion of the Irish people these were not trivialities, but they went far to explain the burning sense of injustice on the part of the people and the execration in which the chief author of this policy was received. The administration of the Coercion Act reeks with paltry malignity and calculated brutality. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary thought the strong things he (Mr. Ellis) and others had said could not be supported, let him give them a Select Committee to inquire into the operation of the Act. If he did, they could fill many a page with illustrations of the gross manner in which the Act of last Session was being carried out. Where did the responsibility lie? It laid with the Cabinet; but before he proceeded to say what he had to say, with regard to the chief author of the present state of coercion in Ireland, he desired to refer to some remarks of the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir

Richard Webster). The hon. and learned Attorney General stood, deservedly, no doubt, at the head of an illustrious profession; he was the head of the Bar of the country. Speaking in Leicestershire on the 2nd of November last, the hon. and learned Gentleman said, according to a report in a most respectable paper, *The Leicester Journal*—

> "That being the position of the Irish question, what had they got at the present. They had Mr. Dillon—they had Mr. O'Brien, and he was thankful to say he was now for three months in the hands of the law. They had got Mr. Dillon—(A VOICE: 'He ought to have five years,' and cheers). He (the speaker) thought if he had his rights he would have."

In *The Times* of the 5th of November, the hon. and learned Attorney General explained that he meant his reference to apply to the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien). That made no difference whatever. The hon. and learned Attorney General, the head of the Bar of England, the Chief Law Adviser of Her Majesty, went down to a public platform and said that if a man had got his deserts, he would have got more than the law gave him. That was unprecedented. Now, they heard something of people saying the same thing in the House as they said outside. He promised the Chief Secretary he would do so. He admitted to the full the responsibility of speaking as a Member of Parliament, and he thought that a man should say stronger things if possible in the House than he said outside. He had never been a party and never would be to inflaming sentiment from public platforms; and he said in his place that it was not creditable to the hon. and learned Attorney General to publicly criticize the decisions given in Her Majesty's Courts of Justice, and especially to say that a man ought to have had five years' imprisonment if he had his deserts. He (Mr. Ellis) hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would not think he was guilty of personal discourtesy when he said that if the hon. and learned Gentleman was not ashamed of what he said in Leicestershire he ought to be. He now turned to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He maintained that from a Minister of the Crown they had a right to expect a little more respect for the House than the right hon. Gentleman habitually displayed. The habitual levity and sneers of the right hon. Gentleman were altogether unbecoming his position as Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. In one of the most tremendous crises that had ever occurred in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman could do nothing but sneer and laugh from his place in Parliament. A story had been told by one, who was now in prison, with respect to certain words which the right hon. Gentleman was said to have uttered. If those words were not true the right hon. Gentleman by his callous demeanour in the House had only himself to thank if anybody believed they were true. Well, they had had 12 months of the 20 years of resolute government. What was it all to come to? The state of Ireland might be gathered as the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) pointed out, by the Government's own confession. They came down to Parliament in 1887, saying they would introduce local government in Ireland, and in 1888 they had nothing to say on the subject. That was all gone by the board. At the outset of their proceedings that day the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Akers-Douglas) moved that the Speaker do issue his Writ for the election of a Member to represent West Bristol. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was again entering the Cabinet. He might be taken to be in hearty accord with the Front Bench opposite; and, therefore, he (Mr. Ellis) would recall certain words the right hon. Baronet had lately addressed to his constituents. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We must administer and legislate in a bold and sympathetic spirit of statesmanship, free from those narrow prejudices which swayed so much the action of the Tories 30 years ago, but which now have no influence whatever in Irish political affairs. And further, I would say that we must do everything, consistently with justice and honour, to give to Irish Members of Parliament as great a voice in the settlement of purely Irish questions as for years past we have given to the Scotch Members in the settlement of purely Scotch questions."

Was that the policy of Her Majesty's Government? It was the policy of the newest recruit, and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) seemed to adopt it. He wished the hon. and learned Gentleman were in the Cabinet, and able to give effect to it. If that was the policy of the Government, they would have to treat the Irish Members with a little more respect to begin with; they would have to give more civil replies to Questions put by hon. Gentlemen from Ireland; they would have to promise investigation into Irish grievances a little more readily than they did. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) went on to say—and this was very *apropos*—

> "Further, those Irish matters which it is necessary to retain under the control of the central Government ought, in my mind, to be administered by political officials directly and personally responsible to Parliament, instead of permanent officials only nominally controlled by a single Minister, who cannot possibly find time for all the details of the administration of the country."

There would have to be a great change in the policy of the Government, if they adopted those words. They knew that the Chief Secretary could not find time to administer, or even to know anything about the administration of affairs in Ireland. There had not been a Chief Secretary for Ireland—not even Mr. James Lowther—who had displayed such a want of knowledge of the Business of his Department. He (Mr. Ellis) thanked the House most sincerely for their kindness in listening to him so patiently. The spirit of the Irish people was yet unbroken. The Irish National League was as strong as ever—nay, stronger. The Government had consolidated in one mass the people against them. He listened with great admiration to the words which fell from the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) the other evening, when he said he thought he might with some reason congratulate himself, at the end of 12 years in the House of Commons, upon the improvement in the state of Ireland. At the beginning of those 12 years, there was but a very small minority in favour of Constitutional agitation; at the end of those 12 years there was a large majority of the people who looked to the House for the redress of their grievances and for the realization of their hopes. They had watched with sympathy and admiration the moderation which had come over the occupants of the Benches below the Gangway, with the consciousness of the just power they exercised. They had watched with great admiration the manner in which they had responded to the great effort of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to solve this troubled question. Hon. Gentlemen from Ireland might rest assured that the Opposition felt the responsibility of the position, that they felt it was incumbent upon them to respond to their somewhat changed attitude, and the efforts of their great Leader (Mr. Parnell). They felt that the responsibility to make the people of this country acquainted with the true merits of the Irish problem lay heavily upon them, and hon. Members from Ireland, and hon. Members opposite might rest assured that, having put their hands to the plough, they did not intend to turn back; but that it would be their resolute endeavour to saturate the minds of the people of England with a knowledge of the Irish Question in its whole length and breadth, perfectly sure as they were that as soon as that knowledge was obtained, the electorate of the country would sweep away that miserable mockery in Ireland which called itself government, and carry home to every dweller in that country all those blessings which good government brings in its train.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) said, he was unable to follow the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) in his eulogy on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) and in his characterization of the speech of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) as amusing. His hon. and gallant Friend, of all men, was least open to the charge of being a master of insinuation. Innuendo and insinuation were assuredly not the arts usually employed by his hon. and gallant Friend, who was accustomed to call a spade a spade and to thoroughly master his facts before he dealt with them. The only attempt to answer the speech of his hon. and gallant Friend was made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), who in his account of the Dopping incident had omitted the most important part—namely, the letter of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) before he had been written to by the lawyers. The statement of his hon. and gallant Friend that the murder of Fitzmaurice was attributable to the action of the National League had been contradicted by the statement that the local branch of the League had ceased to exist before the murder was committed. That might be so; but it was none the less true that Fitzmaurice had been over and over again tried by the tribunal of the League and condemned by that self-constituted Court, and so he was murdered shortly afterwards, as many another poor and honest man had been. He was not speaking of landlords, but of farmers who paid their rent, and tried to fulfil their obligations. One after another they were condemned by a gang of rebels in Kerry, and their dead bodies were found by the roadside or elsewhere. He had no patience with those who could support or palliate a system by which honest men were made to suffer for honest deeds. Then the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had passed on to the imprisonment of the hon. Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane) and the question of the leaseholders. Now the leaseholders had been admitted to the benefits of the Land Act of 1881 by the action of the present Government, and he had himself always advocated that course. But there was no reason why the landlord of the leaseholders should not get his rent when it was due, and the hon. Member for East Cork was justly imprisoned for advising the tenants not to pay their rents—advice which would have involved penal consequences to all who might be induced to follow it. He (Colonel King-Harman) dissented most emphatically from the hon. Member's statement that the National League was as strong as ever, and maintained that it had been seriously weakened during the last two or three months. He ventured to prophesy that in another six months' time the power of the League would be still further diminished. This they knew not only from returns and statistics, but from experience and personal knowledge. The gentlemen at the head of the treasury of the League knew it, because they saw that the payments into their exchequer were falling off. They knew that men who were gradually forced year after year into joining the League against their will were now leaving it. They knew that no real attempts were being made to hold National League meetings in proclaimed districts, and the only persons who strove to prolong the life of suppressed branches were the secretaries and other paid officials who were making their livelihood out of it.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): There are no paid officials.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, that there was not a branch of the National League in which there was not some secretary or paid official who was making money out of it. [*Cries of* "No."] It was all very well to say "No!" but he would put his knowledge and veracity against that of any hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix): How can they make money?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said he would give the how and the why. Money was raised by shilling and half-crown subscriptions from the members, and perhaps out of the entire amount £5 was sent up to the headquarters in Dublin. What became of the rest of the money? That was the question that the people in the country were asking. They wanted to know how men who used to have hardly a coat to their backs and never did any work, now wore tall hats and good coats, and walked about and enjoyed themselves with money in both pockets. It was very easy to see that the money did not come from honest work. In fact, it was well known to be a very lucrative and profitable thing to be the secretary of a local Land League. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division repeated various accusations which had been disproved against the Resident Magistrates. He solemnly warned the Resident Magistrates that when the Gladstonian Party came back to power—which God forefend—every detail of their conduct would be carefully and minutely inquired into. In point of fact, he had threatened them just as other hon. Members had threatened the Irish police, bidding them take care what they were about, and not to carry out the provisions of the law too rigidly. He might remind the hon Member that almost every one of the magistrates who had been attacked that day had been the subject of similar attacks in a former year, and that their conduct had been inquired into and defended by Lord Spencer and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow. As to Mr. Stoney, against whom a charge of malversation of public funds had been brought, his case had been investigated by an officer of the Local Government Board, who certainly was not tainted with Conservatism, and by the Lord Chancellor, and they had come to the conclusion that Mr. Stoney had been guilty of neglect only. The sole case of any substance proved against him was that he had allowed a young girl to use an emigration ticket as member of a family to which she did not belong. She was, however, a friend of the family, and lived close to them. For this error of judgment Mr. Stoney had been censured by the Lord Chancellor, who acquitted him of all *mala fides* or malversation. At any rate, Mr. Stoney's conduct could not be compared to the conduct of certain magistrates who had been removed from the Commission for going out of their divisions, in order to pack Benches elsewhere. In his opinion the statistics which had been laid before the House fully bore out the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He had letters in his pocket from individuals thoroughly acquainted with the country, every one of them saying the same thing—namely, that especially in the South of Ireland trade and commerce, even in the smaller towns, were increasing, and that confidence in the law was daily strengthening. It was known that at the recent Assizes evidence had been forthcoming which could not have been obtained during the "reign of terror," and that convictions had been procured, and that juries had not hesitated to do their duty. A letter which he (Colonel King-Harman) had received from a gentleman who was likely to know the true facts stated that all through the South the Queen's writ could now be legally executed, although recently process of law was openly resisted even in the case of fair trade debts. His correspondent also stated that jurors were now convicting fairly on the evidence placed before them; that comparative order was observed, especially in the populous centres; that mobs were easily dispersed; and that they were mainly composed of small boys and girls, who came to obey the order of some local agitator—probably to assist at a demonstration in honour of some person who had been convicted of having broken the law of the land. This showed that what hon. Members opposite called "the great heart of the people" was not on the side of disorder and lawlessness. His correspondent concluded as follows:—

> "An unmistakable feeling pervades the whole country that at last the Government of the Queen is stronger than any mere local associations, and the people are beginning to feel confidence that the Government can establish security, as every Government of a civilized country ought to do."

[*Cries of* "Name!"] He should certainly not give the name. His informant was a merchant of considerable business in the South of Ireland, and he wondered what some hon. Members opposite would do to this gentleman if his identity were known. He did not suppose that their action would stop short at "exclusive dealing." He agreed with his correspondent that Ireland was now more peaceable and law-abiding; but, of course, it was possible that a serious outbreak of crime might yet be seen, for the history of the country taught us that organizations like the National League fought hard and died viciously, and sometimes gave an expiring kick. But if that did come, the law was strong—the law would be carried out, and the law-abiding persons would be protected. There were many hon. Gentlemen opposite—besides those who sat below the Gangway—who thought any means of pacifying Ireland was preferable to that of using the law. They would not agree that Ireland should be pacified by carrying out the same law that applied to England and Scotland and other civilized countries. They said that was all nonsense, and that there must be conciliation; that Ireland was the only country in which the law would not be carried out; and that conciliation, concession, or giving in in some way or other to agitation and crime was the only way of keeping that unfortunate country in order. He (Colonel King-Harman) could remember when a suggestion was made that Ireland should be pacified by bringing back from America Sheridan—the murderer and organizer—and sending him round through the West—a proposition which was made by no less a person than the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and was endorsed by no less a person than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian——

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Nothing of the sort.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he thought he would be able to show that there was something of the sort. He had many quotations to bear out his statement, but he would only read one. On the 16th of May, 1882, the then Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) asked the then Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, a Question in the House, which was duly reported in *Hansard* as follows:—

> "Captain Aylmer: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman one Question. When he and the Cabinet came to the decision that the three Members could no longer be kept in prison on account of reasonable suspicion, were they then in possession of the conversation between the hon. Member for Clare and the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, in which it was stated that he had such control over Sheridan, who had instigated riot in the West of Ireland, that if released he could induce him to put down the outrages? Mr. Gladstone: Yes, Sir."—(3 *Hansard*, [269] 832.)

Notwithstanding the contradiction of the hon. Member for West Leeds (Mr. H. Gladstone), he (Colonel King-Harman) thought that that quotation from *Hansard* amply bore out his statement that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian endorsed the proposal that Sheridan should be employed to put down crime in Ireland. If this did not prove his case, no case ever was proved. One of the most astounding ideas ever put before the House was that crime had been diminished in Ireland, not by the action of the law, but by the action of the National League. There never was a more ridiculous or absurd statement. A glance at the statistics of crime would show the absurdity of that proposition. In 1877 there were 286 cases of agrarian crime. In 1878 321, and in 1879 863. During that year the Land League was founded, and in 1880 the cases of agrarian crime had risen to 2,585. In 1881, which was not a famine year, but a remarkably good year for small farmers in Ireland, the cases of ordinary crime were 7,788, and of agrarian crime 4,439; in 1882 the number of cases of agrarian crime was 3,433. After the first six months of the Crimes Act coming into operation, and the Land League being suppressed, the number of cases of agrarian crime fell to 870, and in the following year to 762. Was there ever such a suggestion that law-breakers should be law-makers, and that those who provoked the breaches of the law were the men who were keeping down crime and making law respected? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian never said anything truer in his life than when he said that "crime dogged with fatal precision the footsteps of the Land League." That was true then. It was true now, and it would be true as long as the Land League existed. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway spoke of conciliation and the union of hearts, and so forth, which was very fine on English platforms and in the House of Commons; but there was not much of that kind of thing in their speeches on the other side of the water. One hon. Gentleman—the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor)—went to address a League meeting in Tipperary not long ago, and he said he had been talking so much conciliation in England that he hardly knew how to address a National League meeting. If conciliation were the order of the day—as would be inferred from the speeches made in the House of Commons—what about the articles in the Nationalist Press in Ireland? If people were to be conciliated, how was it that the Nationalist organs did not preach that doctrine? How was it they preached hatred to English law as much as they could? How about their allies and friends in America? How about the meeting at New York on Sunday last?—a meeting of Fenians and Invincibles, at which the knife and dynamite were freely advocated, at which Frank Byrne—once secretary of the Land League—advocated the destruction of Liverpool Docks by fire. Of all the speeches made during the debate, none had been so marvellous as that of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, who seemed to have forgotten his own past record. Nothing was so marvellous as his abnegation and his forgetfulness of self, and of what he did when he was Chief Secretary, and when he was responsible for law and order in Ireland. Nothing was so remarkable as the way in which he spoke of the National League, considering that it was he who promulgated the document by which the Land League was suppressed. The right hon. Gentleman taunted the Government with having brought in a Bill to enable the law to be properly administered before there was a sufficient amount of crime to make such legislation justifiable. But it was not the business of a civilized Government to wait until crime was rampant and honest men could not hold up their heads. It was the duty of the Government, if it was necessary, to alter procedure so that law could be enforced. The right hon. Gentleman justified the action of the present Government by referring to the amount of crime under his own maladministration. If, as he said, the Liberal Government only took power to suppress the Invincibles and kindred associations, how was it that his Government suppressed the Land League? The Land League died the moment it was proclaimed; and if the right hon. Gentleman had exercised one-half the vigour in the latter part of his Ministry that he did in the earlier, there would not have been half the difficulty there was now in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman, by his laxity, was, therefore, personally responsible for much of the evils at present existing in Ireland, and the way that he went on to attack the administration of the present law was simply puerile. He complained of the arrest of a football party at Kanturk, who had assaulted the police. Did he mean that the players were entitled to a "free kick" at a policeman? He spoke of men being driven to prison in droves; but he did not adduce any examples. However, it was satisfactory to know that the law was beginning to prevail in Ireland, especially in the matter of Boycotting, which had greatly diminished throughout Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had brought forward a case to show what Boycotting was. That case had been challenged, and he would leave his right hon. Friend to give his version of the story again if he pleased. He (Colonel King-Harman) would give one case, which he did not find in the Police Returns, of the accursed practice of Boycotting which had occurred within his own knowledge—a case, however, which was typical of hundreds and of thousands, but which he could personally vouch for. In the county of Sligo, a man named Goffin was Boycotted for about two years. The man was a small farmer and a shopkeeper; no servant was allowed to work for him, and no customer was permitted to enter his shop. A poor widow, named Sweeney, who had a family of five children, and was in receipt of outdoor relief of 4*s.* per week, assisted the Boycotted man as a means of helping herself and family. In October or September last the woman did some work for him, for which she was rewarded in kind out of his shop and not in money. For this she also was Boycotted. The National League disapproved of this, and the other day the poor woman was in consequence struck off the outdoor relief list by the Guardians, and was told that if she wanted relief she might go into the house, and thus be separated from her children. All this was because she did some work for a Boycotted man, and yet hon. Members opposite were asking for an extension of local self-government for such men as the Guardians of this Union. Let them give the country law and order first, and a real free voice, which the people had not at the present time, and then such Guardians would not be re-elected. If the people were allowed to exercise the franchise according to their conscience, they would not elect men who committed such heartless acts, and who had brought the Unions into the condition in which they now were. Let them look at the condition of the Unions in the South and West of Ireland. He would not speak of what were known as the distressed unions, to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), when he was in Office, advanced £20,000, and he would not say whether that advance was necessary or not, though an inquiry into the management of that grant had proved that it was maladministered to an extent which even those who thought that they knew something about it were not aware of. But he might say that more than one-half of the Unions in the South and West of Ireland were practically bankrupt. The Guardians spent their time in talking politics and in passing seditious resolutions against the Government, and against anybody who did not happen to agree with them, while the poor were neglected, and those who were in receipt of outdoor relief could not get their money because the cheques of the Guardians were dishonoured by the bank through their accounts being overdrawn—[*Cries of* "Where?" "What Unions?"]—He could not give the full list from memory, but he would name off-hand the Unions of Tulla, Ennistymon, and Dingle to go on with, and he would be prepared with other names later if required. These were the kind of people to whom it was proposed to give local self-government, and through whom the hearts of the people were to be won. The first thing that should be done, however, was to keep these people in order, to teach them their business, to teach them the first principles of honesty and duty. After that they might begin to talk about giving them local self-government. Let the law be obeyed first. Law in Ireland must be carried out. There was no nation in the world—as Irish history from the remotest ages proved—that required to be governed, and that must be and would be governed, as the Irish race required to be governed. They must be governed. History showed that before the Saxon ever put his foot on Irish soil the few bright spots in Irish history were where the Irish sceptre was wielded by a strong and powerful Monarch to enforce the law; and where the Irish nation was not governed by law it would be governed by lawlessness. It was the duty of any Government, and it would be the duty of hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, if ever the unfortunate chance—which God forbid—should occur of giving into their hands the government of Ireland, to see that the laws which they made were carried out. Every country must have law. The excitable nature of the Irish people must have law, and if they did not enforce it the people would submit themselves to what they believed was stronger than the law, even though it might be what Mr. P. J. Smyth called the League of Hell—the Land League. The law must be protected. Puny it had been in the past, but punitive, deterrent, and protective, please God, it should be in the future. Men who wished to do their duty must be protected by Government, if Government was to be worth anything at all, and procedure must be framed so as to make the law operative. The Irish people were not free from original sin any more than any other nation; but he believed that they were more easily governed by a strong and just Government than the Anglo-Saxon race. He thought it most creditable to the Irish people that after six years of misgovernment, intimidation, and incentive to wrong-doing they had maintained so good a position as they had. It could not be expected that the evil effect of six years of misgovernment could be done away with in a moment; but he claimed that the action of Her Majesty's Government was doing away with those evil effects gradually but steadily. He believed that the people were looking to the law for protection to themselves—they were turning to industry, and were trying to improve their position, because they believed that the law would protect them in the honest fruits of their industry. Her Majesty's Government were doing their duty by Ireland and by the Empire, and the House might be perfectly certain that they would continue in their present course. He believed that God would bless their efforts, and that they would see Ireland as it should be—free from crime, happy, prosperous, and industrious.

MR. H. GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.) said, that at the outset of his remarks, he wished to protest strongly against the tone adopted by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet Division of Kent (Colonel King-Harman) in his attack upon the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) for some comments which that hon. Gentleman made on the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson). Yesterday he (Mr. H. Gladstone) heard the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, and he said emphatically that the hon. and gallant Gentleman brought a distinct charge in the way of innuendo against his hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) of inciting to crime and outrage, and he also brought a similar charge against another right hon. Member, which he (Mr. H. Gladstone) would not touch upon on the present occasion. The Chief Secretary cheered when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) said that the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh did not deal in innuendos, but delivered downright invectives; but it seemed to him (Mr. H. Gladstone), that the hon. and gallant Member delivered his speech in innuendos thundered forth as invectives. But, however that might be, he denied the charge brought against his hon. Friend (Mr. E. Harrington), and everyone who knew that hon. Gentleman would agree with him in saying that such charges were false and infamous. He had listened with attention to the speech of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, as he wished to gather an accurate idea of the real state of Ireland; but he was bound to say that the speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had left his mind in a complete fog, because at one moment he spoke of the excellent state Ireland was in, and almost in the same breath he said it was in a shocking condition—so bad, in fact, that they must not ever think of giving local government to it. He could not make either head or tail of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's speech, and he should have to content himself with the plain facts which the Government had given in their Returns. There were, however, one or two remarks made by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman which he must notice. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman made charges against members of the National League in Ireland—he charged them with purloining the money of the League. In saying that, he (Mr. H. Gladstone) was not doing the right hon. and gallant Gentleman an injustice, he thought. The worse his charges were against the National League the more fierce in tone and the more savage in demeanour he became, and he gave hon. Members the opportunity of forming an opinion upon the judicial spirit in which the authorities of Dublin Castle worked the Crimes Act. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman had made some allusion to Mr. Sheridan, and a Question that was asked in the House in the Session of 1882, and with regard to which he (Mr. H. Gladstone) only wished to say that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman only had blame and condemnation for one unfortunate individual. Why had not he brought down the thunder of his invective upon the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale and the other Liberal Unionist Leaders who, at the time, were in the Cabinet and privy to what had taken place?

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, he had read the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. If the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale had made a similar answer, he should have read it.

Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, the question was in reference to the Government; and, as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman knew, it was referred to the Government, and all the Members of the Cabinet were privy to the answer. Then the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had gone into the ancient history of agrarian crime in Ireland, and had quoted the figures from 1877, and had tried to show an intimate connection between those figures and the course of the Land League. He had said that crime only began to fall when the Coercion Act of 1881 began to work. He was speaking in reference to the allegations of Liberal Members, that the present improved state of the country was owing to the Land Act of last year. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman would recollect that when, seven years ago, there was a fall in outrages, the Land Act of 1881 was at work.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, that after the passing of the Land Act crime rose to an unexampled extent.

Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, that might be; but, as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman knew, it took some time for the Land Act to get to work. Now, he was going to make a few remarks on the state of Ireland as it appeared to him, and the position of the Government with regard to it. They were very much misled last year in the course of the debates in the House, for they were led to expect from the Government much drastic vigour and effective brutality in restoring law and order in Ireland; but they had had nothing of the kind. The policy of the Government had been exasperating without strength—it had been ineffective without any action calculated to maintain the dignity and supremacy of the law or to create respect for the Administration itself. No serious attempt had been made by the Government to put down the National League. Now, this debate had brought into prominence three facts, which, he thought, were incontestible in spite of the remarks of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. First of all, with respect to the National League. No attempt had been made to suppress it. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman said that the power of the National League was going down, and he brought forward some arguments —the stale, old arguments—which had been in use in Dublin Castle from time immemorial, which he (Mr. H. Gladstone) remembered using himself in 1881 and 1882, and which were continually used by Mr. Foster in this House, to the effect that the subscriptions from America to the Land League were falling off, and that the sympathies of the people were being transferred from the Land League to the Government. Well, were they justified in using that argument then? They were as much justified as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was now—perhaps more justified. In the next place, the Government having tried to suppress a certain number of branches of the National League, as everyone admitted, had failed to do it. They read in the papers that the branches continued to hold meetings. Reports of their proceedings were published in a great number of Irish papers. These facts were incontestible. Then, in the third place, the Plan of Campaign had run its course in Ireland almost without interruption. Most hon. Members would recollect that last year there were two main reasons adduced in support of the Crimes Bill by hon. Members in all parts of the House—namely, that the National League should be put down, and that the Plan of Campaign should be sternly suppressed, and should never be allowed to raise its head. Coercion, they were told, was of no use whatever if it did not enable the Government at once to deal with those two formidable evils. He felt great compassion for the unsatisfied desires of the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Saunderson), the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), and many others. That was the view then entertained by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh and the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale; but the failure of their hopes had been the fulfilment of the expectations of the Opposition; for the Opposition had said at the time in the House that the National League was in reality the Irish nation, and that they could no more put down the League and the spirit of the League than they could put down the spirit of nationality among the Irish people. Well, the 1,800 branches of the League were now flourishing, and no attempt was made to hew down its main trunk in Dublin. A great deal had been said about the illegality of the Plan of Campaign and its failure; and he did not dispute that technically the Plan of Campaign was illegal and susceptible of grave abuses in any well-ordered community; but what attempt had been made by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, by the Chief Secretary, or anybody else, to prove that in its effects and its working during the last 12 months it had done any injustice to anybody? Would the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say that the settlements on the estates to which the Plan had been applied would have been effected if the Plan had not been adopted? Would the hundreds of poor tenants on the Kingston Estate have got the benefit of the Government Land Act of last year but for the action of the hon. Member for North-East Cork?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The settlement was refused by the National League three months ago.

MR. H. GLADSTONE: I am given to understand that a settlement has been quite recently made.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, that settlements made by Lady Kingston were made on terms which were offered to the tenants some time ago and refused. ["No!" *from the Home Rulers.*] He had it from the lady herself.

MR. H. GLADSTONE said, he would leave that point to be dealt with by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, who had a special knowledge of the subject, and were well able to deal with it. But whatever might be said about that settlement, it was clear that a great number of the poor tenants would have been turned out of their holdings but for the action, legal or illegal, of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien); and they might talk about technicalities and the letter of the law as much as they liked, but it was well known that people whose vital interests were at stake and who were driven to desperation, would take the best weapons which came to hand for the defence of their homes and their lives. Did the right hon. and gallant Gentleman deny that all the landlords except one to whom the Plan of Campaign had been applied had given in, though they had at their backs all the armed forces of the Crown to support them? Did the right hon. and gallant Gentleman constitute himself the champion of the one distinguished landlord who had remained obdurate? He (Mr. H. Gladstone) had listened to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman when he had denounced murders and outrages, and he hoped that they in that House all joined in denouncing them; but he had never heard from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, or from the Chief Secretary, or from any occupant of the Treasury Bench, any denunciation of the hideous crimes of the landlords. He did not want to make any sweeping charge against the landlords of Ireland. He had always said, in every speech he had made on the subject, that the vast majority of the landlords of Ireland had done, or had tried to do, their duty; but a remnant of them had been criminals in the true sense of the word, by bringing destruction on thousands of men, women, and children; and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman never uttered a word of condemnation of their conduct. [An hon. MEMBER: He is one of them.] In regard, then, to these points which he had dwelt upon, from the point of view of order and the general condition of Ireland, the Government had not much cause for satisfaction. He now came to the Chief Secretary's statistics, and what were they? In regard to the figures relating to Boycotting, he admitted that cases of "total Boycotting" were of importance, and he was glad to hear the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say that there were fewer of those painful cases to be found in Ireland; but in the Return given they found thousands of cases of what was called "partial Boycotting." He should like to ask what was this partial Boycotting? They had no definition of it. If anything was refused to anybody in Ireland he supposed that that constituted "partial Boycotting." If such a Return were made out for England he could undertake to give 50,000 as good cases of partial Boycotting as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman gave for Ireland. He spoke with some knowledge on this subject, for in many parts of England he had seen and spoken to men who had been, he would not say wholly ruined because they did not allow that in England, but partly ruined by the withdrawal of custom because of their politics. In England they did not allow the system to do much mischief, because they believed in their cause and fought Boycotting and the Boycotters; and if the people who were Boycotted in Ireland had a better cause they would be able to stand out much better against Boycotting than they did. But how were those Returns made up? He had some slight experience of Dublin Castle, having been there four months, and he had some knowledge of the temper and the methods of the loyal minority in Ireland. At Manchester, not long ago, the Chief Secretary happened to mention the question of evictions, and pointed out triumphantly that when the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan) was in Office, a great number of evictions were carried out, while there was a much smaller number during his own tenure of Office. There were special points which were referred to yesterday on which the Chief Secretary was challenged by the right hon. Baronet, and he only wanted to say that it was a matter of notoriety that the landlords and the "loyal minority" had, during the last 10 years, done their best to hamper a Liberal Government and to give every assistance to a Conservative Government. Mr. Forster found that out when in Office, and there was ample proof of it. They know very well that numbers of Irish landlords had held their hands in order not to embarrass a Tory Government, when the same men had at other times insisted on their full legal rights, knowing that their insistance must add to the difficulties of the Liberal Government. The case was the same in regard to Boycotting. The police and the Resident Magistrate were naturally largely under the influence of the gentry and of those calling themselves Loyalists, who cried for coercion and gave figures last year to show they required protection. Now, these gentlemen were bound to show that coercion had succeeded, and he had no doubt had gladly given evidence to Dublin Castle to the effect that their position was much better, in order that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary might have excellent figures to present to the House to justify coercion. ["Oh, oh!"] He made no reflection on the good faith of the Chief Secretary. He was well aware that the right hon. Gentleman could not go into the details of these cases. It had been the standing evil of the Castle that they were at the mercy of the allegations and figures sent to them from all parts of the country. Now, he passed to the Return concerning outrages. Looking at this Return, hon. Members would do well to compare the last five months of 1886 with the last five months of 1887. They would find that the Government could take small satisfaction from the Return. He admitted that there was little crime now; but there was little last year. The Return altogether was of small value; but attempts had been made to found something on it. In the five months of 1886 there were 239 outrages, and in the eight last months of 1887 there were 223, giving the Government the small advantage of 16. He omitted threatening letters and notices, which were of no importance. All this came to very little; and for this paltry advantage the Government last year went through the prolonged and bitter debates on the Crimes Act. It was for this the Government had, if possible, increased the distrust in Ireland in the administration of the law and even weakened the respect for the law itself. More than that, the Government had succeeded, unhappily, in leading a large part of the people of England and Scotland to view the summary jurisdiction in Ireland in the same light as the Irish people. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) had gone into this matter, and he (Mr. H. Gladstone) did not intend to follow him. With all that the hon. Member had said he agreed, and he thought that it proved his contention. It was singularly unfortunate to see in Ireland the responsible authority representing the Government—the 40,000 police and soldiers—standing in hopeless antagonism to the people and their Representatives. Perhaps he might be allowed to give one small illustration of what he meant. A gentleman whom he happened to meet some time ago—a man of unimpeachable position and respectability—was the spectator of some rather notorious evictions in Ireland. He was a gentleman eminently peaceful—peaceful to a fault; and, seeing there was some rough work, he was removing himself to a safe distance at the time an order was given to clear the ground round the cottages, and for the police to form a cordon. The police charged, and this unfortunate gentleman, who had been going off before the order was given, was knocked down three times, and rolled into the ditch. He did not resist at all. After the occurrence, the District Inspector went and apologized to him, and said—

> "The fact of the matter is that my men did not know you were an Englishman. They thought you were an Irish Member."

He added—

> "The Irish Members do not spare us with their tongues, and we go for them when we get the chance."

Now, there was a good deal of humour in that story; but it conveyed a serious moral. It showed that this antagonism must last while the Government persisted in their traditional policy—a policy which, whatever might be said of any other policy, had always been a wretched and complete failure. Now, with regard to the position of the Government and their supporters in respect to their administration in Ireland, the main charge he brought against them was—and the point had been alluded to before in the course of that debate — that they had broken their solemn pledges in regard to local government in Ireland, and they had in this way made their action harsher, more partial, and more mischievous. He asked this, by what Constitutional or moral right were they governing Ireland by coercion alone? In his opinion, not enough had been said of the manner in which the pledges of hon. Members opposite, and of hon. Members sitting on the Liberal side also, had been broken. The Liberal Party were beaten at the last Election because of the promises those Gentlemen had made, and which they had entirely failed to keep. He wished to show that by quotations from speeches; and he assured hon. Members that he would give as few extracts as were necessary to prove his point. All the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite and of the Liberal Unionists at the last General Election were saturated with pledges that they would push forward local government for Ireland, and with repudiations of a coercion policy. At Leeds, on June 19, 1886, Lord Salisbury made a speech—his last speech before the Election—in which he gave the text of his policy. He said—

> "Of a good system of local government for England, Scotland, and Ireland, I have always been an advocate. I believe the extension of local government to Ireland would be a great advantage;"

and the noble Marquess admitted that the present system constituted "a substantial grievance" in Ireland. In his address to the electors of Edinburgh, June 18, 1886, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "To the assertion that there is no other choice than to accept the Government plan or to fall back upon simple repression, the opponents of the Bill give a point-blank denial. . . I am an advocate of large measures of decentralization."

He would now quote passages to show how completely the Government had realized the binding force of the pledges which they gave to the constituencies before the General Election. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), on August 19, 1886, said in the House of Commons—

> "The Queen's Speech of January last announced the introduction of a Bill with regard to local government in England as well as in Ireland. . . . . The great sign-posts of our policy were at that time, and are still, equality, similarity, and, if I may use such a word, simultaneity of treatment as far as is practicable in the development of a genuinely popular system of local government in all the four countries which form the United Kingdom."—(3 *Hansard*, [308] 1323.)

The noble Lord, later on, on September 14, said—

> "He thought that the functions of the Board of Works and the Local Government Board called for the most careful consideration from the Government, with a view to their development, as far as might be, in accordance with Irish ideas and desires. It was the decided intention of the Government to make proposals to Parliament at the earliest opportunity, which he hoped might be next Session."

Now, last Session came and went without any sign of the fulfilment of that promise. The Solicitor General said the hope was disappointed; but it had been disappointed this year, and there was now less hope than ever from the mere fact that they brought in a Bill for the reform of local government limited to England and Scotland, which was not so much wanted as in Ireland. He now passed to the speeches of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, who they all knew was the pillar and support of the present Government, which speeches were even more significant than those already quoted. The noble Lord, speaking at Glasgow, on June 26, 1886, said—

> "To what I said at Belfast last year about local government in Ireland, I adhere now."

At Belfast on November 5, 1885, the noble Lord said—

> "I would not shrink from a great and bold reconstruction of the government of Ireland; I would not be disposed to deny that it is probably too centralized in Dublin, and that owing to the delegation of so many of the functions of government to irresponsible Boards, it is wanting in vigour and responsibility."

Speaking at Rossendale, on July 5, 1886, before the General Election, he said—

> "I admit that any reasonable desire for the extension of self-government must now be considered in the Imperial Parliament."

Two days later the noble Lord said—

> "We have long been endeavouring to find the opportunity of giving to the people of England and Scotland greater control over the management of their own local affairs, and whatever rights we give" (hon. Members would mark this) "to England and Scotland we all are ready to give equally, and, if a case can be made out for it, in a greater, a further, a more generous degree to Ireland."

One more extract he would make from the speeches of the noble Lord. Speaking at Glasgow, June 25th, 1886, the noble Lord said—

> "I confess for myself that I am not going to be intimidated by the name of coercion from supporting, or if need be proposing, such measures as may be necessary for the enforcement of just and equal laws and rights in Ireland, when once I am satisfied we have met, or endeavoured to meet, the legitimate desires and legitimate demands of the Irish people."

Well, what did these extracts show? He regretted to say, and he said it respectfully, as he had a genuine and great respect for the noble Lord, that those extracts clearly showed that the noble Lord must have led his constituents to believe that, if returned to power—and he was practically returned to power—he would see that the question of local government in Ireland should be taken up, because he admitted that the absence of it was a grievance. The extracts showed that the noble Lord gave his constituents to understand that he would not vote for coercion until he had satisfied or attempted to satisfy the just desires and wishes of the Irish people. The noble Lord admitted that they had just desires and wants; but he had voted for coercion, and he (Mr. H. Gladstone) deeply regretted to say that the noble Lord had not lifted a finger to remove the grievance which he himself at his Election admitted to exist. These extracts proved up to the hilt that the Government were returned to power under a complete misapprehension—not to use a harsher word. That misapprehension in the popular mind was brought about by their own speeches and their own pledges, which they had not attempted to fulfil. They had had one excuse that he knew of from a distinguished Member of Her Majesty's Government as to why they were not dealing with this question of local government. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—he was quoting from memory, and the right hon. Gentlemad would correct him if he was wrong—had said that they were unable to deal with the question of Local Government because a wave of lunacy had passed over the people of Ireland.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I gave many other reasons, but I do not think I used the phrase.

MR. H. GLADSTONE said, he quoted from memory, and would not pursue the point. He had seen no valid reason brought forward on the part of the Government for not fulfilling the pledges they repeatedly made to their constituents. He believed they held their position under a misapprehension, and that that explained the speech of Lord Salisbury at Liverpool, in which he said that, though the Government might often be beaten, they would take very good care they did not go to the country. In conclusion, he said that as the National Party became more Constitutional, more moderate, and more reasonable, as it saw the dawn of hope brightening into day, so the loyal patriots of whom the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh was the Leader, were marching in the opposite direction; and the hon. and gallant Member, judging by his own speeches, was the potential advocate of violence and rebellion in Ireland. He did not envy the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was the last and the only hope of the worst landlords in Ireland; but even the right hon. Gentleman had not been strong enough to hold his shield over the great majority of them. One remained under his ægis, and he wished him joy of the noble Lord whom he protected. Unhappily, the Government was the friend of all who were despised and distrusted by the Irish people. He and his hon. Friends, however, saw no reason for despair. They condemned all the wretched details of the present coercion administration in Ireland; but, taking a broad view of the situation, there was every encouragement to the Liberal Party for a renewal of their efforts in opposition to the policy of the Government. Their task might be long; but whether long or short, hon. Members might be sure that there was a lasting alliance, defensive and offensive, between the British and the Irish people, and that that alliance would continue until the Government gave Home Rule to Ireland, or until they were compelled to give place to those who would give it.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, North-West) said, he could not pass by the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Mr. H. Gladstone) without saying that a more bitter speech had, in his (Sir Walter B. Barttelot's) opinion, never been made in that House. The hon. Gentleman had made a threat that law and order would not be maintained in Ireland until Home Rule was granted by the Government of this country. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) stood up in his place to say, in reply to that threat, that so long as they could keep out of power the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), hon. Gentlemen on those Benches and their supporters would use every Constitutional means in their power, in the best interests of the country, to secure that result. The Government had been backed—and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) said it with the greatest pride and gratitude—by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), whom the hon. Gentleman, while professing great friendship, had, nevertheless, done everything in his power to damage before the country. That noble Marquess, however, could well support the criticism of the hon. Gentleman; and they were, at any rate, proud of a man who could throw Party feeling to the winds to secure the best interests of his country, which he knew would only be maintained by the Liberal Unionists uniting with a Party which, whatever their faults or their politics might be, were determined at all hazards to maintain the integrity of the Empire. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had spoken with much violence against Irish landlords.

Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, he had distinctly guarded himself against that. He had limited his remarks to a very few.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, the words were—"The hideous crimes of the landlords."

Mr. H. GLADSTONE: I said "some landlords."

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that reservation might have come in afterwards; but it was not in the first statement of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of the disgraceful way in which the Irish landlords had behaved. He would only say, with regard to the landlords of Ireland, that they had for many generations and in many instances done their duty nobly to their Queen and their country; whereas hon. Members below the Gangway opposite merely showed respect for the Queen in that House, while everything they did outside showed the bitter feeling entertained against the Sovereign and against the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman ought not to pass without notice. They are un-Parliamentary.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that as his expression was considered too strong he would withdraw it at once. His feelings upon this subject were strong, and were shared by a large number of hon. Members on those Benches. He protested against one thing being said within the walls of that House by hon. Members opposite, and to totally different language being used elsewhere. With regard to the landlords, he wished to say that they had surely been heavily mulcted in the interest of the tenants of Ireland. The Land Act of 1870 was the first step in that direction, and the second step was the Land Act of 1881. He had on every occasion voted against the Land Act of 1881, and he had never disguised that fact. He had spoken in his place against it, and had never hesitated fearlessly to state his views, for he had never changed his opinion. The hon. Gentleman opposite had stated that the Government had not fulfilled their pledges with regard to Ireland. He, on the contrary, considered that the Government had done almost more than could have been expected with regard to the amelioration of the condition of the Irish tenants. He had not thought it either right or fair that the Act of last year should be passed, nor did he expect that it would be; but it had been passed, and no one would now deny that it had been an Act of amelioration in the interest of the tenant. While it was passing, he remembered how it was reviled and denounced by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who said it would fail, although now they said it was an Act which was contenting the Irish people. The great question which they were assembled to discuss was that of law and order in Ireland; and the argument of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was that disorder would continue to prevail there. He would call attention to the speech which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian delivered at Shorncliffe on his return from abroad a short time ago. The right hon. Gentleman had said that there was a fact before us of terrible solemnity; it was that in this country, which boasted itself the home of liberty, we saw the spectacle of one nation holding down by force another nation; that they might cast their eyes over Europe and they would scarcely find such a thing; in the North, South, and West of Europe no such spectacle was to be seen, and no such spectacle was to be seen in America; that even in the East of Europe the most despotic of countries gave to Finland her own institutions, and Russia could say what England could not say — namely, that 32,000,000 people in England were afraid of 5,000,000 in Ireland being hostile to Great Britain if they had a local Parliament. But why had not the right hon. Gentleman named Poland, and why did he speak only of Finland, the most peaceable of countries? He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had seen in Poland and around Warsaw in 1864, just after the rebellion, troops and troops of pinioned and fettered men being sent to Siberia. Here was a case far more applicable than that selected by the right hon. Gentleman, and which would not have enabled him to say what he had of despotic Russia. Again, what the hon. Gentleman had said about the number of those who supported the Government had been so well refuted by those hon. Members who had gone into statistics and by an able statement in *The Times* newspaper that he did not think it necessary to refer to the matter further than to say that the Government had a majority of 100 which he trusted they would retain; and his firm belief was that if they went to the country to-morrow they would come back to the House even stronger than they were at present. When the Crimes Bill was in that House hon. Members opposite discussed and opposed it to their hearts' content; and yet when that Bill became the law of the land, and hon. Members were bound to obey it as such, there were some who had declared in Ireland that the Act ought not to be enforced, and that what was the law of the land need not be obeyed by the people. Lord Selborne — for whom everyone in that House had respect— said with regard to the statement of a man high in Office, whose name he need not mention, that—

> "The making of speeches against law and Government could not stop with Ireland."

The noble and learned Lord called that nothing less than gambling with the highest interests of the country, and he concluded by asking whether anyone differed from him in saying that the supremacy of the law was the very essence of freedom, and saying that, nevertheless, there were people who used the name of freedom as if it had anything to do with the subversion of the law which was going on. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) thought there were few who would get up and say that the views which the noble and learned Lord condemned were not those which had been impressed on the Irish people during the Recess. If they went back to the year 1880 they would remember that the Peace Preservation Act was allowed to drop by the Government which was then led by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). What happened? Why, in 1881 things had become so bad in Ireland that the right hon. Gentleman was forced to bring in the Acts of 1881 and 1882, the two strongest Coercion Acts that had ever been introduced. Moreover, there were many hundreds of men in prison without one particle of evidence against them, and who were not brought to trial; and yet hon. Gentlemen opposite were abusing the present Administration because men were brought to trial upon specific charges of crime. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), speaking at Wexford on the 9th of October, 1881, at the time when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had refused his demands, said—

> "You have an opportunity of studying the utterances of a very great man—a very great orator—and who recently desired to impress the world with a great opinion of his philanthropy and hatred of oppression, but who stands to-day the greatest coercionist, the greatest and most unrivalled slanderer of the Irish nation that ever undertook the task. I refer to William Ewart Gladstone."

That was the language of the hon. Member for Cork towards men whom, having abused in the strongest language before their opinions were changed, the hon. Member and his supporters, now that they thought they could get something out of them, fawned upon and flattered in a manner that it was not using language too strong to describe as disgusting. He would like to know when and how it was that the arrangement existing between the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite took place? They all recollected the Session of 1885, and that in the autumn of that year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian prayed that he might not have to deal with Irish Members. But his prayer was not granted, and there was a majority against the right hon. Gentleman unless he could get the Irish Members on his side. And he did get them on his side by a promise of Home Rule; and all the right hon. Gentlemen at that moment on the Front Opposition Bench at once changed their opinion at the right hon. Gentleman's bidding. He would like to know on what plea or principle it was that those right hon. Gentlemen went against the principles they supported when they were elected, and which they had stated inside that House, as well as outside of it. He admitted that the Conservative Government were absolutely wrong, in his opinion, when they allowed the Crimes Act, which had not expired, to lapse, and he felt they would have been in a better position had they not taken that course. He did not think that the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) would deny that, after the Act of 1848, Ireland enjoyed peace, prosperity, and contentment, which lasted for 20 years. [Mr. DILLON: Because you starved 2,000,000 people.] If ever there was a statement without foundation it was that. No nation could have been more generous than England in subscribing for the relief of distress and providing against the famine. He denied that we were three separate nations. We were indissolubly bound together as one nation; we had been so for hundreds of years; and no more mischievous thing could be done by any statesman than to try to sow dissension between English, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had done. What they were endeavouring to do was to secure that Ireland should be governed fairly and honestly, while, at the same time, the law was maintained. He had read in an American paper a report of a speech of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), which, if it were a true report, showed that the hon. Member had stated in America what he dared not state in that House. The words he referred to were these—

> "If any English spies are present, I want them to note what I say with regard to the armed men here. These men are ready to fight for Ireland if the chance should arise, and any nation which England tries to strike can have 100,000 such men to fight against the British Crown."

He also had read the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Dublin (Sir Thomas Esmonde), which stated that—

> "Allegiance would continue only so long as it was impossible to throw it off, and if it was not for the brute force held over Ireland by the English Government its power would not exist for 24 hours longer."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): May I ask where and on what occasion those words were uttered?

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: At Chicago. Were they to believe that hon. Gentlemen made statements in America which they were afraid to make here? Did they wish to be considered rebels in America and loyal subjects of Her Majesty when they were sitting in that House? They had all last year an opportunity of showing their loyalty and respect for Her Majesty. Hon. Members below the Gangway opposite were asked to go to that place where others went to meet Her Majesty; but everyone of them had steadily absented himself, and he asked if that was not disloyalty to the Crown? Irish Members said that so long as there was a Crimes Act there would be no peace in Ireland. But had there been peace when there was no Crimes Act, and was it the Crimes Act that had incited to the deeds that had been done in Ireland? He would mention three cases of murder in West Kerry which would be well known to the hon. Member who lived there. He made no accusations whatever against any hon. Member.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Make them if you can.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Why should I make them? I do not know that they are true. Do you think I would accuse a man if I did not believe that what I said was absolutely true? I make no accusation; but it is an extraordinary thing how sensitive a man is when no accusation is made against him. That gives a strong suspicion that there may be something which we know nothing about.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order, and I claim your protection. This is the second time that an accusation of murder by innuendo, has been made in this House. I would rather be taken from this House and expiate the charge of murder than be forced to sit down and listen to insinuations which just stop short of actual accusation. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, kindly to request the hon. and gallant Baronet to make such accusation as comes to his lips or his mind, and thus give me an opportunity of replying.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman can, no doubt, reply, and I allow him to make a statement and to repudiate any insinuation or charge, if the hon. and gallant Baronet has made any charge of that kind. I do not quite know what the hon. Member's point of Order is.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: The point of Order is this—whether it is capable for an hon. Member to mention first the name of another hon. Member of this House, and then, immediately in connection with that name, to mention murders, and then to pass it off and say "I make no charge," leaving thereby the impression on the mind of the House that there is some connection between the name of that hon. Member and the charge?

MR. SPEAKER: This is a matter not for the intervention of the Chair, but for the general judgment of the House.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I made no insinuation, nor did I even mention the hon. Member's name, further than this—[*Cries of* "Withdraw!"]—and I adhere to it—that it was in Kerry that these murders took place. I do not say that the hon. Member had anything in the world to do with them. I make no accusation against him. But it was in Kerry, and he knows perfectly well that they were most disgraceful murders. I shall hope to see him get up and repudiate that the National League had anything to do with them.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: May I now appeal to you, Sir, on a point of Order, whether it is at all required of me to get up and repudiate that with which I have no connection, and with which I am not charged? I ask whether there is not such a covert insinuation in the charge of the hon. and gallant Baronet that there is some necessity for my repudiating it; and that he inclines to put it to the House that there is some connection between me and the charge of murder?

MR. SPEAKER: Again I say that that is not a point of Order. If the hon. and gallant Baronet had made any charge against the hon. Gentleman in the House in un-Parliamentary language, I should certainly have called him to Order. If the hon. Gentleman thinks any insinuation has been made against him, he is at perfect liberty to repudiate the insinuation so made, and to state that there is no foundation for it. No question of Order has yet arisen. If anything disorderly arises it will be my duty to interfere.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): May I ask whether it is in Order for an hon. Member to insinuate that another hon. Member is responsible in some kind of way for a murder which has been committed? An insinuation, as I understand, has been made, and the imputation is distinctly made on one hon. Member of this House that it is his duty to disclaim, in the name of an association of which he is a member, responsibiliy for that murder.

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot be responsible for the effects which any insinuation, so-called, may produce on the House. It is not for me to say to what extent the insinuation goes. If any insinuation or charge had been made in un-Parliamentary language it would have been my duty to interfere. It will be quite sufficient for the hon. Gentleman, if he thinks it necessary to do so, to repudiate anything of the kind which he thinks laid to his charge.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, again, that he had not the slightest intention, nor had he, to the best of his belief, done this. He had stated that murders had occurred in the district in which the hon. Member for West Kerry lived, and that he knew them to be most foul and abominable murders; he stated also that if that hon. Member could say that the League was free from any connection with them he would be doing that body a great service. The whole of the proceedings of the League showed how necessary it was that we should have a resolute and determined Government in Ireland; and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) wished to say how he and all of them on those Benches appreciated the efforts of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the courage and determination which he had shown in enforcing the law which had been placed in his hands, without which he would not have discharged the duties of the position in which he was placed. When they remembered how his right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had suffered in mind and body, and how in the agony of his soul he had in his defence exclaimed, "I am an English gentleman," they felt that in the present position of affairs they must look for a man who would unflinchingly do his duty; and they looked to the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and the body of men who supported the Government in their policy for the means of securing to every man in Ireland the freedom to which he was entitled. That was the policy they intended to pursue.

God grant that his right hon. Friend might be permitted to restore that freedom to the people of Ireland, and it certainly should not be the fault of the Unionists of this country if he were not able to do so.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. O'Brien,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND [SALARY, &c.]—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee thereupon read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he did not think the Bill ought to be taken at that hour. They were now within one minute of the time for discontinuing debate on this Bill. The Government had repudiated over and over again last Session the notion of giving a salary to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who had come to the assistance of the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

PERSONAL PROPERTY (EXEMPTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to exempt Personal Property (to a limited value) from seizure and sale under legal process, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Picton, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Channing, Mr. M'Ewan, and Mr. Howorth.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 126.]

HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Robert Reid, Bill to facilitate the better Housing of the Working Classes in London, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 127.]

House adjourned at ten minute before Six o'clock

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 16th February, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Pharmacy Acts Amendment * (13).

Second Reading — Cathedral Churches (2); Law of Distress Amendment (4).

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*First Reading* — Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint).*

QUEEN'S SPEECH—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE LORD STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD (The Earl of MOUNT-EDGCUMBE) reported Her Majesty's answer to the Address as follows:—

My LORDS,

"I thank you for your Loyal and Dutiful Address.

"I receive with cordial satisfaction your assurances that you will take into careful consideration the measures which may be submitted to you, and I trust that, with your co-operation, they may be settled in such a manner as will effectually promote and increase the welfare and happiness of my faithful people."

[*For Lords Address*—see *Appendix.*]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following, viz:—

E. Lathom. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Morley.
L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Colville of Culross.

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

E. Cadogan. (*L. Privy Seal.*)
M. Bath.
E. Lathom. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
E. Devon.
E. Winchelsea and Nottingham.
E. Lindsay.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Bathurst.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Milltown.
E. Belmore.
E. Powis.
E. Morley.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Ducie.
E. Sydney.
E. Wharncliffe.
E. de Montalt.
V. Gordon. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
V. Hutchinson. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
V. Hardinge.
V. Eversley.
V. Oxenbridge.
L. de Ros.
L. Clinton.
L. Balfour of Burleigh.

L. Boyle. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
L. Digby.
L. Thurlow.
L. Foxford. (*E. Limerick.*)
L. Colchester.
L. Wigan. (*E. Crawford and Balcarres.*)
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Sudeley.
L. Belper.
L. Houghton.
L. Hartismere. (*L. Henniker.*)
L. Sandhurst.
L. Colville of Culross.

PRIVATE BILLS.

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL.—(No. 2.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it agreed to a certain extent, but not entirely, with the Bill presented last Session. That Bill was not pressed to a second reading because a committee of the Lower House of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury was appointed to consider and report upon it. Their report was considered by a committee of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, who consulted him upon the subject; and the result of the consultation was that the report of the committee of the Lower House was substantially adopted as the basis of the Bill of which he moved the second reading. There were, consequently, considerable differences between the present Bill and that of last year. It was necessary to say something about the history of the subject. In 1879 he introduced into this House a Bill to enable cathedrals of what was called the "new foundation"—that was those that were founded by Henry VIII.—to revise their statutes. These cathedrals were governed by statutes which they had no power of altering in any substantial manner, and it seemed to him that this was a position in which no corporate body ought to be placed. Having suffered as the dean of a cathedral of the new foundation at Ely, he felt strongly on the point. By the Bill of 1879 he endeavoured to revive an Act of Parliament passed in the reign of Queen Anne which dealt with the subject. It was not much used during her reign, with which it expired; and his wish had been to confer upon the Sovereign something like those powers which were given to Queen Anne, and which died with her. When he proposed the second reading of the Bill, Lord Beaconsfield, who was Prime Minister at that time, objected to it on the ground that it dealt only with cathedrals of the new foundation, and he stated that the difficulties which had come to his knowledge had related chiefly to cathedrals of the old foundation, referring, no doubt, to the case of York Minster. His Lordship then intimated the intention of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the advisability of legislation for cathedral foundations, both new and old. A commission was accordingly appointed; it was at first presided over by the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and afterwards by himself. The Commission completed their labours, making, as they were directed by the Commission, a Report upon each cathedral, and also a Report embodying certain general recommendations. The Bill of last year was, in effect, the translation of the Commission's recommendations into the form of an Act of Parliament; the present differed from it in several respects. One difference, to which he would subsequently refer, was a very important one. The centre and backbone of the present Bill was that it should be competent for the dean and chapter of a cathedral, with the consent of their visitor, to lay a statute before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, if they approved of the statute, should lay it before Her Majesty in Council, that it should be laid on the Table of the Houses of Parliament for three months, and that if it were not appealed against by any person affected by it, and if no Address to Her Majesty against should be presented by either House, it should be lawful to Her Majesty to approve it, and then it should have full effect as a lawful statute of the cathedral. The machinery was simple, and he believed it would be effective. He would now specify two or three points in the Bill which required notice. There was an omnibus clause which contained special provisions as to certain cathedrals. It was considered that an ordinary statute could not effect some of the objects to be attained by that clause; but any of its proposals could, in Committee, be amended or omitted. There was, also, no reason why any cathedral body should make use of the clause unless it desired to do so. Clause 10 proposed an exchange of patronage in cathedrals between the Bishops and the Crown. It seemed to him that both these forms of patronage were exceedingly valuable. It was desirable that the Crown should retain patronage in cathedrals; but the objection to the existing condition of things was that in some cathedrals the Crown had all the patronage and in some it had none, while in others the Bishops had all the patronage and the Crown had none. At Carlisle, for example, he had the patronage of all the canonries, while at Norwich the Bishop had not a single stall in the cathedral at his disposal, and it was the same at Bristol and at Gloucester. The Bill proposed that a scheme should be prepared by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners which should adjust this inequality, and that in every case the Bishop should have at least one stall in his cathedral, and that the Crown should be compensated by having in exchange a stall in some other cathedral where now the Crown had none. The object of Clause 13 was to remedy a difficulty which was universally acknowledged as to the interpretation of the 3 and 4 Vic. c 113 s. 44, with regard to dean and chapter patronage. The difficulty was to put an intelligible meaning upon the clause; and there was no recognized or uniform interpretation of it. It was, therefore, proposed to repeal the clause entirely and to substitute for it one to which it was thought there could be no objection. The 12th clause saved the powers which any dean and chapter might lawfully possess of making statutes. The 13th clause provided that a statute under this Bill should not vary or supersede any provision of the Parish of Manchester Division Act, 1850. There had been a great deal of difficulty with regard to the Cathedral Church of Manchester. The dean and chapter were some time ago involved in a law suit, the result of which had been to settle that the number of persons employed in the cathedral as arranged by the original charter could not be altered. Therefore, the Cathedral of Manchester, with its large endowment, was now fixed with the most absurd and inadequate choir of four men and four boys. There had been negotiations between the rectors of Manchester and the dean and chapter on this point, and he was in hopes it would have been possible to introduce a clause into this Bill which would have produced harmony and peace. In fact, a clause was laid before him, but it was objected that it had not been agreed to by both sides, and when it was put before the parties he found they did not agree at all about the matter. Therefore there was no alternative but to omit the clause altogether, and to leave Manchester, so far as this Bill was concerned, in its present unsettled state. He did not see in his place a noble Lord who had taken great interest in the matter (Lord Egerton of Tatton), who might possibly be disposed to insert in the Bill a clause to deal with this difficult point. For himself he should only be too glad if it were possible to settle the Manchester difficulty by a clause in this Bill. The important difference between this Bill and that of last year, to which he had promised to refer, was that this was entirely a Permissive Bill. Last year it was proposed that if deans and chapters did not reform their statutes within a certain time it should be competent for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to frame statutes. His own opinion was that there would have been no hardship in that arrangement; but, as others thought it was better to leave the matter entirely optional, he was willing to concede the point, believing and hoping that public opinion would supply any coercive power that might be needed. If his Motion for the second reading of the Bill were agreed to, he did not propose to take the Committee stage for a month, so that all concerned might consider the various points raised by the Bill. The passage of the Bill through their Lordships' House would be an easy thing; the difficulty would arise when it reached "another place." He hoped, however, that when it left that House it would not be overlaid or strangled in the House of Commons.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*).

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, the Government did not desire to offer any objection to the Bill, and he thought that there could be no objection on the part of their Lordships to read it a second time.

Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the 16*th of March* next.

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Herschell.*)

(NO. 4.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD HERSCHELL, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said that it dealt with two matters, and two only, in connection with the levying of distraint, but these were of very considerable practical importance. In the first place, the Bill gave the same privilege of exemption from distress for rent to a tenant in respect of his bedding and tools as he had against an execution under Section 96 of the County Courts Act, 1846, by which an artizan's tools to the value of £5 were protected against distraint. His attention had been called by a County Court Judge, who had had great experience in administering justice in these matters in a large town, to the very great hardship and evil which resulted from the absence of such a provision as this. The power now in the hands of the landlord of distraining upon the tools of an artizan did not give any real satisfaction to the landlord for the debt, for they were generally sold for a very small sum, and when the tools were sold the skilled artizan was no longer able to work, and was deprived of the means of employing the skill which he possessed. So that the law as it now stood really did great mischief to the tenant, while it gave very little benefit to the landlord. Inasmuch as the law exempted these articles from execution for any other kind of debt, it was not unreasonable that they should be exempted from distress for rent by the landlord. The other provision in the Bill, which was of considerable importance, referred to the employment of certified bailiffs, as under the Agricultural Holdings Act, to levy distress. A landlord, with the exception of cases under that Act, could at the present time employ as bailiff any person he pleased. Under the Agricultural Holdings Act, however, a landlord was restricted to bailiffs who had been appointed or approved by Judges of County Courts. That Act was passed in 1883, and he believed had been found to work well. He had been informed that in one single day a County Court Judge had before him four cases in which bailiffs appointed by landlords had entered the houses of the wrong persons. In one case a bailiff entered the house of a tenant and seized goods worth £4 or £5 for 14*s.* rent which the tenant did not owe. The bailiff took the goods away and sold them, and left the family to sleep upon the floor, the result being that all the members of the family suffered from illness and one of the children died. The tenant, a woman, brought an action against the bailiff and the landlord, and it was held that the landlord, not having directed the bailiff to proceed against her, was not liable, and that the tenant's remedy was against the bailiff. That remedy was absolutely worthless, because this bailiff, having the proceeds of the sale of the goods in his possession, disappeared, so that the landlord suffered as well as the tenant. In neither of the other three cases had the bailiffs handed over the money obtained by the sale of the goods distrained upon to the landlord. He had had a number of other cases communicated to him by a County Court Judge, showing that the present system by which the choice of bailiffs was left to the landlord was most unsatisfactory. The Bill proposed that in future landlords should employ bailiffs approved by a County Court Judge. This had been the law so far as agricultural holdings were concerned for the past five years, and there was very strong ground for extending it to urban holdings as well. He hoped that their Lordships would think it worth while to read the Bill a second time. He moved that the Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Herschell.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, he did not intend to ask their Lordships not to read the Bill a second time, although there were two doubtful matters in it. In the first place, some provision should be made for the case where the tenant, whose tools and bedding would be exempted, persisted in stopping, in defiance of his landlord, upon premises in respect of which his term was out and he did not pay rent, and in respect of which he had no distrainable goods. With regard to the employment of bailiffs, he should prefer a provision which would make such an act as that referred to by the noble and learned Lord an act of extortion or robbery on the part of the bailiff, punishable by fine and imprisonment rather than the clause in the Bill. Instead of making it necessary that a bailiff should get a licence from a County Court Judge, any such act of wrong-doing should be made an offence, and the man should be punished. Then the Bill said that the County Court Judge might from time to time appoint a sufficient number of fit and proper persons. In his opinion, the Judge ought to appoint any properly qualified person who applied. There should be no limit or restriction in the matter of numbers.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that he was a little apprehensive as to the advisability of introducing the words about a "sufficient number" of bailiffs contained in the Bill, because in the case of a place like London, for instance, how was a County Court Judge to ascertain what would be a sufficient number to meet the necessities of the case? He, therefore, entertained some little doubt as to that point; but the matter was one which could easily be left to be dealt with at the Committee stage when they came to consider the Enacting Clause. Upon the whole, he must say he thought that the Bill would be a valuable addition to their legislation, and that it would remove some of the objections to the power of distress as it at present existed.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BANGOR AND WARRENPOINT) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Bangor and Warrenpoint—Was *presented* by The Lord Balfour of Burley; read 1ª.

Lord Bramwell

PHARMACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Pharmacy Act, 1852, the Pharmacy Act, 1868, and the Pharmacy Act (1868) Amendment Act, 1869—Was *presented* by The Earl of Milltown; read 1ª. (No. 13.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 16*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Standing Orders, *nominated;* Selection, *nominated.*
PUBLIC BILL—*Ordered—First Reading*—Breach of Promise of Marriage* [128].

QUESTIONS.

ITALY AND ABYSSINIA—MASSOWAH.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he would put up a map of the neighbourhood of Massowah in the Reading Room, and allow an officer of the Intelligence Department to mark the positions of the Italian troops?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have given instructions that the best map we have of the neighbourhood of Massowah shall be placed in the Reading Room; but as regards the positions of the troops, as no foreign officers are to be attached to the Italian Army, we have no means of indicating them which are not available to the public generally.

POST OFFICE—THE ENGLISH MAIL TO SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is intended to despatch any part of the English mail for South Africa by Continental route to Lisbon, there to be put on board the Cape mail steamers; and, if so, on whom will fall the extra cost of 2½*d.* per letter in addition to the present 6*d.* charged for letters to South Africa?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Cape Colony has granted permission for the steamers of one of its mail contractors—the Union Steamship Company—to call at Lisbon on the outward voyage from England; and it has asked the Post Office here to send mails by the Continental route to Lisbon, there to be put on board the Cape steamers. This request involves two questions—first, whether we can acquire the right to send mails through the Continent by the trains of the International Sleeping Car Company, which are not *per se* mail trains, and without the use of which the route offers no advantages; and, secondly, if we should use those trains, who is to pay the cost of the mail transit, which will probably be considerable? These questions are under consideration. The Post Office has not yet acquired the right to send the mails by the private express trains referred to, and it is in correspondence with the Cape Colony as to the payment of expenses. In the meantime, it is, of course, not intended to send any mails to South Africa *viâ* Lisbon; and, for my own part, I am not disposed to recommend the Treasury to incur any additional expense on account of these mails, if the effect of such an arrangement would be to place the commercial interests of this country at a disadvantage in competing with those of other nations on the Continent.

ARMY (INDIA) MADRAS — ARMY CLOTHING CONTRACTS.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, notwithstanding his statement made to the House last year, the Superintendent of Army Clothing, Madras, has invited tenders to supply goods for the year 1889-90, in terms which will prohibit goods made in Lancashire and Yorkshire from competition; and, whether the following items are included in the terms of the specification: Flannel, blue, grey, S. W. 19,263 yards; Flannel, thick, cricket, white, 2,378 yards; Flannel, white, S. W. 7,808 yards; Flannel, grey, S. W. 7,000 yards; Cotton, grey, 36 inches wide, 2,762 yards; Cotton, white, O. R. 9,786 yards; Holland, brown, 2,438 yards; Cotton, twill, 37,250 yards; Serge, blue, thick, No. 2, D. W. 8,517 yards; Drill, Kaki, 485,579 yards; Braid, tubular, worsted, white, 3,309 yards; Braid, tubular, worsted, yellow, 7,057 yard; Serge, blue, rank and file, 16,127 yards?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has observed with regret that an advertisement of tenders for Army clothing has appeared at Madras in terms which he considers misleading, and he has accordingly addressed a communication to the Government of Madras on the subject. The value of clothing for which tenders were invited last year was £17,000; the amount purchased £24.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) - COURT HOUSES—ACCOMMODATION FOR PRISONERS AWAITING TRIAL.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can now lay upon the Table of the House the Memorandum, promised last Session, stating what steps have been taken by Local Authorities to remedy the defects in the accommodation of prisoners awaiting trial?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am afraid it is still premature to present any complete statement of the steps taken by the Local Authorities to improve their accommdation for prisoners awaiting trial. I am happy to say that in 89 cases the authorities have complied with all the conditions laid down by the Committee. There are 50 cases in which correspondence is still proceeding, with results which promise to be satisfactory. In only seven cases have difficulties arisen, which have not as yet been removed.

POST OFFICE — SELECT COMMITTEE ON SUNDAY POSTAL LABOUR.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether effect has yet been given to any of the recommendations made in the Report of the Select Committee on Sunday Postal Labour; and, if so, in what way?

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Report of the Committee was by no means unanimous?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Yes, Sir; I am quite aware of that. In reply to the Question on the Paper, I have the honour to state that the inquiries I have thought it necessary to make relative to the Sunday services affected by the Committee's recommendations are not yet complete; and that although I hope very soon to be in possession of all the information which I have asked for, it will, I think, be better to await this before announcing what steps appear desirable to adopt, in view of the Committee's recommendations.

THEATRES (LONDON AND THE PROVINCES) — CONSTRUCTION — LEGISLATION.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (Exeter) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Bill this Session to deal with the questions of access into and exit from theatres?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Government have now under their consideration the question of the greater safety in construction of theatres both in London and the Provinces, and the expediency of introducing a Bill dealing with the subject.

NORTH SEA LIQUOR TRAFFIC—FLOATING GROG SHOPS—INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT THE HAGUE.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Bill this Session to carry into effect, as far as England is concerned, the International Convention for the Suppression of Floating Grog Shops in the North Sea?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Any such Bill would have the hands of the Board of Trade. I be in inquired there, and find that it is intended to introduce such a Bill.

SILVER PLATE—RESTRICTIONS ON THE MANUFACTURE AND SALE.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the fall in the price of silver, and the consequent fall in the exchange value of the Indian rupee, whereby the incomes of members of the Anglo-Indian Services are seriously affected, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take into consideration the laws relating to the manufacture and sale of articles of silver plate in the United Kingdom, with a view to remove all hindrances to the consumption of the raw material, silver, for manufacturing purposes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply to the hon. Member I can only say that I cannot anticipate my Budget Statement by saying what modifications of existing taxation I am or am not prepared to propose. I am afraid the hon. Gentleman must be content with this answer.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his statement last Session, that he had considered the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Reformatory and Industrial Schools, which reported in 1883, and that two measures, dealing respectively with reformatory and industrial schools, had been prepared by the draftsmen, and would, he hoped, be introduced next Session, Whether these two Bills are now ready, and how soon they will be introduced?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that two measures were now being revised, and would, he hoped, be introduced soon after Easter.

COMMONS (METROPOLIS) — WANDSWORTH COMMON — DAMAGE BY VEHICULAR TRAFFIC.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the action at law referred to in answer to a Question put on 3rd February, 1887, relative to the extensive damage to Wandsworth Common by the vehicular traffic of the tenant of the Royal Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund, is still pending; or, if concluded, with what result?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, the powers of the Conservators of Wandsworth Common were transferred last year by an Act of Parliament to the Metropolitan Board of Works. I think that my hon. Friend would best obtain information on the subject referred to from that Body. I may add that the Commissioners of the Royal Patriotic Fund do not admit the alleged damage.

INLAND REVENUE—STAMPS ON BANKERS' CHEQUES.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What was the amount realized last year by the 1*d*. stamp on bankers' cheques ?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The amount may approximately be placed at £450,000.

ADMIRALTY—PENSIONS TO WIDOWS, &c.—UNCLAIMED PRIZE MONEY.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the large reduction which has been made in the Navy Estimates for the ensuing year has enabled him to overcome the "financial difficulties" which he experienced last year in obtaining from the Treasury the proceeds of naval mulcts, fines, unclaimed prize money, unclaimed deceased men's estates, and the sale of slush, in order that this money, properly belonging to the Royal Navy, may be used for the carrying out of the scheme of pensions to the widows of Seamen and Marines, as recommended by the Duke of Edinburgh's Committee?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): No final decision has yet been come to as to the appropriation of naval mulcts, &c., which is one of the proposals contained in the scheme submitted by the Duke of Edinburgh's Committee. The Admiralty have been unable to accept this scheme as a whole, as it touched age pensions. I hope later on to be able to give some definite information as to how the money in question is to be dealt with.

IRISH LAND COMMISSIONERS—SCHEDULE OF PRICES.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of the Government to lay upon the Table the Schedule of Prices upon which the Irish Land Commissioners acted in decreeing the recent reduction on judicial rents; and, if he can give any explanation as to why Mr. Justice O'Hagan declined to sign the Order promulgated in December last?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commission, in decreeing the recent reduction on judicial rents, acted, subject to the principle laid down in section 29 of the Land Act of last year, as a Court of Arbitration on judicial rents, from which there is no appeal. Hon. Members will see that, under the circumstances, the Government would not have the right to ask the Commission, or any single Commissioner, for the grounds on which their decision was based, even if such a course seemed in other respects desirable.

ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1887—COMMON PASTURE.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in a parish where "common pasture" has been acquired by the Sanitary Authority under section 12 of "The Allotments Act, 1887," a labourer may have the benefit of the same, in addition to an allotment of arable land or a garden?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Where common pasture has been acquired for a parish by the Sanitary Authority under Section 12 of the Act referred to, a labourer may have the benefit of the common pasture in addition to an allotment under that Act.

BURMAH—CAPITATION TAX.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether a capitation tax, and of what amount, per head, is imposed in Burmah; what classes of persons are exempted from the tax, and the grounds of such exemptions; and, whether this tax is complained of by the Natives as most oppressive on the poorest members of the community?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): A capitation tax, five rupees for each married man and two rupees and a-half for each bachelor, is imposed in Burmah. In some parts the rates are only two rupees and one rupee respectively. Teachers, Government servants, persons unable to earn their living, and immigrants for the first five years of residence, are exempted. The tax is not specially unpopular.

INDIA (TELEGRAPHIC SERVICES)—DIRECTOR OF INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPHS,

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the retirement of the present Director of the Indo-European Telegraphs is overdue under the Service Rules; and, whether he is not only allowed still to retain his appointment, with all its valuable remuneration and perquisites, but that he is also allowed to hold the appointment of Director of the Edinburgh Museum on a large salary?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): There is no Service Rule regulating the retirement of the present Director General of the Indo-European Telegraph Department. On the 24th of January last it was settled that he should retire on the 15th of February, which he has accordingly done.

RABIES IN DOGS—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

Viscount CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of the Government to give effect, by legislation or otherwise, to the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Rabies in Dogs; and, whether it is in his power to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of deaths from hydrophobia during the last 10 years?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The subject of rabies in dogs is receiving the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and the Privy Council Office are in communication with some Local Authorities with reference to the restrictions which may be necessary in connection with it. If it should be considered that further powers are required they will be asked for. If my noble Friend moves for a Return of the number of deaths from hydrophobia in England and Wales from 1877 to 1886, the Motion will be agreed to by the Government. The average annual number of deaths in England and Wales during the 10 years referred to was 40, and the average number in London from 1878 to 1887 was seven. The total number of deaths in England and Wales from hydrophobia in 1885 was 60, of which 27 were in London; in 1886 it was 26, of which nine were in London. The number of deaths in London in 1887 was two. I am unable to supply the total number in England and Wales for 1887.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1887—THE INSTRUCTIONS.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether complaints have reached the Commissioners of Customs of delay and inconvenience having arisen in consequence of the observance by Custom House officers of the instructions of the Commissioners relative to the carrying out of the Merchandise Marks Act of last Session; whether these complaints have referred mainly to goods for home consumption or to goods in transit; whether any of the instructions themselves have been objected to by traders; and, if so, what was the purport of the objections; whether it is the case that goods of foreign origin have been detained for no other reason than simply because the word "yards" was used to indicate their measurement, that being an English word, without the addition of the foreign place of origin; whether it is the case that thermometers made abroad have been detained because the word "Fahrenheit" was impressed upon them, that word being supposed to be an English word; and, whether it is intended to issue any amended instructions, after the experience obtained since the Act has been in operation?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that little complaint has reached the Board of Customs as to the manner in which their officers have carried out their instructions. The London Chamber of Commerce have suggested that goods bearing labels required merely for packing and similar trade purposes may be admitted without such qualifying words as may be required in the case of labels intended for the public. The Sheffield Chamber have suggested amendment of the regulations as regards the requirement that security should be given by informers under the Act. These suggestions are now under consideration. When the Act first came into operation goods were detained at certain outports for bearing tickets with the word "yards," but were released immediately on reference to the Board. The answer to the Question about Fahrenheit thermometers is in the negative. When further experience has been gained of the working of the Act it will probably be found desirable to issue further instructions. I think it right to add that the Customs were strongly pressed in the direction of strictness in the supposed interests of manufacturers in this country; and it is not surprising if some difficulties have arisen. I have for some time been in communication with that Board on this question, and they have shown themselves most ready to avoid all hindrance to trade, so far as this can be done, while carrying out the provisions of the Act.

POST OFFICE—GOVERNMENT ELECTRICAL FACTORY, HOLLOWAY.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the Postmaster General, If he will state the number of men employed in the Government Electrical Factory at Holloway, and what is the proportion of foreign workmen engaged there; whether the nature of the work is such as can be carried out equally well by capable English workmen, who are continually applying for employment there; and, if the Controller of the Factory is now absent from ill-health, how long he has been so, and, if still in receipt of his full pay?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The number of men employed in the Telegraph Factory at Holloway is 180, of whom 30 are foreigners. The selection of fresh workmen is made solely according to the qualifications and character of the men applying for work; and in the last two years only two new foreigners have been engaged. The Controller of Stores, under whose supervision the Factory is, has, I regret to say, been absent on account of illness for the last 12 months, but has not for the past six months received full pay. I have recently applied to the Treasury to grant him a superannuation allowance.

CEYLON—FOREIGN MAIL STEAMERS.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether an Ordinance has recently been passed by the Government of Ceylon, admitting certain foreign mail steamers calling at Colombo to the status of men-of-war, a privilege denied to British mail steamers; whether this Ordinance was opposed by the commercial member of the Legislative Council, by all the Native members, and by all the non-official members except one; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have given any sanction to a measure passed by the official majority in opposition to the wishes of nearly all the non-official representatives of Colonial opinion?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): An Ordinance was enacted at the end of last year by the Legislature of Ceylon continuing, during the subsistence of the Postal Convention with France of 1856, temporary Ordinances which confer on French and German mail steamers in the ports of the Colony the status of men-of-war—a privilege which is not possessed by British mail steamers. Opinion in the Legislative Council was divided, as the hon. Member states. The Ordinance was introduced at the instance of the Home Government as regards the French vessels, in order to comply with the conditions of the Postal Convention of 1856; and, as regards the German vessels, in compliance with the request of the German Government that, during the continuance of the Convention, the mail steamers subsidized by them might be allowed the same privileges as those subsidized by the French Government.

BOYCOTTING (IRELAND)—EXPLANATION OF TERMS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to Sessional Paper 6, "Boycotting (Ireland)," What is the meaning of the following terms therein used:

(a.) wholly Boycotted; (b.) partially Boycotted; whether, before the preparation of the Return, any steps were taken by the Government to secure the use of the terms referred to in the same sense by the compilers in all parts of the country, and also in the two different periods embraced in the Return; and, whether he will give the definitions of the terms "wholly Boycotted" and "partially Boycotted" furnished by the Government for the guidance of the compilers?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Persons are classified as wholly Boycotted when no one in their neighbourhood will buy from them, supply them with necessaries, work for them, or hold any intercourse with them; and as partially Boycotted when they suffer from all or any of these injuries in a partial degree. When the Return, which now forms the first period of the present Return, was originally prepared, the officers who compile these Returns were called on for an explanation of the method of classification adopted by them; and it was found, as must obviously be the case, that the method throughout the country was practically the same. Since July last there has been no change whatever in the mode of preparing these Returns, and therefore no new definitions were issued.

ARMY—THE HOUSEHOLD TROOPS—THE MEDICAL SERVICE.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any alteration is contemplated in the Medical Service of the Household Troops; if so, what is the nature of the proposed alteration?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The whole question of the organization of the Medical Department of the Army has been engaging my earnest attention. Several points of detail are still under consideration; and I must ask my hon. and gallant Friend to be good enough to wait until I introduce the Army Estimates, when I shall endeavour to explain fully the arrangements which are contemplated.

Mr. Arthur O'Connor

THE SEYCHELLES ISLANDS—ISLAND OF MAHÈ.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is aware that British Residents in the Island of Mahè still complain of partial and unjust administration of the Laws, and of other grievances; and, whether he will cause another and more rigid inquiry to be made into the affairs of that Island?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): Since the inquiry held in the early part of last year, which was mentioned in my reply of the 11th of February, 1887, to a Question of the hon. Member on this subject, I have not received any further complaints from the Island, and I therefore do not propose to order another inquiry to be held. I have no reason to suppose that the former inquiry was not sufficiently rigid.

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS—FAILURE OF THE CARDIFF SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, When the Report of the Commissioner, appointed under the Savings Banks Act of last Session, to inquire into the circumstances attending the defalcations in connection would the Cardiff Savings Bank, would be issued to Members of this House, together with the Minutes of Evidence?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I had hoped to be able to lay the Report and Evidence on the Table when the House first met; but the revision has been somewhat troublesome, and is only just completed. It will, I hope, be in the hands of Members in a very few days. I have already laid it on the Table.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW (IRELAND)—"BLUNT *v.* BYRNE."

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen in *The Daily News* of 14th February, a report of the proceedings of Mr. Wilfrid Blunt's action against Mr. Byrne, in the Dublin Court of Exchequer, of the previous day, in which the following passage is contained—

> "On the adjournment for luncheon, Mr. Walker said he must ask the Bench to order some refreshment to be allowed to Mr. Blunt. It had been refused to him on Saturday.
>
> "The Attorney General said, certainly that would be done. He wished to correct a misstatement in some of the morning papers—namely, that he had objected to the adjournment on Saturday afternoon, when Mr. Blunt had said he had not had any food. On the contrary, he had asked his Lordship to adjourn then, as he asked him to adjourn now. He would take care that, as far as he was concerned, Mr. Blunt would have luncheon;"

and, whether he can give the House any explanation of the matter.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on further inquiries, he still adheres to his statement that there was no truth in the incident, as reported in the London papers, of what took place on the adjournment for luncheon of the case of Mr. Blunt against Mr. Byrne, at Dublin, on Saturday last; whether Mr. Blunt had been allowed no food except dry bread and milk for two days previously; whether his counsel asked for an adjournment on that account; whether it is true that Mr. Blunt was entirely deprived of all means of writing, and of all literature except the Bible, during the first month of his imprisonment, and was only allowed a slate and a pencil from the commencement of the second month; whether the Visiting Magistrates specially recommended that he should be allowed writing materials; and whether this recommendation was refused by him though strongly urged by Mr. Blunt's friends?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, I will answer both Questions at the same time. I have not seen the newspaper report referred to by the hon. Member for Londonderry. My right hon. Friend (Mr. A. J. Balfour) does still adhere to his statement. The newspaper report has been brought under the notice of the Judge, and he says there is no foundation for it. Up to luncheon time on Saturday Mr. Blunt received the full Irish prison diet, which is rather more liberal than the English, and, in addition, he had certain indulgences, ordered by the medical officer. He had lunched that day in Court, and has received it each day since. Under the Prisons Rules a prisoner, during the first month of imprisonment, is not entitled to writing materials, and can only have religious books, which, however, are not restricted to the Bible. From the commencement of the second month they are entitled to a slate and a secular book, paper and ink not being allowed until the fourth month. It is the case that the Visiting Justices, apparently through a misconception, made the recommendation alluded to, and that the friends of Mr. Blunt asked for special indulgences, altogether at variance with Prison Rules, to be granted to him. The Prisons Board, in the performance of their duty, were unable to accede to these requests.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE LAW OF EVIDENCE—COUNTY COURT PRACTICE.

MR. O'HEA (Donegal, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, If a County Court Judge is empowered to refuse to hear any accredited representative in the employ, permanent and exclusive, of any party to an action, whether such person can prove his case or no by his own evidence; if any County Court Judge can refuse to hear a person as a witness, on the grounds that the plaintiff to an action does not attend the Court, and refuses to instruct an advocate; and if Order 51, Rule 1, of the County Court Rules, 1886, permits a person so situated to attend and conduct any action, either before the Judge or the Registrar; if attention has been drawn to the action of the Suffolk County Court Judge at the Court holden at Stowmarket on the 21st July, 1887, when, owing to the absence of the plaintiff in certain actions, who was travelling in Scotland and knew nothing of the subject-matter of the various suits, the causes were dismissed; whether the Treasury have intimated to all Court officials, by circulating a copy of Judge Lushington's Judgment in *re* Appleby, 5th April, 1887, that it is desirable permission be given to certain persons, in the absence of any party to an action, to represent such person or persons, as the case may be; whether the tenth section of the Act of 1852 enacts that, by permission of the Judge, any person may address the Court; and, if the facts are as stated, whether an intimation will be conveyed to the Suffolk County Court Judge, pointing out the necessity for permitting duly-qualified servants to represent and protect their employers' interests at all Courts holden within his jurisdiction?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The practice in the County Courts is perfectly well settled, and under it a party, his wife, a member of the family, and clerks, servants, or agents in the regular employment of parties, are permitted to appear on their behalf, although such persons may also be witnesses; but neither the statute, the rules, nor the practice permit a person who is not in the regular employment of the party, or is not a solicitor, to appear as an advocate of the party. My attention has not been drawn to the case in the Suffolk County Court referred to by the hon. Member. The practice, which is correctly laid down in the Judgment of his Honour Judge Lushington, is, I believe, well known to all County Court Judges; and there is not, in my opinion, any necessity to make any representation or intimation to his Honour the Judge of the Suffolk County Court.

ADMIRALTY—H.M. YACHT "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he will be good enough to inform the House as to the nature, extent, and probable cost of the overhaul now being applied to the yacht *Victoria and Albert*; whether it is for the purpose of conveying Her Majesty the Queen to Cherbourg; and, whether the various branches of the crew and engine room are being utilized in the "re-fit," or only Dockyard hands.

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The principal items connected with the overhaul of the *Victoria and Albert* are docking and examination of under-water fittings and the making good of defects in hull, engines, and boilers, at a probable cost of £1,700. These repairs are required for the maintenance of the vessel in an efficient state. It is the rule of the Service that the crews should assist the Dockyard, as far as possible, in carrying out the work on their ships, and this is now done to the fullest extent possible.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPECIAL SHORT-HAND REPORTERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he has observed that the Irish Executive claim the right to force a shorthand reporter through the crowd attending a meeting, in order to place him near enough to the speakers to take down their speeches; whether the same right is claimed by the Executive in regard to meetings held in Great Britain; and, whether, if so, the right is derived from Statute or from Common Law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I am not aware that any special right is claimed by the Irish Executive; but in Ireland, as in England, it is the duty of the Executive to obtain, if necessary, accurate information as to speeches made at meetings, and, if it is considered necessary in the interests of law and order, reporters are sent to meetings both in England and Ireland alike. There is no statute dealing specifically with the matter.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.): Does the hon. and learned Gentleman mean without any sworn information?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I can only repeat that it is at the discretion, as it is the duty, of the Executive, to obtain accurate information with regard to the speeches made at public meetings.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): The hon. and learned Attorney General has not answered the Question. It was whether, when a constable arrived late, he had a right to force his way through the meeting *vi et armis?*

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I think the hon. Member for East Mayo can scarcely have listened to my answer. I stated that I was not aware of any special right claimed by the Irish Executive.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN SEAGRAVE, R.M.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether he has observed that Captain Seagrave, who was appointed a Resident Magistrate in September, 1886, stated at the Mitchelstown inquest that he had had no legal training, and that he sits to adjudicate upon cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act; whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has convinced himself that this gentleman has any legal knowledge, in accordance with the pledge given in this House, that no Resident Magistrate should adjudicate on cases under this Act of whose legal knowledge the Lord Chancellor has not convinced himself; and, if he has so convinced himself, whether he can state the grounds on which his Lordship's decision was based?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that I am aware of the statement made by Captain Seagrave, and referred to by the hon. Member. It was never contemplated that more than one member of the Court of Summary Jurisdiction under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act should necessarily be a person of the sufficiency of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant should be satisfied; and the 11th section of the Act in this particular corresponds exactly with the 22nd section of the Act of 1882. Captain Segrave is not one of the legally qualified Resident Magistrates. He has, on some occasions, acted as member of a Court of Summary Jurisdiction under the Act; but on each of those occasions his colleague has been a legally qualified Resident Magistrate.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—ALLEGED AGREEMENTS WITH EUROPEAN POWERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any despatch or despatches were received in the course of last year from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin, suggesting that this country should give certain pledges or assurances to Italy, in order to induce that Power to enter into an alliance with Germany and Austria, or with either of those Powers; and, whether such pledges or assurances were given; and, if so, whether he will state what these pledges or assurances were? I wish also to ask, whether the right hon. Gentleman has observed that the *Epoca di Genoa* guarantees the fact that Vice Admiral Hewett, in returning thanks to a toast in that city, said that England would send out ships to help Italy in case of a war; and, whether the French and Italian Governments have been informed that this statement is entirely unauthorized?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I have already stated, in reply to the hon. Member, that I must decline to produce any Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and Foreign Powers in regard to the condition of affairs in Europe; and I believe that the House will recognize that the present time is one in which it would be most unwise to do so. With regard to the last Question of the hon. Member, I have not seen anything purporting to be a report of Admiral Hewett's speech, and I should hesitate to take it on second-hand report from any newspaper.

MR. LABOUCHERE: In consequence of the reticent reply of the right hon. Gentleman, I shall move the following Amendment to the Address:—

> "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that it will conduce to our proper appreciation of certain of the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our consideration, if we can be informed that no Correspondence has been exchanged between Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, containing any assurance of a contractual character, which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy, or if such assurances have been given, that they should be brought to our knowledge."

NORTH AMERICA—THE ANGLO-AMERICAN FISHERIES DISPUTES.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What progress has been made by the Fishery Commissioners, now sitting at Washington, towards an amicable adjustment of the Anglo-American Fisheries disputes; and, whether the Alaskan disputes are to be settled by the existing or a new Commission?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): By a telegram received at the Foreign Office this afternoon Mr. Chamberlain reports that a Treaty has been signed which we believe to be quite satisfactory, though we are not yet aware of its precise terms. I cannot admit that the differences in regard to the North American fisheries ever amounted to disputes, as stated in the hon. Member's Question. We believe that questions relating to Alaska have been discussed by the Plenipotentiaries; but we are not aware with what results.

POLICE (METROPOLITAN)—THE STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATE OF WEST HAM AND SIR CHARLES WARREN.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the report in the public Press of an interview which a deputation of ratepayers had on Tuesday with the West Ham Town Council, for the purpose of—

> "Protesting against the action of Sir Charles Warren towards the Stipendiary Magistrate of the district in the execution of his duty for the maintenance of law and order;"

and, what steps, if any, he now proposes to take in the public interest with reference to the action of Sir Charles Warren in this matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to the report in question. As I have already stated, I have tendered to the learned magistrate—I hope to his satisfaction—the explanations which I thought were called for, having regard to the respect due to the Bench and the importance of preserving good relations between the Magistracy and the Police Authorities. I do not think any further step is necessary, so far as that matter is concerned.

Mr. PICKERSGILL inquired whether, besides soothing the wounded feelings of the magistrate, the right hon. Gentleman would take any steps to relieve the disquietude which undoubtedly existed in the public mind on the subject.

[No reply.]

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY DIVISIONS.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received a copy of a resolution unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Newtownards Farmers' Association on the 8th instant, to the effect that the delay in appointing Sub-Commissioners for County Down required the immediate attention of the Chief Commission: whether, considering that some thousands of farmers in the County of Down did in October last serve notices of applications to have fair rents fixed, and that these farmers are entitled to the benefit of the reduction on the six months' rent due at November last, he will now arrange to have a Sub-Commission appointed to hold sittings in County Down without further delay; and, whether it is a fact that the Sub-Commission presided over by Mr. R. R. Kane, B.L., was removed from County Down owing to pressure brought by the landlords of the county upon the Lord Lieutenant, whose own tenants in that county had also applied to the Land Commission to have fair rents fixed.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The copy of the Resolution has been received. It is, doubtless, inconvenient for both landlord and tenant that a sitting cannot be held in the County Down before next April to define their respective rights. The Land Commission have been again communicated with on the subject; and they state that all the sittings of Sub-Commissions have been arranged up to the end of April, the Down one being fixed for the 4th of that month. His Excellency authorizes me to state that he has in no wise interfered with the discretion of the Land Commissioners, and he adds that but few of his tenants have gone into Court. Since entering the House I have received the following telegram—

> "Sub-Commission No. 1 worked in County Down all December, and finished December list of cases by delivering decisions on 25th January."

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF 1887—RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How much of the money allotted last year under the Budget for the relief of local taxation has been paid over in Great Britain; and, how much of the £50,000 promised at the same time to Ireland for various objects has been already actually spent?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) (who replied) said: Of the grant of £250,750 to England and Wales for the relief of local taxation nearly £215,700 has been paid over; of the grant of £35,000 to Scotland nothing has yet been paid; and of the grant of £50,000 to Ireland nearly £25,000 has been paid.

GRANTS TO MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When he proposes to appoint the promised Committee on Royal Grants?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government do not think it advisable at present to ask the House to appoint a Committee, as was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in 1885, as Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to remit the whole subject to her Advisers for their consideration, and they will report to her upon it.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I will only ask, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it was proposed to appoint a Committee?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; but on further consideration the Government think it advisable to take the course now recommended.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a Vote in this House of an additional grant to a member of the Royal Family was carried on the understanding and on the condition that such a Committee should be appointed?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir; I do not understand that such a condition was made.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I wish to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether I am right in the interpretation I put upon the answer which he has just given? I do not understand the right hon. Gentleman to say anything which would preclude the Government from proposing the appointment of a Committee with regard to the Civil List if, after considering the subject, they thought that course necessary.

MR. W. H. SMITH: That is distinctly so.

EGYPT—THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL AT CAIRO.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Judge Advocate General went to Cairo as the private agent of the ex-Khedive Ismail without communicating the fact and circumstances of his journey to Her Majesty's Government, or to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; or, if not, what communication did he make to Her Majesty's Government, and what answer did he receive from them or from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and, whether Her Majesty's Government, after learning the circumstances, informed the Government of Egypt that the Judge Advocate General was nothing more than the private agent of the ex-Khedive, or otherwise took steps to prevent the Egyptian Government from being influenced in its consideration of these claims by the fact that they were being pressed by a member of the Government of a country whose troops were occupying Egypt?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman has only asked me, as the House will be aware, as to one particular part of the transaction; but I prefer going back to the beginning of it. The Judge Advocate General, on taking office in 1885, stipulated that he should retain his private practice—a course which was followed by his successor, Mr. Mellor. Before he took office, among his clients were Ismail Pasha and other members of the Khedivial family. When, a year ago, there was a prospect of an arbitration taking place in regard to the affairs of these clients, he did mention the matter to the Marquess of Salisbury, who said that he saw no objection to his so acting, so long as it was clearly understood that he only appeared in his private capacity. With regard to the arrangements, the only persons the Judge Advocate General saw in the matter were Sir Evelyn Baring and Sir Edgar Vincent, and they both knew exactly his position in the matter. The arrangement, we are informed from Egypt, is one that has put a stop to a series of litigious suits, is advantageous to Egypt, and satisfactory to members of the Khedive's family.

MR. BRYCE asked whether the term private practice was understood to cover the case of going out as a private agent to prosecute a claim against a foreign Government.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think I have stated fully and accurately all that transpired. He was at liberty to retain his private practice, and he did so, and included in that practice was the busi- of his client, Ismail Pasha.

Mr. BRYCE: Am I to understand that no communication was made to the Judge Advocate General before he went to Cairo in November or December last?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think I have said so; but I thought it better to make a full statement, in order that the House should understand the circumstances.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH PUBLIC WORKS — DRAINAGE AND LAND IMPROVEMENT.

Mr. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works by introducing Bills for land improvement and arterial and river drainage; and, if so, when the same will be introduced; whether the charge of such legislation will be transferred from the Treasury to the Irish Department of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; whether in such legislation "statutory termors" will be included as owners of land in the formation of Conservancy or Drainage District Boards for the purposes of the Act, as assented to by the former Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and having regard to their altered tenures; whether his attention has been called to an extensive arterial and river drainage scheme in North Kilkenny District extending over 24 miles, and which would relieve a waterlogged valley of that area, and where the occupiers have had all the preliminary Survey maps, &c. executed by the County Surveyor at considerable expense more than four years ago, and approved by the Board of Works' Engineer, including the loan of £32,000 for the execution of these works; and that, owing to the defective character of the Drainage Acts, those works are in abeyance, and the labouring population as well as the occupiers interested are deprived of the benefit of the expenditure; and, whether the Government are prepared to carry out the recommendation of the Royal Commission by forming main conservancy districts, to use their own language—

> "This present year, without waiting for the legislation which would be required to bring their recommendations into effect?"

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Government, as the hon. Member is aware, have already taken action in the direction indicated by the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works with regard to arterial drainage—land improvement in the technical sense used in Ireland was not included in the Reference to that Commission—and they will press forward with energy in that course. Bills carrying out generally the recommendations of the Commission with regard to the Shannon, the Barrow, and the Bann have been prepared, and will very shortly be introduced, and all the necessary Parliamentary notices in connection with these Bills have been given. Upon the reception given to these measures by the House will depend the action which the Government may take with regard to the introduction of a general Bill dealing with the subject of arterial drainage. Should the three Bills already mentioned meet with a favourable reception, the Government do not despair of introducing such a general Bill during the present year. With regard to the suggestion that, prior to the introduction of such a general Bill, the country should be mapped out into main conservancy districts, as suggested by the Royal Commission, I may say that we are anxious to do this; but that, for the present, the time of the chief hydraulic engineer is fully occupied in connection with matters relating to the Shannon, the Barrow, and the Bann.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I think it will be for the convenience of the House if I say that I propose to lay on the Table of the House to-night the new Rules of Procedure. Nominally, they will be put down for Monday next, but only that they may appear on the Paper, not that there is any intention of proceeding with them.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): Is it not settled that on Monday next we are to proceed with the debate upon Trafalgar Square?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Address must be disposed of before proceeding with any other matter; therefore, if I am not assured that the debate on the Address will conclude to-morrow night, I cannot propose to take the Trafalgar Square debate on Monday.

MR. JAMES STUART: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will proceed with the London question before the other stages of the Address?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Address must be voted by the House before any other Business can be taken.

MR. JAMES STUART: Will it be the next Business?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot undertake to say that, since it is possible that the exigencies of Supply may necessitate our putting down Supply.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): On the Report stage of the Address I shall have an important Amendment to move—

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have said that the Address must be voted before any other Business is taken.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I propose to move on the Report of the Address—

"That this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to any measures for Ireland which shall deal with the arrears of excessive and unjust rents which have accumulated in many cases during the last two years of agricultural depression from the inability of tenants to pay them, and which shall prevent the wholesale eviction of tenants which is threatened in the district of Loughrea and Woodford.

"That this House also desires to express its regret to Your Majesty that Mr. Wilfrid Blunt should have been prohibited holding a meeting in the said district for the purpose of expressing sympathy with the tenants, and bidding them have patience, pending application to Parliament for relief."

I may mention that the latter part of the proposed—but I think that will be over by next week—Amendment can hardly be discussed pending the trial which is now taking place in Dublin.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to give Notice that I will move, as an Amendment to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the latter part of it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[SIXTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February].—[See page 64.]

And which Amendment was,

To leave out paragraphs ten and eleven, in order to insert the words—"Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session, which was of an ameliorative character, has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much to alienate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, AND LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE.—RESOLUTION.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.): I have not had the pleasure of listening to this debate; but I have been reading the reports of it attentively in the newspapers, and it seemed to me that, with the honourable exception of the speech of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), all the speeches of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, and the speech of their solitary champion on this side of the House, were guided by the key-note struck for them by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on one of the opening nights of this Session. They all seemed to me to be more or less artfully designed to draw angry retort from these Benches. Unhappily, it is one of our national characteristics that we are a little too quick and hotheaded to resent injustice, and a most generous use you make of your strength to play upon that weakness. The whole policy of the Government in Ireland, and the whole tone and object of their speeches and of their newspapers—and I am sorry to say of those powerful London newspapers that do their work—their whole object seems to be to get at the worst side of the Irish and English character, and to sting and goad us into doing things which would put new life into the national prejudices which are expiring, and expiring in spite of them. Their difficulty is not that the two peoples are disunited; their difficulty and terror is, that they are growing only too united for their purpose. It is a noble ambition; but you failed in Ireland, and you will fail, I promise you, in this House also. There was a time when we came to this House with our hand against every man and every man's hand against us, for we expected no quarter, and to the best of our ability we gave none. There seemed no use or purpose in struggling or reasoning with the tremendous and cruel forces arrayed against us. But that, happily, is now at an end for ever, thanks to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). We come to this House no longer as enemies amongst enemies. We count ourselves no longer Ishmaelites in this House, nor in this land of England either. We come here now amongst allies, who have staked the whole fortunes of their great Party on our cause. We come here amongst friends, too, who have not been afraid or ashamed to stand by our side and by the side of our people in many a bitter hour of trial and calumny last winter. We come here, too, amongst a people whose conscience, as I believe, has been deeply stirred by the sufferings that our unfortunate people have endured and are enduring, and although we are still confronted in this House by a hostile majority, callous to those sufferings, we know that that majority does not represent Scotland nor Wales, and we believe that it does not even represent England. It is a majority that was obtained by foul means and upon representations that have turned out to be utterly false. We know that it is a majority which two years ago were not ashamed to receive their offices at the hands of the very men whom they are now libelling in England and torturing in Ireland. I have no respect for that majority. I doubt whether in their secret hearts any one of themselves has very much respect for them. I know very well they are extremely ill at ease. We believe, as I say, that we are winning, and that the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Chief Secretary, and his Friends have failed in Ireland. He has failed to smash our organization; he has failed to break the spirit of our people; he has failed to defame us—I will not say in the eyes of our own countrymen, for that is absurd, but in the eyes of any honest man in these three Kingdoms; he has failed in every one of the calculations in which he indulged so heartily last autumn when this House trusted him with the tremendous, the terrible powers of this Coercion Act to extirpate and annihilate us. I think I shall prove before I sit down that the doom of failure is written upon every clause and upon every provision of this Act, abject failure and discomfiture and disgrace. I think I shall be able to prove that our people, sorely as they have been tried and sorely as they have been proved and wronged, have managed to survive one of the most horrible Coercion Acts that has ever been directed against human liberty. They have been able to crush and baffle it at every point, and that without one deed that they need look back upon with shame, but with the sheer force of the unconquerable national spirit. Now, Sir, in the first place, I shall try to deal very shortly with my own case, and if I refer to it at all, it is not in order to notice the gross sneers of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). I do not think it would be, but if it were as Parliamentary as it is true, I would call them malignant sneers. I think it probable that before very long those sneers will be answered in the only way they deserve by the electors of South Tyrone. It is not in order to answer him that I have referred to the question of my own case, but it is because undoubtedly I recognize that I am the very worst "criminal," the very worst Parliamentary "criminal," who has been convicted under this Act. I am the only one—I believe I can say it—I am the only one of the imprisoned Irish Representatives who could have been proceeded against under the ordinary Common Law with the shadow of a chance of conviction. Every other Colleague of mine who has been convicted has been punished, or is being punished, for new and for statutable offences for which no jury in the world would dream for a moment of criminally imprisoning them under the ordinary law; and the point that I would like to press upon the House is this, that if I can justify my offence in the eyes of every man who thinks more of human nature and human suffering than of Party rights—if I can justify my offence, then I say, a thousand times more forcibly, the conviction of everyone of my Colleagues appears to be an outrage upon justice, and their detention in prison an indelible disgrace to the man who planned to put them there. I find that foul misrepresentation has been resorted to for the purpose of misleading the English public as to the offence for which I was put in prison. Within the last week I have been reading over the papers that were published during my imprisonment, and I was sorry to find that the Head of Her Majesty's Government (the Marquess of Salisbury) was not above stooping to encourage and to lead this attempt most unfairly and untruly to poison the English mind against me. He made a speech at Oxford in which he indulged in a great many flouts and jibes at my own humble expense. Well, I do not complain of that. It is not the first time that he has been accused of indulging in flouts and jibes at the expense of persons with whom he was more intimately allied than he is with me. But here is how this great Nobleman, the Prime Minister of England, describes to an English audience my offence in Ireland. He asks—"What is there in the case of Mr. O'Brien to excite sympathy, to make him a martyr?" And then he goes on with those very creditable witticisms of his. He says—

> "I do not refer to his small clothes (laughter). Their vicissitudes would furnish a theme for an epic (renewed laughter). I hope an Irish bard will arise worthy of the subject (continued laughter). But taking the man apart from his clothes (roars of laughter)—

[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Shame!" *from Irish and Liberal Benches, and slight tittering from Tories below the Gangway.*] I notice now that the laughter does not quite rise into a roar on the opposite side. Of course, as to these remarks, I do not answer them. I only say that, to my mind, they are characterized by more or less good taste; except that the Marquess of Salisbury is such a very great Nobleman, I would be inclined to say with less taste. He then went on to say—

> "What is there to excite the sympathy of English Liberals in the cause of Mr. O'Brien, who broke the law, and incited others to break the law? He recommended that men employed by the Crown for the recovery of just debts should be met with violence, and in consequence of that violence some of them have been brought near to death's door. [*Cries of* "Shame!"] What is there to excite the sympathy of loyal citizens and loyal subjects of England?"

Now, I shall tell you very briefly the circumstances under which my advice was given to the Mitchelstown tenants, and I shall tell you what are the results of that advice; and I will ask the opinion of any candid man in this House, when he has heard me—I will ask him whether that speech of the Marquess of Salisbury is not calculated to convey to the average Englishman an impression so false, so misleading, that I am afraid I should be obliged to travel beyond the region of Parliamentary epithets to characterize it. On the 2nd of August we had, practically speaking, as far as this House was concerned, passed a Land Act enabling the Mitchelstown tenants—over 1,000 of them who were leaseholders—to have their rents revised in the Land Court. On the 8th of August word reached me that police and soldiers were gathered in Mitchelstown to carry out an eviction campaign, and the effect of that would have been to have prevented and forestalled all the operation of that Land Act on that estate, and, practically speaking, to defeat the intention of Parliament, and to fling those poor people naked upon the world, before the relief which was already actually entering the door could reach them. It was technically legal for the landlord, I admit, for a few days longer. But I hold that if ever there was a crime committed against society, it was the crime that was being attempted, for the day that I went down to Mitchelstown an attempt was already being made to defeat, as I say, the plain and expressed intentions of Parliament, and to plunge this whole community into wretchedness and disorder in order to defeat, by a few days, the operations of a Bill which the landlord well knew would vindicate the position of the tenants, as it has, in fact, since triumphantly done. Well, but what was to be done? If the right hon. Baronet the ex-Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) were still the Chief Secretary, at all events, acting in his early manner, we might still have had some hope that the Queen's troops would not have been the accomplices of an infamy of this sort. The police and Militia were already at their work on the day that I went to Mitchelstown on the appeal of this poor people. I found that evictions had already been actually carried out there on non-residential holdings, and one in the case of a poor widow, where there was no possibility of resistance. Aye, it is the old story in Ireland, they evict without mercy only the weak, who can make no resistance, and they have no scruple about perpetrating wrong when it can be done in the dark. I need not describe the bitter feelings that passed through my mind that day when those poor people—my own constituents—looked to me in the hour of their helplessness and desperation to know what was to be done. They saw the ruin that was coming down upon their homes; there was just one hope, and I defy anybody to point out another. There was just one hope for those poor people in all the world, and it was this. The Northwich Election was pending; it was coming off in a few days, and Irish evictions were an awkward topic for the Tory candidate. The story of Glenbeigh and of Bodyke was beginning to horrify and excite the English mind, and I knew that Tory statesmen would not scruple to lend their troops to perpetrate a wrong if it could be done without commotion; but I knew also, or guessed, at all events, that they would hesitate to do anything that would make them lose the Northwich Election. I had not a moment for consulation with anybody in the world. On my own responsibility, and actually and absolutely on my own responsibility, without consultation with anybody, and on the spur of the moment, there and then, in the open square of Mitchelstown, and in the hearing of a number of policemen, I did tell the people that if, under those special circumstances, those evictions were carried out before the Land Bill, which was just almost law then, should become law, that it would not be a vindication of the law, but it would be an outrageous evasion of the law, and that they would, before all men, be justified in defending their homes by every honest effort in their power. I may have been right, or I may have been wrong; but I have no doubt on the point in my own mind, and I have not been in the least degree inclined to suffer in my conscience in reference to it. I have no doubt that though technically it was illegal for me to save the people, as it would have been legal for the landlord in two days more to ruin them—I dare say, technically speaking, it would be a breach of the law to hold the arm of the executioner, even if you knew and if he knew that a reprieve was actually arriving at the gates. That was precisely the case of these people. A reprieve was coming and the reprieve has come. At all events, whether I was right or wrong in law, the result proved that I did not miscalculate the statesmanship and the morality of the Tory Party. What happened? The moment it became evident that these evictions would not go on without scenes that would ring through England, the eviction campaign was abandoned. The very day that I made that speech at Mitchelstown all was peace for the tenants; not another eviction took place, and Captain Plunkett, who came down to superintend the eviction campaign, remained, I am glad to say, and I am proud to say, remained to turn his energies to getting up a prosecution against me instead. Not a single eviction has taken place from that day to this, not an act of violence was committed. Not a blow was struck, not a hair was injured on the head of a policeman or of a bailiff in consequence of that speech—not one. But it did not end there. And what was the rêsult? That these poor tenants, those thousands of people who but for our action—who but for the action of my friend John Mandeville and myself, would have been beggared and homeless men to-day—those men were enabled to take advantage of the Land Bill such as it was, while we were in prison. A Land Sub-Commission carefully chosen was sent down to the Mitchelstown estate to prophesy against us, and to prove the guilt and the dishonesty of the Plan of Campaign; but for all the gold in the house of Barak they could not do it. These picked Tory officers, two of them convicted rackrenters themselves, were obliged to declare that these poor tenants, who but for us would have been flung mercilessly upon the world by the landlord, were entitled to remain in their homes, and that they are entitled to remain in them at lower terms and at lower rents than had been demanded before. What has happened since? The landlord has actually taken refuge from the judgment of even a Tory Land Commission in the moderation of the Plan of Campaign; and three days ago my hon. Friend and Colleague—and I am proud to call him my hon. Friend and Collegue—the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) signed, sealed, and delivered a treaty which secured those poor people in their homes as thoroughly as Galteemore is secured in its base. This is the transaction as to which the Marquess of Salisbury is not ashamed to say—

> "He recommended that the men employed by the Crown in the recovery of debt should be met with violence;"

and in consequence of his recommendation they were met with violence, and scalded, and some of them brought near to death's door. As I have told you, not a single eviction took place after the date of my speech. Not a single act of violence of any kind has taken place in any way upon the estate —not a blow was struck—not the smallest injury was inflicted upon any officer of the law in consequence of that speech; and the most frightful wrong was averted, and those poor people who were being despoiled of everything they had in the world were secured in their houses for evermore. All I can say is that if that transaction, instead of being submitted to a tribunal of Resident Magistrates at Mitchelstown—if that transaction could be submitted to any 12 Englishmen—to any jury of 12 Englishmen from sea to sea—I do not think it is I who would have very much to fear; nor need I have any fears of a guilty conscience in facing those men. I should rather think that if there is anybody to whom the cry of shame applies in the transaction, I should think that if there is anybody who has reason to blush at the name of Mitchelstown, and to remember Mitchelstown, apart altogether from the blood that was shed there, I should think it is not I, but that it is Her Majesty's Government, who had neither the humanity to forbid these evictions nor the courage to persevere in them. They superintended and sanctioned them so long as there was no prospect of resistance; but they abandoned them—they had the cowardice to abandon them—the moment that they threatened to become inconvenient to a Tory candidate; and they had the incredible meanness—the incredible meanness while my hands were bound in prison—to present a story to the English public under a false and untruthful guise in order to reconcile the public to having me treated worse than they would treat any cut-throat for saving my people, for saving my own constituents, from a fate which the law, which the Land Commissioners, and now which everybody on this earth acknowledges would have been most unmerited and a most awful calamity if it had happened. Now, Sir, I will not weary the House, I promise you, by going into all the miserable instances of foul play, the vile acts of indecency that were resorted to against me in the usual way, I might say, for, unfortunately, they are commonplace, every day occurrences in Ireland, under the infamous tribunals that you have set up there, and call them justice. I will not go into that matter; and as to prison treatment, well, I certainly am not going into any recital of the miserable little prison torments and indignities that were employed to give us pain and humiliation, and, what is much more important, to besmirch the character of the Irish Representatives in the eyes of the people of England and elsewhere. I think we can afford to pass these things by. I believe that our opponents are not all so lost to everything that is manly and generous in sentiment as not to feel rather ashamed than very exultant about the right hon. Gentleman's prison exploits. But there is another order of opponents. I am sorry to think that there are men who, while capable of inflicting pain of this description, are capable of deriving a still keener pleasure in seeing that the torments have told and in seeing us smart under their effects. But I shall not gratify them, and I cannot do so, for the simple reason that I do not feel wounded, and I did not feel in the least degraded. I rather suspect that the right hon. Gentleman, under all his jaunty bravery, carries his conscience not quite so easily as appears, or as I do mine. I confess I did feel very keenly when in prison as to a letter which the right hon Gentleman published to a Mr. Armitage, in which, not making any broad and honest charge against me, he conveyed a stealthy and loathsome insinuation, the loathsome insinuation that I sheltered myself under the plea of illness from the enforcement of prison discipline—a statement as to which I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to refer to any one of the three official doctors who examined me, for one tittle, I will not say of foundation, but even of countenance for such an assertion. Here we are now face to face, and I challenge him, in defence of his own character—for it is, after all, his own character that is at stake—I challenge him to appeal to any one of those three officials—one of them the prison doctor, a Protestant gentleman, and the son of a landlord; and the other a member of the Prisons Board; and the third a gentleman whose name even to this hour I do not know—I challenge him to appeal to any single one or to all of these gentlemen, to give the slightest countenance for that infamous imputation. I find I am rather warmer on the subject than I wish to be. I have said that I was angry about that letter while I was in prison; but since I have come out of prison, and have had an opportunity of again reading that letter, I am angry no longer. If I was a much greater man than I am, I confess it would be ample vengeance for me to find that any statesman who had any reputation to lose should have penned such a letter—a letter conveying the most hideous and cowardly imputation upon a man whose mouth was closed; but I must say also that there breathed in every sentence the temper of a beaten and an angry man, and I was going to say of an angry woman, but I do not want to say it, because it would be a gross libel upon that gentle and tender sex to associate it with the production of such a letter as that in such a spirit. I pass that by without further comment. From all I have been able to learn since I left prison, in England I feel that it is no longer necessary for us to defend ourselves in the eyes of the English people, and I believe that there is not a Tory of the fifth or sixth magnitude who really in his heart believes for one instant that we are such poor creatures as to cry out against a mere sentence of imprisonment or its consequences, except those like the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone, who stated that we attempted to set up a distinction between Members of Parliament and peasants—our comrades, our true patriots, who have been convicted under the Act. Sir, there is not a shadow, not a tittle of foundation for that. We have claimed nothing for ourselves as Members of Parliament that we do not claim equally for every man who is convicted under the Summary Clauses of the Act. If that man is a criminal, there is no reason why he should not be tried before the ordinary tribunals and convicted. No, Sir; we do not ask the poor to make their prison lot harder by making the fight we have had to make in resistance against these prison rules. We made that fight; but if we win, they shall win as well as we. Our position was simply this—and this is the only thing I shall say upon the matter—that you are perfectly welcome to treat us to all the punishments that your Courts of Law judge would have been sufficient for the very vilest crimes in society—the plank bed, bread and water diet, 24 hours of solitary confinement, deprived of books, of writing materials, of visits, and so forth—you are perfectly welcome to heap every material and physical discomfort and privation upon us, if that is your generous and chivalrous treatment of political prisoners. You will never hear a murmur or a word of complaint from our lips if you stick to that; but the moment you go further, and not only treat us as badly as the worst criminals in society—when you go further and try to subject us to moral torture from which criminals are altogether exempt—when you ask us to make open and active and voluntary acknowledgment of our kinship and equality with criminals, then we say, no; we will die first. And you will have to learn the definition between your criminal classes and Irish political prisoners, even if you have to fall back on the Coroner's jury and their verdict to ascertain that distinction. I will say nothing more about it. I will pass on to the results; and I will only say that if anybody has reason to blush for them, I do not think it is we. I hope I am not detaining the House. If I am, the only excuse I can plead is that I do not think I shall have an opportunity very soon of claiming their attention; but I should like to ask before I sit down—where is all this to end? What object is accomplished by it? If this is to go on for ever and for ever, what object can it ever possibly accomplish except misery to a weak people and worry and eternal shame to yourselves? Is the object of the right hon. Gentleman to convert the Irish people, or is it to dragoon them—to dragoon them out of aspirations which are as deeply lodged in the hearts of 1,000,000 men as the blood in their veins? Does the right hon. Gentleman in his wildest hour imagine that he has made one single convert throughout the length and breadth of Ireland by his conduct? I suppose the right hon. Gentleman will reply by-and-bye. Even to take it on the lower and meaner sphere of brute force, I ask him can he name as much as one single village club which he has effectually stamped out? Can he produce one single man from our ranks whom he has really frightened as the result of all the terrific powers which he has been wielding in Ireland during the last six months? I put it to hon. Gentleman opposite to remember with what shouts and what exultation they passed this Crimes Act with which to trample over us. I can remember well the yell of delight with which they hailed the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—I think it was—that this was to be a duel to the death between the National League and the Government, and they accepted the challenge. Well, are you satisfied with the results? I put it to hon. Gentlemen candidly, would they have yelled so loudly last autumn if they could have foreseen that the results of the most stringent Coercion Act, and the most unchecked powers that ever a despot was armed with, would have been so meagre, so ignominious, and so miserable? Did you or did you not expect that it would suppress or crush the National League? Hon. Gentlemen are silent now. I remember well the shout of derision that came from the opposite side of the House when I ventured to intimate a doubt whether the Act—terrific as it looked—would succeed in crushing the Plan of Campaign. Has the Plan of Campaign been crushed, or even crippled? Ask the deputation of Irish landlords who waited on Lord Salisbury the other day with a begging letter. Ask them how many of them would be willing to try a fall with the Plan of Campaign to-morrow. The fact is the Plan of Campaign has never had so uniform and unbroken a course of victories as it has had during the last six months. The greatest number of the important struggles in which we were engaged when this Act was passed have been brought to a victorious conclusion under the very mouths of the right hon. Gentleman's guns. And upon what terms? I could keep you an hour giving instances of the results; but this I say—that the one thing that applies to them all is, that in every single instance at least the original demands of the tenants have been conceded, every evicted tenant has been reinstated, and every shilling of law costs incurred in the struggle has been borne as an indemnity by the landlords. Surely the landlords could have done as well as that, or better, without any Crimes Act at all. I will just give one or two instances of the right hon. Gentleman's administration in Ireland. I will just take the case of Lord De Freyne, in County Roscommon. Just as this Act was passing, Lord De Freyne's agent, Mr. MacDougall, wrote this letter—

> "Spot the men in your district who are able to pay rent and will not. We will see, now that the Coercion Bill has become law, whether we will not make them honest men."

It turned out that the dishonest men were Mr. MacDougall and his master. Mr. MacDougall had confidence in the Crimes Bill and in the right hon. Gentleman last autumn. Where is Mr. MacDougall to-day? He is gone—he is dismissed, and everything that the tenants were then demanding has been conceded. It was the very day after I came out of prison that I learnt that the new agent had had an interview with two of the most prominent of the Campaigners on the estate, and that he not only agreed to the tenants' terms, but that he agreed to refund a sum of over £1,700 which Mr. MacDougall had dishonestly extorted from them on a portion of the estate before the Plan of Campaign was started. This money was wrung from the tenants by sheer terrorism, by serving 150 writs of ejectment against the tenants before they had the protection of the Plan of Campaign; and now, such is the force of the Plan, with the Crimes Act in full vigour, that this landlord has not only been obliged to concede the tenants' terms, but he has been obliged to disgorge the money that was unjustly and dishonestly wrung from these poor people while they were defenceless, and he has been obliged to pay every shilling of the costs of 150 ejectments. Now, Sir, that is Lord De Freyne's impartial opinion as to how the cat is jumping as between the Crimes Act and the Plan of Campaign after six months. Now, I will quote another instance, the famous —or rather infamous—estate management of Bodyke, where the proceedings last summer horrified England, and for which Her Majesty's Government provided no remedy whatever. What is the result? Last year Colonel O'Callaghan, one of the most hardened rack-renters—and one of the most desperate fighting men besides in Ireland—refused to accept £970 to cover one and a-half year's rent of 57 tenants. He has now accepted £1,000 to wipe off two years rent of 72 tenants, after incurring some £500 in legal expenses. That is to say, after losing all his money, and after costing the British taxpayers over £1,000 for expenses for his evictions, he has now come to the conclusion—and he is one of the most desperate of rack-renters—that the Crimes Act is "no go," and he has struck his flag to the Plan of Campaign upon far worse terms to him than he would have got before the Crimes Act was passed. Only this very day a letter came to my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) from the principal man who stood almost between the living and the dead on that estate — the Rev. Peter Murphy. The Rev. Father says—

> "My dear Mr. Dillon—A thousand thanks for cheque. You have acted nobly by us, and we have every reason to thank and be grateful to you. What pleases me most of all is that our victory over Colonel O'Callaghan is complete, and approved by all who understand the matter fully. He did his utmost to get the tenants to purchase, and he would, I think, sell on any terms rather than yield to the Plan, but we absolutely refused to purchase as long as the rope remained around our necks. We would not entertain the idea of purchase at all until restored to the holdings, and free as the mountain air to meet on equal terms. The next gale is not to be asked until the end of June; reductions conceded to the different degrees of poverty were 15 per cent upwards to 25, 30, and 40. The cost of evictions were £450, and the other costs in legal proceedings were at least £150. He said he should pay the agent £50 out of the £1,000 given him, and that he was paying 5 per cent for moneys borrowed besides. I have received a very great number of letters congratulating us on our success. We have succeeded wonderfully, thank God and all our friends, and you amongst them."

This is the way in which the right hon. Gentleman has beaten the power of the Plan of Campaign. These poor tenants have won in spite of him, not merely by adhering to that Plan of Campaign. What other lesson has he taught them? The tenants have won, and every man who was evicted retook possession of his holding in defiance of the Crimes Act, and has held on his holding ever since. The other lesson the right hon. Gentleman—this triumphant Cromwell—has taught them is this—that, thanks to their own pluck, and not to the right hon. Gentleman's mercy, they are more secure in their homes to-day than the right hon. Gentleman is in his tenancy of the Treasury Bench. It is the same way with every estate we have had to deal with. I am at this moment officially aware that on several estates where that struggle is still proceeding the landlords are basing their hopes, and are opening their negotiations, not with the right hon. Gentleman or Dublin Castle, but with the man who sits there—my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo—and with other members of this criminal and illegal conspiracy—a conspiracy on whose dishonesty we have heard so many homilies from right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Why, I sometimes wonder that the homilies they address to us and to our suffering people upon theviolation of the Ten Commandments do not blister the lips that utter them. This dishonest conspiracy! No Land Court that has ever revised their demands has been able to pronounce them to be other than most just and moderate. My hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) mentioned the other night that there were only three really great estates in Ireland on which the landlords are offering any resistance. One of them is the Brooke estate, in the County Wexford, where the agent—Captain Hamilton—is an Emergency man by profession. The second is Lord Massereene's property, in the County Louth, where the agents also are Emergency men by profession; and the third is the estate of Lord Clanricarde. It must be a proud thing for Englishmen to know that on the last property the right hon. Gentleman is exercising one of the most abominable systems of petty persecution that ever was practised, in order to strike down the defences of these poor people, to smother their voices, and to tie their hands in their struggle with a man who in the Queen's own Law Courts has been branded as a monster of cruelty and avarice. I will only say that I wish Her Majesty's Government joy of all the credit that they will get out of their holy alliance with Lord Clanricarde; and I wish Lord Clanricarde joy of all the rents he will get out of his tenants. The fact of it is—there is no use in blinking it—that instead of overthrowing the Plan of Campaign, the right hon. Gentleman has only made it more secure and more irresistible by driving us to do our business with less publicity. The machinery of the Plan has now been perfected to such a degree that we find that one single Campaign estate is sufficient to keep the peace of the whole community—aye, and to settle the rents of a whole community more satisfactorily and more honestly than an army of Land Commissioners. We find that that is the consequence, and I will tell you why; it is a very simple reason—because the penalties of such a struggle as theirs are so heavy that they are enough to intimidate any tenantry from putting forward an unjust demand, and they are also sufficiently great to terrify all landlords from refusing a just demand. It may be a rough-and-ready method—and no doubt it is—but it has succeeded. What is the result? In 99 cases out of 100 throughout last winter it succeeded without any struggle at all, and to refute this we challenge those who talk about the immorality and dishonesty, or the criminality, of the Plan of Campaign. We challenge them—and I challenge the right hon. Gentleman—and he will have an opportunity of forcing my words down my throat if I am wrong—to name any single deed of outrage or of crime that is traceable to the Plan of Campaign from end to end of Ireland. I challenge you to name any one case in which the demands we have put forward have been declared by any judicial tribunal or Land Commission in the country to be dishonest, exaggerated, or exorbitant; and I challenge you to adduce to the House any one single case in which the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded—with all his powers and all his terrors—in breaking up a combination once formed on an estate. I think his is not a very victorious record so far as the Plan of Campaign is concerned. Remember always that the Plan of Campaign is the merest segment of the Irish difficulty. It is a mere rough-and-ready way to cure the blunders of your legislation, and to cure your folly in not closing with the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork. My hon. Friend, myself, and others are the mere Uhlans and vedettes to the army of millions of Irishmen who take rank under the standard of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork. Now as to the National League. Let me for a moment examine the statements of the right hon. Gentleman. We heard it stated over and over again in the most portentous accents in this House that the authority of the National League and that of Her Majesty's Government could not co-exist in Ireland—that either one or the other must pack up and go. What has all this tall talk come to? Is the National League gone? Does it show the slightest signs of going? There are 1,800 branches of the National League in Ireland. [*Cries of* "More!"] There are rather more, because the Government has added more branches by its suppressing action. No more than 230 branches have ever been nominally grappled with. There are 1,500 branches, something like five-sixths of the whole organization—on which not a finger has been laid. Why? Is it because the right hon. Gentleman has conceived a certain affection for the National League? Is it because the branches are declining in power, or have altered or abated their principles one jot in terror of this Act of Parliament? No; it is because the Government have made such a disastrous and grotesque mess in attempting to suppress 200 branches that they dared not face the ridicule—the colossal collapse—that would result from any attempt to grapple with, or crush, the whole of the organization. Everyone who knows the suppressed counties of Kerry, Clare, and my own county, knows that the branches hold their meetings just as usual, under the noses of the police. We know by the figures and the cash that come in that the subscriptions, instead of falling off, have increased. The resolutions of the League are passed in the usual way, and, I can tell you, they are regarded with more sacredness and efficacy than usual by the whole community. I have told you that the branch meetings are being held. I will read an extract from a branch report in *United Ireland* the week before last—one of these suppressed branches which have, according to the local policeman, disappeared from view. It says—

> "A large representative meeting was held on Monday, Mr. George Pomeroy in the chair."

No concealment of names—

> "Balloting for officers and committee took place with the following result, after a most vigorous competition for offices, the only emolument for which will probably be a couple of months in gaol—J. O'Callan, 60 votes; G. Pomeroy, 58; S. O'Keefe, 56; D. Hanlon, 50; O'Leary, 60; Power, 44; FitzPatrick, 47," and so on. "The first five are elected."

Mark you, there was a most vigorous competition and close voting for office, the only emolument of which, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland knows well enough in his heart, will probably be a couple of months on a plank bed. This is how the majesty of the right hon. Gentleman affects the people of Ireland. There is no disguising the fact that the whole of your suppressive machinery—the whole machinery for effectually suppressing the National League—has become inoperative and has totally broken down, and for a very simple reason—that Act was conceived and drafted upon the theory that you were dealing with a people who were only pining to be delivered from the terror of the National League; whereas you find to your cost that you are dealing with a people who are the League themselves—who are ready to guard it with their lives, and who will undergo any amount of persecution, torture, or privation, rather than betray or forsake it. The whole of your Act depended upon the 1st clause—the power to elicit secret evidence. That is a very effective piece of machinery. Why do you not put your power of Secret Inquiry Clauses into force for the purpose of suppressing the branches of the National League? Why? Because you know you would have to send thousands of people to gaol who would rather go there than let you wring one tittle of information out of them. Your only other source is informers—and it is our proudest boast that with an organization numbering upwards of 500,000 men up to this time you have not been able to bring a single informer into the market, though no doubt the market price of the article was never higher. I want the right hon. Gentleman to tell us here to-night what he has got by all his wild and vicious lunges against the Irish people. I have no patience with talking of "crime in Ireland" outside Kerry. The Moonlighters and the Government have had Kerry to themselves for the last five or six years. We could only stand by. Between them be it, and let them divide the honours. The right hon. Gentleman tells us, indeed, that the number of persons partially Boycotted has decreased. Well, I do not know what local policeman may be pleased to call "persons partially Boycotted." I am very sure, however, that the list would go up or down according to the requirements of the Government. The real test is this—let the right hon. Gentleman give us a list of the land-grabbers who have taken farms; and let him give us a list—and I only wish he would—of the land-grabbers who, even since this Act has been in force, have dropped their neighbour's goods, like hot potatoes. Boycotting? I say that, so far as unjust or wicked Boycotting is concerned, I claim that more has been done to suppress it and put it down by my hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin—the Secretary of the National League (Mr. T. C. Harrington)—than the right hon. Gentleman could do in a century. I shall always, as long as I live, hold that there is a perfect right in the community to exercise its legitimate influence on men who, for their own base and greedy purposes, are the pests of society. I admit that there are two classes of victims at the right hon. Gentleman's mercy—public speakers and public newspapers. Public speeches are the merest appendages of our organizations; and why are public speakers at his mercy? Simply and solely because we refuse to be driven away from our free right of public meeting, but choose to assert it, as Mr. Wilfrid Blunt tried to assert it at Loughrea, by the light of day. If we chose to go about and deliver our speeches in private, we should run a coach and four through every provision of this Act with the most absolute impunity. My hon. Friends the Members for East Clare (Mr. Cox) and West

Cork (Mr. Gilhooly) were for months and months engaged in the business of the Plan of Campaign, and my hon. Friend the Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy). It is not the least secret, for we have no secrets that we are afraid to have known. [An hon. MEMBER: Oh, oh!] I only hope that that hon. Gentleman who said "Oh!"—[An hon. MEMBER: Rochester.]—Certainly. They have actually been for months on the business of the Plan of Campaign, even with warrants over their heads for speeches that they delivered to the people. Again, perhaps, I may be giving the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary a tip, but I do not object to it a bit. Talk of me in connection with Mitchelstown! My hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) was a far and away more formidable person than I was in the Plan of Campaign organization on the Mitchelstown estate. But because he happened to be a man of few words, he will be voting with us in the Lobby to-morrow night instead of reposing on a plank bed in Tullamore, as he would if he had spoken out his mind at the market cross. I do not mind telling it—and he will not mind it either, now that his work is done, and done victoriously. Then about the right hon. Gentleman's glorious newspaper war. I will not say a good deal—though I might—about the meanness of this policy of subjecting journalists to a bread and water diet for the simple offence that they recorded the right hon. Gentleman's failure from week to week. That is the sting of their offence—because these meetings are held—because the meetings are held in spite of him and the Government. He might as well issue a Proclamation suppressing the sun in the heavens, and then go about smashing the faces of the sun-dials for recording the fact that the sun was shining and moving on in its usual way in spite of him. Worse still is this miserable guerilla war on the newsvendors and the bullying and intimidating of their wives and their little children. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary might have remarked that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), who sits next to him, is a person who in former years might so easily have come under that same category. The right hon. Gentleman sold *United Ireland* in its day. I make no reproach to him, for he was an extremely good customer. If he had not parted with his Irish business as he did in a most timely manner in view of subsequent legislation of this Government, the right hon. Gentleman would be liable, at this moment, to three months on a plank bed, for having for six months sold the paper. I hope that chivalry has not so died out of the human breast as that you will resent for the Leader of the House of Commons what you condone in the case of a miserable shopkeeper of Killarney. But what I want to emphasize is my own knowledge of that policy, and its absolute and downright failure even against even so eminently vulnerable and punishable a sort of property as we know a newspaper is. The right hon. Gentleman has not succeeded in burying one single newspaper report. He has not daunted a single newspaper, and I promise you that he never will even if he proceeds from the editors to the printers, and from the printers to the printers' devils, as he probably will do. There is absolutely only one redeeming feature of the right hon. Gentleman's policy in Ireland, and that is its colossal and monumental failure; and that is the one thing that softens the minds and hearts of the Irish people against the deeds and atrocities he has committed against them. Within the last few weeks—probably in view of the sitting of Parliament—the right hon. Gentleman has made a more prodigious show of energy than ever, striking out right, left, and centre, outraging the feelings of the Irish people, and insulting and maltreating men of honour and courage. Notwithstanding that for the last few weeks he has been more wild and desperate than ever, the feeling against the right hon. Gentleman in Ireland has been steadily settling down from a passionate and almost uncontrollable sense of indignation to a feeling not quite flattering to the right hon. Gentleman's vanity—though perfectly reassuring to his friends who surround him with detectives—a feeling—well, I will not more particularly describe it than say that the hon. Member for Cork very aptly illustrated it the other night by the apologue of the lion and the cat. We feel that we have taken the right hon. Gentleman's measure now in Ireland, and are a match for him. We feel that he has failed, and that with the amount of public spirit—the unparalleled amount of public spirit—and the most wonderful spirit of self-sacrifice that he has raised in Ireland, he will go on failing as long as grass grows and water runs. We believe—and it goes a great way to tranquillize the Irish mind—that he has done much to advance the Irish cause by awakening the consciences of Englishmen, by uniting the two peoples together in common human sympathy, and in common abhorrence of the brutal and cruel system of terrorism which, I must do him the justice to say, he is courageously and quite logically, though I do not think very prudently, exhibiting in full working order in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) a short time ago, in a speech at Hastings, claimed that at all events the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had held his own in Ireland. Well, that is rather a meek and unassuming boast, considering the high and swelling boasts we heard from the same lips in the palmy days of last Session. Has the right hon. Gentleman even held his own? I venture to say he has demoralized every department of his own Irish Government and every class of his own officials. There is not an office in Dublin Castle at this moment that is not subjected to as much espionage and as many precautions against betrayal as if it were the Palace of the Czar. The right hon. Gentleman has the distinction of having developed an entirely new department of the Irish difficulty among Her Majesty's soldiers. When my friend Mandeville and myself were hurried away in a special train in the middle of the night to Tullamore I felt it rather keenly; but I was considerably consoled when I learned that the next use the right hon. Gentleman had to make of special trains was to ship Her Majesty's soldiers away from Tullamore for cheering Mandeville and myself. Do not let them ride off upon the statement that these were mere Irish soldiers. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: They were Irish soldiers.] Some of them were so, no doubt; but there was a Scottish regiment there, a regiment of his own countrymen, the Scottish Fusiliers, and by some unhappy accident they also had to be driven away by special train for some awkward manifestations at Mitchelstown. The right hon. Gentleman had to employ police patrols to watch the prison officials. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; the police patrol in Tullamore gaol was not between the outer world and me, but between me and the gaol officials, and not only that, but to my own knowledge—the right hon. Gentleman cannot even count on the Royal Irish Constabulary—to my own knowledge he had to employ policemen to watch policemen. That is what the right hon. Gentleman calls "holding his own in Ireland." He has done one thing, and really now I remember it is about the only thing he succeeded in, and he botched that, or nearly succeeded in doing so—kicking about a number of bonfires that were lighted through Ireland on the occasion of our release. He did that in many instances, and had the heads opened of the miscreants who lit bonfires and who cheered for us, and for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. He succeeded in that, and I cannot help thinking that that exploit most aptly sympathizes and sums up his whole successes in Ireland. He has kicked out a few bonfires of Irish Nationality, but the spirit that lighted them is beyond his power. It still lives, and it will still burn when the memory of his unhappy time in Ireland will be a mere speck in the dark clouds of misgovernment that are passing away into a forgotten and forgiven past. Well, but the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends plead for a little more time. His noble Uncle—his noble Relative—says that though it may not be convenient at this moment to submit to the English constituencies the judgment upon his policy in Ireland, that you have only to give him a little more time for the triumph of coercion, and for the annihilation of the power of my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). Aye, a little more time. My hon. Friend the other night reminded the House that the right hon. Gentleman was not the first Chief Secretary who signalized himself by experiments at Tullamore. The late Mr. Forster—and I do not recall the circumstances for the purpose of insulting his memory—the late Mr. Forster went down to Tullamore and addressed the people from the hotel windows, under the protection of a regiment of police, and he came back to this House, and there are many men in this House who can still remember the triumphant account he gave of his experiences at Tullamore, and the pathetic, the tragic sincerity with which he assured this House that he was winning, that the people were with him, and that the followers of my hon. Friend were a mere pack of broken men and reckless boys. If they only gave him a little more time, said Mr. Forster, for his policy in Ireland, it would make his triumph clear. That was seven years ago. Does the wildest man in this House imagine that the second experiment at Tullamore is going to be more successful? Do any of the right hon. Gentleman's best friends claim that he is a better man or a braver man than Mr. Forster, or that he is the deeper statesman of the two? No, Sir; the right hon. Gentleman is, no doubt, in a position to inflict misery upon our people—misery and untold suffering. I do not deny it. It is no child's play for us, and I daresay there is no man's health entirely the same after enduring what some of my poor friends are enduring to-night; and we have to face not one spell of imprisonment alone, but imprisonment all the time and all our lives as long as we have the power or strength to fight him, or as long as the right hon. Gentleman has power to kidnap us away from this House and consign us to prison. We do not dispute his power that way. We acknowledge that the mere sufferings in prison are only a part, and a very small part, of the frightful sufferings, calamities, and troubles which the right hon. Gentleman is bringing upon many an humble family in Ireland. A brutal persecution is going on at the hands of every village constable — every brutal constable who has a quarrel with the people. There is a state of uncertainty, confusion, injustice, and ruin to the business of the country, and it is a most burning shame that such an ordeal should be inflicted on people whose only crime is that they desire to live in peace, and rule in happiness in their own land. The strain is sometimes almost intolerable; but the Irish people, you may depend upon it, will bear that strain. We have now tested the right hon. Gentleman's strength and our own, and we are not cowed—we are not disheartened. We are not even embittered. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has accomplished within two years what 700 years of coercion have not accomplished, and what 700 years more of coercion will leave unaccomplished still. He has knitted the hearts of the two peoples; he has knitted them by a more sacred and enduring bond than a bond of terror and of brute force. He has done that, and our quarrel with England, our bitterness towards England has gone, and it will be your fault, it will be your crime, if it ever returns—a crime for which history will stigmatize you for ever. We, at all events, are not the Disruptionists. It is you who are the Disruptionists, the Exasperationists, and the Separatists. We have never made a disguise of our feelings in this House, and we never will. We do not play the diplomat in the same manner as the Tory Government do out of Office. We say what we mean. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), and many another good Friend beside him, have been over in Ireland this winter, and they can tell you that whenever the name of England is uttered now in an Irish crowd, it is uttered no longer with hatred, it is uttered with hope—aye, it is uttered with gratitude to those awakening British masses, those honest British toilers who have never authorized this policy of barbaric brutality in Ireland. They never have, and we believe they never will. We believe in them, and we are content to wait. You are the Separatists to-day. We are for peace and for the happiness and for the brotherhood of the two nations. If you are for eternal repression and eternal discord and eternal misery for you as well as for us, we are for appeasing the dark passions of the past. You are for inflaming them, whether for purposes of a political character I do not care to name; but at the best for purposes and in the interest of that wretched clan of landlord Mamelukes whom you support in Ireland, who are neither good Englishmen nor good Irishmen, and who have been your evil genius, just as they have been the scourge of our unhappy race. That is the state of things, and in such a cause and with such forces as these I believe the end is not far off, and to the God of justice, of truth, and of mercy we leave the issue. As far as we ourselves are concerned, we shall be amply compensated for what we have suffered or what we may have to suffer yet in our grand old cause. We shall be amply compensated if we should be destined, as I hope, please God, we may, to be the last of the long and mournful list of men who have had to fight and suffer for it, and believe me upon the day of our victory we will grant an easy amnesty to the right hon. Gentleman opposite for our little troubles at Tullamore, and we will bless his policy yet as one of the most powerful, though unconscious, instruments in the delivery of our country.

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) (who rose amid loud cries of "Balfour," which that right hon. Gentleman declined to notice) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. W. O'Brien) had in his eloquent speech dealt largely with personal matters, and he (Mr. Finlay) thought there were few hon. Members who thought his speech too long; but at the same time he believed it was the general sense of the House and the country that the debate on the Amendment had lasted quite long enough, and that it was time they should as speedily as possible proceed to the Business of the Session. As far as he was concerned, he certainly should be extremely concise in his remarks. The hon. Member (Mr. W. O'Brien), towards the close of his speech, charged the Unionist Party in that House with inflaming the passions and animosities in Ireland that were now in a fair way to die out. He (Mr. Finlay) was not aware of any section of the Unionist Party against which that charge could justly be made. It had ever been the ambition of the Unionist Party to see that equal justice was done throughout Ireland, to appease those animosities which were the relics of past misgovernment and past misfortune, and to heal those wounds which still, it was plain, occasioned so much bitterness. But they believed that in a country so divided as Ireland equal justice might best be had in the Imperial Parliament. Divided as Ireland was, they protested against a proposal to hand over one part of the country to the domination of another. The hon. Member for North-East Cork assured them that all bitterness on the part of his friends towards England was gone, and that the national prejudices which had raged in the past were expiring. He (Mr. Finlay) confessed he thought the House would have listened with more pleasure to that declaration if it had not the opportunity of comparing it with speeches made elsewhere by Members of the Nationalist Party. What he said with regard to hon. Members below the Gangway was that the Party which they so ably represented had three voices. There was one voice that was heard in the House of Commons and on English and Scottish platforms; another, and a somewhat louder voice, was heard in Ireland; but if they wanted to get at the real springs of this movement they must listen to the voice used on the American platform. The speech of the hon. Gentleman was largely devoted to prove that the Crimes Act of last Session was a failure, and that the policy of the Chief Secretary had collapsed. For that purpose the hon. Gentleman went into a large number of cases, leading up to the conclusion that the Crimes Act was impotent, and that the policy of Coercion, as he called it, had failed, and must fail. He (Mr. Finlay) did not propose to follow the hon. Gentleman into these particular instances, and he thought it would be a waste of the time of the House to do so. But if he wanted any proof of the fact that the Crimes Act had not been a failure, he found it in the intense bitterness with which the hon. Gentleman spoke of it. If the Crimes Act was not at work, and if it was not leading on to the result which was dreaded by hon. Members below the Gangway, why all this animosity when the hon. Gentleman spoke of the Chief Secretary and the legislation he had been carrying out? He (Mr. Finlay) confessed that some remarks made by the hon. Member suggested to his mind the inquiry whether the Irish sense of humour, of which they used to hear so much, was altogether extinct. The hon. Member spoke of the Act of last Session, the provisions of which were tolerably familiar to the House now, as being the most horrible Coercion Act ever enacted against human liberty. He (Mr. Finlay) would appeal to the House whether there was not an extravagance about that declaration which seemed to show that the hon. Gentleman who made it had for a time forgot the humorous aspect that such a statement must assume? The hon. Member was loudly cheered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). He (Mr. Finlay) wondered whether that right hon. Gentleman had entirely forgotten the Act of 1882. Was the present Act a bit more horrible or stern than the Act of 1882, and did either of these Acts deserve, or could they reasonably be stigmatized as the most horrible Act ever enacted against human liberty? He did not consider that it was the function of that House to sit as a Court of Appeal from sentences of Courts of Law. There had been an increasing tendency of late to bring up decisions of the Law Courts for revision here, and he thought those who tried to impose upon the House functions for which it was unsuited, and which it could not properly discharge, were not the true friends of the House, and its legitimate influence in its proper sphere. He did not propose to go into the question of the justice or injustice of the conviction of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. O'Brien), but he would just remind the House that the hon. Gentleman himself avowed in his place in the House that he recommended the tenants on a particular estate to resist by all means —by force, if necessary—the process of the law. He (Mr. Finlay) appealed to the House whether action of that kind could be tolerated in any civilized country? If the law was harsh, amend it; but if any hon. Gentleman was to be allowed to stand up and be cheered by an influential Party in that House when saying that he had advised men to resist the law by force——[*Cries of* "No, no!"]

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) was understood to contradict the hon. and learned Gentleman, and to say that the hon. Member for North East-Cork had said he advised resistance by all honest means.

MR. FINLAY, proceeding, said, he could not be deaf to the interruption that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. O'Brien) did not say he recommended the tenants to resist the process of the law by force. He was in the recollection of the House, and if the words of the hon. Member did not convey that idea, he did not know what the English language meant.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I did not say by force, but I am bound to admit that I did say by every honest means in their power, whatever that would import.

MR. FINLAY said, he must really have the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian and the hon. Member for North-East Cork to settle their little difference between them.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: As the hon. and learned Gentleman has referred to me, and has said that the hon. Member for North-East Cork had recommended resistance by force——

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): If necessary.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: As the hon. and learned Member appeals to me, I must say that when he said the hon. Member for North-East Cork had recommended resistance and that he was cheered by a large Party in this House, I must state that the hon. Member for North-East Cork said in my hearing that he recommended resistance by every honest means. These are precisely the words which the hon. Member for North-East Cork used.

MR. FINLAY: Whatever the exact words of the hon. Member might have been, if he (Mr. Finlay) understood him, he had just stated that he recommended resistance by every honest means, and that he meant to include the use of force if necessary. He would now shortly give his reasons for not being able to support the Amendment. The first portion of that Amendment he confessed he had read with some satisfaction, because it referred in flattering terms to the character of the ameliorative legislation with regard to Irish tenants on which the House occupied so large a part of last Session. It was gratifying to know that that legislation had and was having a beneficial tendency. But he could not shut his eyes to the fact that that was introduced merely by way of preface to an attack upon the other part of the legislation of last Session, which was concerned with the repression of crime; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) invited the House to come to a Resolution which would express its conviction that the legislation of last Session was a failure. He could not imagine that the hon. Member seriously thought that any considerable section of the House would be guilty of such political ineptitude as to abruptly change the course which upon full reflection they adopted upon Irish matters. The curse of all our dealings with Ireland had been a want of continuity of policy. Ireland had been made the plaything of English Parties. They had dealt with Ireland in too many cases—not for the benefit of the country itself, not for the benefit of the United Kingdom, of which Ireland was a part, and with whose interests its own were inseparably connected, but in the interests, real or supposed, of one of our great political Parties. Those unfortunate tactics reached their climax when the great surrender of 1886 was made. That great surrender had the effect of breaking up the Liberal Party. But he thought it had also this effect—that it had roused the country upon that point, and that the country had been led to come to the determination that Ireland should no longer be used as a piece in the warfare of Parties, but that there should be something like continuity of policy in our dealings with that country, and that our Irish policy should be governed by the necessities of that country and by the necessities of the United Kingdom, and not by the exigencies of Party warfare. The redress of grievances was no doubt a great thing, and the Act of last Session conferred enormous boons upon the Irish tenants; but the maintenance of law and order was just as essential for the prosperity of the country. The House enacted last Session a Crimes Act which was permanent. That was to say, it remained law, and remained in force, until it was repealed like any other Act. To his mind, that appeared to be, and was, one of the best features of the measure. It signally distinguished it from those intermittent attempts at the maintenance of law in Ireland which had hitherto failed—very largely because they were not continuous. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who was now very much engaged upon the arduous task of endeavouring to give effect to that legislation, that he might count upon the loyal support of the Liberal Unionist Party to that end. It was not without consideration that the Liberal Unionists concurred in the legislation of last Session; and that legislation, now standing on the Statute Book, they were resolved should have a full and fair trial. But, to his mind, they were not merely engaged in the maintenance of law and order in the ordinary sense of the word, but they were engaged in a conflict to which they (the Liberal Unionists) were called by every Liberal principle that was worthy of the name. What hon. Members below the Gangway were fighting for, and what so embittered them against the Crimes Act of last Session, was this—they were struggling for liberty to coerce others. He did not at all deny that there was a large element in Ireland that was disaffected at the present time; but there was also a very large portion of the population that was loyalist, and there was a still larger portion ready to be on the winning side—one way or other—which up to that time had been coerced by the National League, but which was ready to declare its sentiments when the pressure under which it had suffered up to this time was removed. They were face to face, not with mere sporadic disorder, but with an organized conspiracy to substitute the law of the League for the law of the land. That was the situation, and that situation must be dealt with. But, surely, if there was one principle of Liberalism clearer than another, it was that there ought to be liberty for every man to form and to express his own opinions, to choose his own associates, to sell his goods to whom he would, and to take on lease, if he liked, any land that was in the market. To all liberty of that sort the National League was the declared and avowed foe, and they were fighting for liberty to coerce their fellow-countrymen in the enjoyment of the freedom which on every principle of Liberalism they ought to enjoy. They had in their hands a tremendous weapon—the weapon of Boycotting. Boycotting was not exclusive dealing. It was nothing like it. The difference was pointed out with overwhelming force only five years ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian himself, and he (Mr. Finlay) apprehended it had not changed its nature since then. He also apprehended that, if there was any change, it must be in the point of view of the right hon. Gentleman. The object of this legislation was to break down this tyranny; and in the struggle with the National League he apprehended that the Government were entitled to the support of every true Liberal in the House who valued Constitutional liberty. Various charges had been made against the Liberal Unionists in this matter. They were told that they were associating with Conservatives, and that no crime could be deeper. Well, he was not very careful to answer in that matter. He apprehended it had ever been one of the honourable traditions of English political life that, when a foreign danger threatened, Party differences were sunk for the common welfare of the common country. They were now face to face with a domestic danger greater than many a foreign war had occasioned, and he considered that every honourable tradition of English political life called upon men, in a crisis such as this, to sink considerations of Party—to vote as they believed the welfare of their country demanded. They were told that legislation of this kind was inconsistent with representative government. So far from being inconsistent with it, he believed it was a necessary complement of the extension of the franchise in Ireland. Surely the first principle of Liberalism was that the electors, in whose hands the franchise was put, should be at liberty to exercise it freely according to their own judgment, and that House was bound to see that such measures were taken as would enable the House and the country to hear what was the true voice of the people of Ireland. They would never hear that true voice so long as an organization existed the purpose and the effect of which was to make the machinery of the polling booth and of the ballot box merely efficacious in registering the decrees of the branches of the National League. They were told that the Government ought to be engaged in conferring local government upon Ireland. He would ask the House whether an extension of the powers of local government to Boards chosen throughout the country would be likely to be a blessing or a curse so long as the organization of the League was in force, and so long as it was at liberty to use the weapon of Boycotting, which it was known to use with such terrible effect? But he would like to read what was said on this question of local government by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) at Inverness, on the 17th November last. He was asked certain questions after his speech, and the first was this—

> "Keeping in view that all sides in politics in England and Scotland not only desire, but insist on, decentralization, and a large and comprehensive scheme of local self-government, would you not be willing to accept of such a scheme for Ireland also—in the first instance, to see how it worked, with power to improve and develop it by degrees, as circumstances might require?"

What was the hon. Member's answer to that?—

> "Certainly not; because I do not think that any scheme short of the Bill of Mr. Gladstone would work any good in Ireland. And such a proposal as this would work a great deal of mischief, and make the settlement of the question more difficult."

Yet after that statement made by, perhaps, the most prominent Member of the Nationalist Party, they were hearing, night after night, taunts hurled against the Government for not introducing a Local Government Bill for Ireland. All he could say on this subject was—"Surely in vain is the net spread in sight of any bird." What was the alternative to which they were invited if they were not to persevere in the policy on which the House determined last Session? What other course was open? The proposal was that Her Majesty should hand over the government of Ireland to the officials of the National League. For that was the proposal of the Home Rule Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, short of which the Member for East Mayo had said they would accept nothing. It had, however, been said that there had been concessions on certain points of that Bill. For his part he believed that those concessions were absolutely illusory, and that no solid concession had been made on any one of the points to which attention had been called. But there was one point on which there had not been even the semblance of a concession. They all recollected how much many hon. Members were impressed with the necessity of some security for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland. An Irish Parliament was proposed to be created, with an Executive dependent upon that Parliament. Had any concession been made upon that point? He had read attentively every speech that had been made by the author of that Bill of 1886; and he confessed that he had not found in one of them the slightest indication of a willingness in any way to restrain the powers that would have been conferred under that Bill upon the Irish Legislature and the Irish Executive with regard to the maintenance of law and order. And there was a very sufficient reason for it. Hon. Members below the Gangway would not stand any such concession for one moment. He wished to call the attention of the House, and especially of Members who were most struck with the difficulties in regard to the maintenance of law and order as an obstacle to the Bill of 1886, to a speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), in which—also speaking at Inverness—that hon. Member declared that the fundamental condition which they required was that the administration of the law in Ireland should be under the control of the Representatives of Ireland, as well as the making of the laws; and no system of local government would give them that. It was thus a *sine quâ non* that the maintenance of law and order should be handed over to the proposed Legislature and Executive in Ireland, and that without any of the checks without which many Members formed the greatest reason for voting against the Bill of 1886. He asked the House, he asked the country, he asked the electors to realize the fact that it was not proposed, and could not be proposed, that the administration of the law should be in any way withdrawn from the proposed Irish Government. How would the control of the administration of the law, of the police, of the magistracy, and of the Judges be employed? On that point he would quote, not from the Nationalist Members, but from what had been said by an English Member in that House. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) yesterday, in the course of his speech, said—

> "Such were the men who were carrying out what he would call this infamous Act—he warned those men deliberately—that when the Liberal Party crossed to the other side of the House—and it would not be long before that took place—every detail of their administration would be carefully scanned. And if there were any instances that would allow of their being brought up and punished for what they were doing in Ireland, that opportunity would be taken."

That remark was cheered by the Nationalist Members, and it was a very significant warning with regard to the proceedings of any British Parliament. He (Mr. Finlay) was not concerned by what the hon. Member might think or say. No British Parliament would act in the vindictive spirit expressed in the words he had just quoted. He would like to ask the House what would be the fate of those who had been engaged to the best of their ability, loyally, and trusting to the honour of England, in the administration of Irish affairs, if they were to be handed over to the tender mercies of an Executive which should represent the majority at present dominant in Ireland? The unparalleled baseness of the proposed surrender required no comment. They had heard, of course, a great deal about the grievances of hon. Members below the Gangway. He (Mr. Finlay) confessed he sympathized with those grievances; but he wished they would not employ such heated language in speaking upon them. The hon. Member for North-East Cork talked about the "torture" employed in the prisons of Ireland under the Crimes Act. He (Mr. Finlay) considered that no word could be more remote from the fact with regard to prison life. As he understood the matter, there had been no difference whatever made in the treatment of prisoners under the Crimes Act as compared with prisoners under any other Act, unless it were that more indulgence was shown to the former. ["Oh, oh!"] There was, perhaps, one grievance. Hon. Members were very anxious to appear before the country as heroes and martyrs; but there were certain disagreeable preliminaries consequent upon and to be gone through before that state could be attained, and they seemed to wish to have all the glory of heroism and martyrdom without any of the inconveniences. He sympathized with that grievance also; but, after all, their great grievance really was that the administration of the Crimes Act by the Chief Secretary was beginning to tell—it was taking it out of their power to coerce those who had hitherto swelled their majority. That was their great grievance; and, in comparison with that, everything else sank into insignificance. The Chief Secretary had been made a target for a perfect storm of abuse. He (Mr. Finlay) dared say the right hon. Gentleman knew how to appreciate that abuse at its true value. Hon. Members below the Gangway spoke of him now as they used to speak of Mr. Forster. But next year, if it were convenient for the purposes of political warfare, they would no doubt be ready to talk of him as they now spoke of Mr. Forster. Let the right hon. Gentleman go on without fear or favour in this matter. The goal he had in view was that there should be no law in Ireland but that of the Queen. Until that was achieved, they would have no Constitutional liberty in Ireland; and he hoped the House would lend its support to the Government in the arduous task of grappling with the endeavours of the National League to upset the law of the Queen and establish a law of its own.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, he would not for a moment presume to follow the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Finlay) in any of the technical or legal arguments which he had used, as they had been already abundantly answered in the course of the debate. He was not very much surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman had expressed himself anxious that the debate should conclude, because, as yet, no answer had been given, either by the hon. and learned Gentleman himself or by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, to the damning indictment of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), who had opened the debate to-night. The hon. and learned Gentleman had then gone on to point out that the Coercion Bill had been a gigantic success on account of the bitterness of feeling which it had created in the minds of the Irish people. For his (Mr. H. Gardner's) part, he could not for the life of him see that that was any proof of the success of the measure, or that the Government or their supporters ought to make it a source of congratulation. It was exactly as the hon. Member for North-East Cork had pointed out. The Coercion Bill in Ireland and the policy of the Government had created bitterness, and was tending to prevent rather than bring about such an opinion as had already been effected in part by the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). But it was not for the purpose of following the hon. and learned Gentleman that he (Mr. H. Gardner) had risen. If he did venture to trespass on the time of the House for a short period it was not because he felt that he could add in any way to the words and the arguments which had come from hon. Members on that side of the House; but it was because he desired to emphasize upon the Government the fact that the deep and indignant protest which was felt against the coercion policy of the Government in Ireland did not come alone from Irish Members of Parliament, or Members who had Irish constituents in their division, but also from those who, like himself, had no Irish voters in their constituency, but represented purely an English and essentially a quiet agricultural division. It was in the name and with the consent of thousands of agricultural labourers in his constituency, and thousands of others in the county in which he lived, that he protested against the Irish policy of the present Government; and he did so more willingly on account of the somewhat unworthy sneer that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had used in a speech of his the other night when he said that Members of the Liberal Party were afraid to repeat in the House what they had said on platforms during the Recess. The right hon. Gentleman had been guilty of a very unworthy sneer, and he (Mr. H. Gardner) presumed that he meant by his words not only to include the eminent Leaders of the Liberal Party, but also the minor lights like himself. The right hon. Gentleman would feel with him that the courage and honour of even a minor light like himself was as important to him and to his constituency as was the courage and honour of the most eminent Member of the House, and he told the right hon. Gentleman that he was ready to repeat in his place everything he might have said about the Government during the Recess. There had been a great deal of talk during the Recess, and if the right hon. Gentleman would use his undoubted influence with the Government to obtain him an opportunity, he should be very happy some evening or other to come down and repeat to him every one of the speeches he had made behind his back. They had been told in the Gracious Speech from the Throne that the coercive policy of the Government in Ireland had been a success. Well, he ventured to utterly deny that fact, and he would go further and say that no one was more conscious of its failure than right hon. Gentlemen connected with the Government on the Treasury Bench. Instead of success, the whole administration of the Coercion Act had been a source of weakness to the Government, and had dealt no slight blow to the stability of the Government. They who looked forward to the triumph of Home Rule in Ireland in the no distant future might well regard with satisfaction the coercive blunders of the present Government, were it not for the suffering and indignity which it had involved on the Irish people. He would go further, and say that they had not, on their side, a better electioneering agent than the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He ventured to say that the Coercion Act in Ireland had failed. He would ask the House to consider at what its powers were aimed. Undoubtedly they were aimed at the continuation of the Plan of Campaign, and against the power of the National League. Had the Government succeeded in this instance. On the contrary, it seemed to him that the Plan of Campaign had almost everywhere triumphed, and almost justified its existence; and as to the National League, he took it that that body was stronger now than it was when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary came into Office. The Government claimed credit for a higher intention than the mere suppression of the National League. They hoped, no doubt, to bring about a better government in Ireland. They hoped, no doubt, to bring about a restoration of the confidence of the people in the administration of the law, and they sought to establish better relations between the Government of Great Britain and the people of Ireland. He would ask the House whether they had succeeded in that endeavour? He thought they were all agreed on that side of the House that the essence of all government lay in the consent and contentment of the governed. If, then, the Government had not secured that, how could they claim that their policy had been a success? If they could show any kind of success at all it was merely the triumph of repression, and that was a small boast for a Constitutional Government to make in this country at the end of the 19th century. They had been taunted with not repeating the phrase of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, "Remember Mitchelstown;" but having heard the speech of the hon. Gentleman who commenced the debate that evening, the Government would see that hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House did remember Mitchelstown. He ventured to say that on that occasion the deep-lying principles of Constitutional government had been violated. If hon. Gentlemen thought he had gone too far in saying that that melancholy incident was against those deep-lying principles, he had on his side the high authority of Mr. Burke, who in 1793 said—

> "If the hearts of the people are not with the hands of the soldiery, you may call your Constitution what you please; but, in reality, it merely consists of three parts—Cavalry, Infantry, and Artillery, and nothing else."

At that time the Irish Constabulary was not in existence, or Mr. Burke would, perhaps, have included them. It was the favourite statement of hon. Members forming the composite majority in that House, that the Coercion Bill of last year set free the people of Ireland from the miserable state of intimidation in which they were placed. He remembered the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), in an eloquent speech, saying, last year, distinctly that the measure of coercion so-called was simply a measure of emancipation for the people of Ireland. That was said on the eve of the last Election, when he and his Friends went about saying there was no coercion at all. He did not know whether the hon. and learned Member was of the same opinion now; but, at any rate, the Government had passed their measure of emancipation, and set free this miserable people. How had they employed their freedom? If the reports in the newspapers were to be believed, that nation of emancipated slaves had cheered to the echo those men whom hon. Gentlemen opposite called tyrants, and endeavoured to prove their devotion to them. The only excuse the Coercionist Party had for ignoring the opinion of Ireland, as expressed by a vast majority of her Representatives, was that their seats had been won by the intimidation of a priest-ridden and League-ridden people. This statement had been repeated that evening by the hon. and learned Member for Inverness; and it had been repeated a day or two ago by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson). In the somewhat vague, if amusing, diatribe of the hon. and gallant Member there were two points which seemed of importance—one was that, in his opinion, the National League was, if possible, more powerful in Ireland during the last six months than in the past, which did not say much for the government of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and the Coercion Bill which he used; and the hon. and learned Gentleman still adhered to the extraordinary fallacy that the vast majority of Gentlemen who came to that House from Ireland had gained their seats by intimidation and oppression. But the Government had passed their Coercion Act, which was administered with the high capacity of the right hon. Gentleman, the ultra-Coercionist Member of a Coercionist Government. He asked why the Government, having passed their enfranchising Bill, had not given their newly-enfranchised electors the chance of using their freedom? It was because they knew that if there were an Election in Ireland they would not win one single seat, and that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway would be returned to Parliament in greater numbers. But the Coercion Act had not only failed; it had been administered in such a way as to make our Government ridiculous in the eyes of Europe. If the Government really meant to tame Ireland into submission by their 20 years of resolute government, they needed the courage of a Bismarck, and not the bravery of the Irish Secretary. Why had they not set about their task in a business-like and dignified manner? What was the use of this peddling, irritating tyranny? This policy of imprisoning Members of Parliament, priests, and editors for short periods, from which they emerged greater heroes than ever? Why had had not the Government the courage of their opinions; and why did they not disenfranchise the country altogether? The reason was but too plain; it was not that they would not, but that they dare not, because they knew that if they were to propose any such measure in that House and put it before the country, the public opinion, not only of Ireland, but of the whole United Kingdom, would be against them. What, then, was the use of their petty tinkering policy, which made us the laughing stock of the world? He would now say a few words with regard to the subject of the National League. About 56 years ago, under Lord Liverpool's Administration, that House of Parliament set to work on the task of suppressing an organization which, in his opinion, somewhat resembled the National League. He alluded to the Catholic Association. It resembled the National League in this way, that it possessed the confidence of the great majority of the people of Ireland; it was, moreover, established to bring about a great political change, and it commanded the sympathy of some leading statesmen and a great many other persons in this country. Mr. Plunket—at the time Attorney General—said that "the history of Ireland was a history of associations." If that were true then, it had been true, with some brief intervals, ever since. He deplored the fact that associations in Ireland should be able to win the confidence and obedience of the people from their legitimate rulers. He went further, and said that he deplored the necessity of the National League, because the necessity of its existence was an outward and visible sign of incapacity or maladministration of the present Government in Ireland. But he lamented the supremacy of associations in that country for other reasons, because associations, whether they were the National League or the Orange Society, must of necessity be Party associations representing Party feelings. He was well aware that the party which the National League represented was nine-tenths of the people of Ireland; but he regretted that a minority, however small, should not be represented in an association of such national importance. Well, was it not manifest that if the Irish people, as history proved, were determined to place their confidence in associations of their own countrymen, would it not be wise to give them the only national association which could not be a Party association, which would be backed by lawful authority, which would represent all creeds and classes — namely, a Legislative Assembly in Dublin? Nothing could better display the mistaken policy of coercive measures for Ireland than the way in which the people of England regarded the so called criminal manufacture by the Coercion Act. He regarded it as a significant fact that, not only in Ireland, but in England, there were crowds who cheered the political victims of the Government. The English were a law-abiding and law-loving people; and if a vast number of them showed, as they undoubtedly do, sympathy; not to say approbation with those whom the Government called criminals, was it not more likely that the Coercive Law was wrong rather than numbers of hitherto honourable men should suddenly become demoralized? He had merely risen for the purpose of protesting in the name of a purely English constituency against the policy of the Government in Ireland, a policy which, had it not been for the promise held out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, would have plunged that country in despair and gone far to wreck that true and lasting Union of the two Kingdoms which hon. Members on his side of the House so ardently desired.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): said, that he desired to make a few remarks on this question, because it was one in which his constituency took a great interest, and because Separatist agitators took a great interest in his constituency. Upwards of 60 meetings had been held in his Division since the General Election, and some 10 Members of Parliament had been down to try and convert Mid Leicestershire to the Home Rule gospel. He could also claim the great honour at that moment of being the only Catholic supporter of the present Government in that House. He had read recently with great pleasure an article in the *Moniteur de Rome*, which, although not strictly speaking an organ of the Vatican, was well known not to express opinions that were offensive to it. That article contained a significant paragraph, asking how the Irish Nationalists could count upon the sympathies of Catholics, and how the supreme and moderating power of the Church could work in her favour when such culpable and revolutionary elements mingled their aim with the national movement? It was to him a matter of satisfaction and pleasure to know that at least in the remarks made to the Irish pilgrims a few weeks ago, he, whom he revered as the Vicar of Christ, had no word of censure for the policy of Her Majesty, or the personal conduct of the Irish Secretary. He had been elected by the division of a county which only six months before had polled 1,040 votes in favour of a Radical candidate; and if that Radical majority had been turned into a majority of 135 for himself, it was because he had come forward as an opponent of every form of Home Rule or autonomy for Ireland; it was because he had said, "If there is crime there must and shall be coercion;" and it was therefore as the champion of coercion, as some called it, that he stood there. He would endeavour to show that the present policy of the Government in Ireland was the only possible policy. There were going on in Ireland two movements. One of those claimed for the Irish people an independent and separate nationality. He denied that the Irish had ever been a separate nation in the strict sense of the word, and if it depended upon him they never should be. The English were a race which had succeeded in building up of many Nationalities one Empire, and when he spoke of the opposite Party as Separatists, he meant it in the sense of Separatists who wished to set up an Irish nation with a separate autonomous Government. Besides the great Nationalist idea which dominated the Irish mind, this latter was permeated with the idea of social revolution. Through social mutiny they wished to march to national independence. Without wishing to say anything offensive, he might mention that he had been much abused by the Irish Press, which he considered a great honour, although, of course, he should have preferred to be looked upon by them as a friend rather than an enemy. He was only an enemy to the Nationalist cause. He claimed to have received, in some sense, an Irish education, and he had no wish except to see Ireland in the full enjoyment of the same liberties as those enjoyed in England; and there were still certain measures which were wanted to complete the equality between the two countries that would certainly receive his cordial support if they were brought before the House. There was principally a measure wanted to deal with Irish education. The Catholic portion of the Irish people did not enjoy those advantages in respect of education to which they were entitled, and that was the rock on which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had originally broken down. It was after this that the right hon. Gentleman had written his articles upon *Vaticanism*, and since that—as far as he could judge—the policy of the right hon. Gentleman had been that of a dazed and revolutionary politician. That was another subject on which Irish Members would receive his cordial support. He thought it most unjust and improper that in a House elected as that House was at present, the only men who were incapacitated to stand as Representatives of the people of Ireland were the Roman Catholic clergy. He said it was an unjust thing and one which ought to be remedied, that in a country where the clergy exercised so much influence they should be excluded from the political world. It was not right that men who were the natural leaders of the people, as were the Irish clergy still, should be debarred by the law from coming to that House to join in the legislation of the country. Perhaps it would be best if the four Catholic Archbishops had seats in the House of Lords; and if the Church of the people were represented in the Upper House, as the English Established Church was, there would be no injustice in excluding the clergy from the Lower House; but the present conditions placed the clergy in a position of political ostracism. He only claimed for the teachers of the Christian Revelation rights which were not denied to men who preached what they were pleased to call the "Fruits of Philosophy." Returning to the socialistic movement which existed in Ireland, he found in *The Freeman's Journal* of last week the report of an address delivered by Mr. Davitt, who stated his programme concisely in these words—

> "The issue is one of stupendous magnitude. . . . The fight is not only for political supremacy between the masses and the classes, it is likewise a struggle between producers and monopolists for the just distribution of the produce of England and Ireland."

If he (Mr. De Lisle) were to refer to the movement as a hydra, for social anarchy was a terrible hydra, he should say that it had a Davitt head which represented socialism, and a Dillon head which aimed at crushing landlordism, and a dynamite head which advocated assassination. Last year a letter appeared in *The Catholic Herald*, New York, in which it was said that the time had come to put an end to him (Mr. De Lisle), because he had dared to censure the anarchical attitude of the Catholic hierarchy. With reference to the question of landlordism his view was that they could not do without it. Although they might destroy the present landlords and divide the land among the people, Parliament could not prevent them borrowing money upon the land, and by that very transaction new landlords would be created. He did not think that by putting the gombeen man or petty local usurer in the place of the present landlords, the really poor peasantry would be any the better for it. Furthermore, he rose to congratulate the Government on the policy which they had so consistently maintained, and he did so with pleasure because he found there was a feeling in its favour growing up in the ranks of the Catholic clergy, as well as of the educated laity, which they should not have expected to find a year ago. At a meeting at the Foreign Office a year ago or more he had spoken of the Catholic hierarchy of Ireland as acting the part of a higher anarchy. Those words had given great offence, but he believed the recent utterances of the Bishop of Limerick, condemning Boycotting and the Plan of Campaign as sinful and criminal, had entirely justified his remarks. They had now the expression of opinion of a distinguished Prelate of the Irish Catholic Church to confirm them in the belief that Boycotting and the Plan of Campaign were sinful and criminal; and as the whole of the so-called Coercion Act was directed to put an end to these sinful and criminal proceedings, it was entirely justified. He considered that this confession of opinion by the Bishop of Limerick was of great value to the Government, because it showed that there was a body of the clergy forming a large majority who held similar views; indeed, he was in a position to know that such was the fact. That letter of the Bishop of Limerick had not been published 24 hours when there was another expression of opinion published in the *Freeman's Journal* on the part of Bishop Healy, who agreed to every word Dr. O'Dwyer had written. The revolutionary attitude, however, continued to be championed, and he referred to a letter which appeared in *The Tablet* last Christmas twelve months, which claimed that—

> "Ever since the Union, rebellion was a sacred duty for every honest Irishman, provided there were a reasonable chance of success."

It was a remarkable fact that the author of these opinions had been since promoted to the important post of the Prosidency of Thurles College, the second most important educational establishment of the Catholic Church in Ireland. That promotion seemed to be a reason for very grave misgivings on their part, and it was that declaration of opinion which justified him in making the remark with regard to the Catholic hierarchical higher anarchy. From the point of view there expressed, the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian would be a fatal mistake, because it would give the necessary leverage to justify, aye, sanctify, rebellion — namely, "a reasonable chance of success." He did not think that any sensible man could now have a shadow of doubt as to the cause of Fitzmaurice's murder. It had been traced home to the League. There was not a link missing. The murder was an eloquent but terrible proof of the truth of Bishop O'Dwyer's words—

> "You cannot mark a man out to be Boycotted, or universally shunned, without running the risk of prompting his murder."

He now wished to reply to a certain manifesto in the form of a letter which had been addressed to Monsignore Persico, signed by Lord Ripon and others. He denied that he was guilty of what was here called want of respect and veneration to the Catholic Church; but he did certainly think that what had been done in Ireland was not only detrimental to religion, but also a grave injury to the country to which the clergy whose conduct was in question belonged. He believed that the Persico mission was intended solely to inquire into the truth of charges which had been alleged, and whether the attitude of the clergy was or was not inconsistent with their sacred duty. This was a case in which a question of morality was involved, and he considered it one in which the highest ecclesiastical authority should consider whether the charges made were true. He was not alone in the view which he had expressed, and he would quote from a letter of an Irish landlord—Colonel Chichester, who knew Ireland well—which was one of a series in a controversy that had been taking place in *The Tablet* on the subject of Boycotting. The letter contained these words:

> "I, for one, look on the Plan of Campaign and the system of Boycotting, no matter on what terms they are carried on, as utterly dishonest and indefensible."

It was certainly a matter of great satisfaction to him, and he believed also to a very large number of other Catholics, to have read the words addressed to the Irish Pilgrims the other day in Rome by His Holiness the Pope, who had publicly expressed the hope that the Irish people would obey their Prelates, and the Prelates obey the law. His Holiness had expressed his confidence in "the justice of the men who were placed at the head of the State"—that could only mean Her Majesty's responsible Ministers — and thus he exhorted the Irish people to obey the law. He had seen in *The Times* to-day a statement of two or three facts, which to him would be quite sufficient to justify the passing of the Crimes Act. As an instance, it appeared that in reference to a marriage of a humble farmer and a young girl at Tralee, the possibility of the bridegroom being shot at no distant date was considered a necessary contingency to be provided for in the marriage settlement. According to *The Times*, the husband was to receive £50 down and £100 by promissory note at 12 months if he were not shot in the meantime. There were many other instances which he would not then refer to, because he thought he had detained the House long enough. But these accumulated facts proved how systematic and general had become the social tyranny and wickedness of the Land League. It was a melancholy thing to see Catholic priests and laymen co-operating with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who now attacked the United Kingdom as he had so often attacked the Church:

> "The great ship of your Church, once so stout and fair, and well-laden with good destinies, has become a phantom ship; . . . . and you who work it are no more than the ghosts of dead men."

The great ship of the State, still so stout and fair, and well laden with good destinies, had become a mutinous ship; and therefore he said that those who worked it should arise and, not like ghosts of platform men, but like patriots and fearless statesmen, sweep away all who dared to resist the law. If Her Majesty's Government continued in the way they had so well begun, and if the health and strength of the right hon. Gentleman the Irish Secretary were preserved to them some years longer, he believed that which they all hoped for would be achieved—namely, the peace and happiness and enrichment of the people of Ireland.

MR. EVELYN (Deptford) said, that the right hon. Member for Mid Leicestershire (Mr. De Lisle) in the speech he had just made had presented a curious and an almost inexplicable phenomenon which had bewildered him more than any other object with which he was familiar. The hon. Member was, or professed to be, a Catholic, and yet he indulged in insults against the Irish hierarchy and against those who held the creed which he professed to reverence. The hon. Member in his long and discursive speech attempted to make out a claim on the Irish Members by stating that he would advocate certain plans of Catholic education and other movements which would find favour with those hon. Gentlemen; but, in the meantime, he was prepared to continue the great oppression of Ireland. The hon. Member would not, by presenting these other subjects for their consideration, earn the gratitude of the Irish people. His observations had ranged from China to Peru; and though he (Mr. Evelyn) had expected that he would end by reading a number of letters from *The Times*, he had not unnaturally concluded by giving them the whole book of the Prophet Jeremiah. But he (Mr. Evelyn) would pass from the hon. Member to consider the Amendment before the House. It might be discussed either as a Party Motion, the carrying of which would involve the defeat of the Government, or it might be discussed on its merits; and if it were, there was no reason why it should not be accepted by every Member of the House. From both points of view he felt it to be his duty to vote for the Amendment. He wished to get rid of this Coalition Government; he did not call it a Conservative Government, for in the course the Government had pursued they had been false to the best traditions of the Conservative Party. The hon. Member (Mr. De Lisle) had sounded the praises of the Union. They had heard the praises of the Unionists sounded by many Gentlemen to-night—in fact, music of this kind was very common in the country. The Unionists were extolled with considerable oratory at Primrose League and other meetings; and the country had heard a vast deal more about this Paper Union than the union of hearts and sentiments. It could not be disputed that Lord Salisbury was prepared in 1885 to throw over the Paper Union altogether. The interview between Lord Carnarvon and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) must have been well known to Lord Salisbury after it had occurred. It was true that in 1888 Lord Salisbury gave a denial; but what was it? They knew that Lord Salisbury was practically prepared to go in for Home Rule, and they knew what Lord Salisbury's denials were. He said that the assumption that every other Member of the Cabinet besides Lord Carnarvon had expressed feelings in favour of Home Rule was an utter, complete, and absolute falsehood. This was pretty strong, and the noble Lord generally used strong language in denials; but nobody ever said that every Member of the Cabinet of 1885 besides Lord Carnarvon had expressed feelings in favour of Home Rule. What was very confidently believed was that several Members of the Cabinet, including Lord Salisbury himself, were quite prepared to go in for Home Rule. They were all glad to find that the Land Act of last Session had had an ameliorative effect on the condition of Ireland. But they could have wished that it had dealt with the question of arrears, and that it had not given undue facilities to evicting landlords like Lord Clanricarde. He hoped that the Act might soon be amended, and made more serviceable to the Irish people on these subjects. But he was thankful to know that, even as it was, it had tended to the diminution of crime. With regard to coercion, he could not but remember what he had witnessed in a late visit to Ireland. He wished that more Englishmen would go over to Ireland and judge for themselves, and not listen to excited statements and inflamed newspaper articles against Ireland. He had witnessed with his own eyes the misery of the people and the oppression under which they laboured, and he could not but feel that it was only too true that the Crimes Act, which they were told was to be directed against crime, had been really directed against political opponents. This had been clearly shown in the cruel administration by the Government of that tremendous weapon which the House put into the hands of the Government last Session. He, for one, had to confess with regret that he had voted for coercion; but he did so, as was well known, reluctantly, and because he understood that this terrific weapon was to be used for the repression of crime, and crime alone. He now found that that was altogether a fraudulent pretence on the part of the Government. He believed that Lord Salisbury all along had it in his mind to exercise the power that he sought from Parliament in a cruel and abominable manner. On the 16th of May, 1886, Lord Salisbury made a foul and slanderous attack on the Irish people. Lord Salisbury declared that what was wanted for Ireland was 20 years of resolute government. He did not complain of that declaration; but Lord Salisbury went on to say that they wanted confidence in the Irish people, and that it depended upon the people they were to confide in; and he added—"You would not confide free representation to the Hottentots." At the time that speech was made he (Mr. Evelyn) happened to be contesting the borough of Deptford against a most able and eloquent adversary, and had the humiliating task of trying to explain away those words of Lord Salisbury. Later events had shown that he was quite wrong, and that his opponent was right, and that all along the present Premier had in his view the establishment of a Hottentot Government in Ireland. In November last Lord Salisbury made a memorable speech at the Mansion House. He said then that any one of his Colleagues was worth the whole 86 Members from Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] The expression of approval which came from his hon. Friend sitting below (Mr. Johnston) he did not wonder at; but he did wonder at such a vulgarism coming from the lips of the Prime Minister of England — *In vino veritas.* Taking these two speeches together—the Hottentot speech and the speech at the Mansion House — did they not show that Lord Salisbury had an utter contempt for the Irish nation; and had he not insulted the Irish? When he was contesting Deptford, and read the Hottentot speech, he had a personal reason for not quite approving of that speech, for he had the honour to have Irish blood in his veins. He knew that Lord Salisbury had denied likening the Irish to Hottentots; but let anyone read his words, and put their own construction on them. Now he came to the administration of the Crimes Act, and he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not in his place, because he had something to say to him. As to the cruel administration of the Crimes Act, he wondered how the right hon. Gentleman could smile and smile, and still be a Chief Secretary. What would not do at all, and what would not be approved by the English people, was that he should treat political prisoners with cruelty, and he should steal their great coats, and that he should gloat in conversation over the weak hearts of his intended victims. The man who did this was a man about whom he would express no opinion, because if he did he should, perhaps, be transgressing the Orders of the House. But he would say that he considered the Government of Ireland by the Salisbury-Balfour clique —he would not say by the Ministry—but by the clique, which controlled the Ministry—to be thoroughly infamous. His hon. Friend on the Front Bench smiled; but let him answer the speech of the hon. Member for Cork, who had proved to the House that the Chief Secretary had thrown into prison old women, boys, and girls, and had committed all that oppression which had still to be denied. Now, he wished to say a word with reference to the treatment of Mr. Blunt. A question had been asked that evening as to why Mr. Blunt had not been given some food when he was dragged from his prison in Galway to the civil action now going on in Dublin. The answer was that Mr. Blunt had the ordinary food of prisoners; but what he contended was that Mr. Blunt was in an exceptional position, and that it was a cruel and shameful thing to give a man the ordinary food of prisoners in the 24 or 30 hours during which he was going to a Court of Justice, half-fainting, to be severely cross-examined. Lord Salisbury and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would have to answer for all this, and for other abominable cruelties to the English nation. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-

East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) that one of the reasons of the diminution of crime in Ireland was the feeling entertained by the Irish people that there was some degree of sympathy entertained for them by the English people. Such a feeling would necessarily have a great effect upon a warm-hearted people like the Irish; and he trusted that Parliament would do everything it could to cultivate that feeling. He remembered the compliment paid by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Chief Secretary—by the despoiler of Egypt to the despot of Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the right hon. Gentleman as "Brave Mr. Balfour." Where was the bravery of the right hon. Gentleman? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) lately went to Loughrea, and did exactly what Mr. Wilfrid Blunt had done. Why was he not picking oakum like Mr. Blunt? He (Mr. Evelyn) would tell them. It was because the "brave" Chief Secretary dared not tackle a Privy Councillor and an ex-Minister. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford had done admirable service. He had made the Chief Secretary shrink, and he had brought the hermit of the Albany to something like reason. He would say no more, except to make one or two remarks personal to himself. He wished to say that a great many statements had been made about him which he would not notice at all. No one cared less for jeers and sneers than he did when he knew he was doing his duty. There was only one remark to which he would refer, and that was that he had written to Lord Salisbury. He had done nothing of the kind. He wrote a letter to the First Lord of the Treasury, who so ably led the Conservative Party in that House, and from whom he had always received the greatest courtesy; but he did not write to Lord Salisbury. He felt great regret at parting from his hon. Friends on that side of the House; but he would advise them—though he did not expect they would take his advice—to go over to the other side, and purify themselves from the disgrace which had been brought on the Conservative Party by the policy of the Government in Ireland. After the discipline of Opposition they might come back to those Benches and assert the true principles of Conservatism, which were enunciated in his early career by Mr. Disraeli, and which, he thought, would lead to a conciliatory policy towards Ireland. During his (Mr. Evelyn's) visit to Ireland he was sometimes cheered by the Irish people; but he felt ashamed of those cheers, having voted for coercion; and when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford, on the day of Mr. Blunt's condemnation, was going to Ballinasloe to address a public meeting there, he asked him (Mr. Evelyn) to accompany him, but he refused. He had said—"You can address the Irish; but I have voted for coercion, and I feel I have no right to speak to them and get praises I do not deserve." He could assure hon. Members opposite, however, that the votes he had given against Ireland had been given under false pretences; but the vote which he should now give would be given with all his heart and soul.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he was sure the words of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Deptford (Mr. Evelyn) would be heard by the majority of people with much pleasure. With the exception of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, whose retirement from the House they must regret, but whom they hoped, since his retirement must be, to see replaced before long by Mr. Wilfrid Blunt—with the exception of the hon. Gentleman's speech everyone in the House must have observed the extraordinary tameness and wearisomeness of the debate since the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) resumed his seat. The speech which was delivered by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Loughborough Division of Leicestershire (Mr. De Lisle) scarcely required and scarcely deserved any comment; but he turned for one instant to the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), because the speech was characterized by what very frequently characterized the speeches of hon. Gentlemen of the hon. and learned Gentleman's way of thinking. The hon. and learned Gentleman span a large web of words and reasonings; but there were no solid facts at the bottom. The House must have been astonished, and people out-of-doors must be astonished, when such a speech as the hon. and learned Member's was the speech that was made by their opponents in answer to the remarkable attack made upon the Government by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness was so good as to say that the liberation of the Irish voter from the control of the National League was the only and necessary condition to the conferring of the franchise upon the Irish people. He (Mr. James Stuart) would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman and his Friends if they were going to contest Limerick; and he would ask, if they were going to contest Limerick, what sort of a show they expected to make there? He would put another question to their opponents—to the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell)—would the hon. Member agree along with his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) that they should each resign their seats and that each should contest the seat of the other, and then see how matters stood? He thought that in any practical way they liked to put it, when they tried to realize what the result might be at the poll of thus removing the restraint of the National League, they would be convinced—as, at any rate, he was—of the flimsiness of the arguments the hon. and learned Gentleman had adduced. His speech was chock-full of those ancient platitudes, as they had become, which stood in the place of argument amongst hon. Gentlemen of his way of thinking. Why did not he—why did not the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—when he spoke, bring into his speech more facts bearing on the question. And why did not the Government make haste, before this night closed, to answer what the hon. Member for North-East Cork had stated? Why did they not answer what the hon. Gentleman had said about the Army, and what he had said about the Police? And why did not the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or someone else opposite, stand up to meet the strong assertion, and the strongly-backed assertion, as to the total failure in every direction of their Coercion Act? He (Mr. James Stuart) did not intend, in the few remarks he had to make, to go at all over the whole of the question; but he intended to confine himself to one or two matters of fact, bearing, as they did, on the Amendment which was before the House. He asserted that the supporters of law and of order in Ireland were not the Government and not that loyal and patriotic Party, as they called themselves, but were such Gentlemen as the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien). He believed that upon them and the much-maligned National League lay much more than upon any other the preservation of law and order in Ireland. There was a matter which had been referred to in the House, and which he might mention in passing—it was the question of the meetings at Dungannon, Omagh, and Dromore. The proceedings in connection with these meetings gave them an example of how the Executive Government had been disturbers in that part of the country—a part of the country which could hardly be said to be under the immediate influence of the National League. A meeting was to have taken place at Dungannon. On the same day, at the same hour, and at the same place, the Orange Party in the district stated they would hold a meeting. Instead of preventing the second meeting being held, the Government proclaimed the meeting which was first announced. He went, a week or so afterwards, to Omagh. A meeting was there advertised in the same way by the Party to which he belonged. In the same manner the opposite Party—the loyal and patriotic Party—gave notice of a meeting at the same place and at the same time. The walls of Omagh were placarded with notices that the rebels and assassins should not be permitted to hold a meeting there. Yet that being in the early days of the visits of English Members of the House to Ireland, he supposed the Resident Magistrate and the Government thought better of it, for the meeting was not proclaimed; no steps whatever were taken to prevent the people holding their meeting; and the other side never put in an appearance, thus showing the baselessness of the threats by which they endeavoured to stop free speech. Some time afterwards the same kind of thing occurred at Dromore. The very same notices were given on both sides; and, with the double experience before them, the Government again adopted the principle of stopping the first of the two meetings. Now, he maintained that the Government had as much ground for permitting the meeting first announced at Dromore in the hope and in the belief that it would be uninterrupted by the Orange Party, as they had to take the reverse opinion. He had had some other experience of the action of the Government authorities in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland made very much, some time ago, of what he called the extreme inaccuracy of his (Mr. James Stuart's) assertions. On the 12th of September last the right hon. Gentleman, speaking of the firing of the police at Mitchelstown, said it was not a random fire, but that it was a deliberate fire of men acting under the orders of their officers, who instructed them to fire only on those portions of the mob attacking the barracks. Exactly opposite the barracks there was a shop kept by a grocer named Costella. Side by side this shop there was a door into Costella's house. That door had above it a fan-light, and when a person opened the door a stair went straight up in front of him. He (Mr. James Stuart) saw that fan-light. It was riddled with buckshot. It was about on a level with the first floor, and directly opposite the door of the police barracks. Mr. Costella told him that when the firing began nearly everyone in the street ran into his shop. There were about 30 people. He took them up the stair into his house, and while they were on the stair —there were women among them— while they were on the stair a policeman, putting his rifle through the window of the police barracks opposite, fired right into the fan-light. Certain he (Mr. James Stuart) was that he himself saw the holes of the buckshot in the fan-light. He saw the marks of buckshot on both sides of the stair, and he had in his possession one of several of the buckshots which were picked out of the wall. "It was a miracle," said Mr. Costella, "that no one was hurt." He (Mr. James Stuart) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was prepared, in the face of that statement, to maintain that it was not a random fire, but a deliberate fire of men acting under the orders of their officers, and firing only at those who were attacking the barracks? He asked the right hon. Gentleman, if he maintained that his statement was strictly accurate, how he could account for what he (Mr. James Stuart) had just described? When he returned from Mitchelstown to Dublin, he was requested by his hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), to go away almost immediately to the estate of Lord Massereene at Dunleer. The circumstances were these. On the Tuesday previous to his visit notices of eviction had been given. That was Tuesday the 27th of September last. There had assembled in connection with these evictions a very large crowd under very threatening circumstances, and the evictions had been suspended in consequence of the danger of carrying them out. It was feared that on the following Tuesday, for which notices of eviction had again been given, there would be some further serious gathering of angry people, and that there might be a collision between the authorities and the people, which might lead to bloodshed, and his hon. Friends asked him if he would go to Dunleer on that occasion and on their behalf do whatever he could—they gave him *carte blanche*— to prevent any collision between the people and the authorities. He undertook to do that, and went to Dunleer. When he arrived, he found the circumstances as expected; he found the evictions about to go on, and a large number of people in considerable excitement. When he stepped upon the railway platform he found there no fewer than 300 policemen and 150 soldiers, and he asked for the Resident Magistrate. There were two Resident Magistrates on the spot, one of whom was certainly not very civil, and the other of whom was a little less uncivil. He explained to them that he had come there with a view of endeavouring, if it were possible, to prevent some of the poor people from being shot. They listened to what he had to say. He said that he had come to the conclusion that danger existed there from the contiguity of an excited crowd with a large number of soldiers and police, and that the best way his visit could be utilised would be for him to lead the people away some distance from the scene of the evictions, in order that he might address them, and speak to them words of caution and of hope. The Resident

Magistrate told him that he was not on any account whatever to allow any meeting to be held, and that he should break it up if one were held. That, of course, was the purport of his words—he (Mr. James Stuart), at this distance of time, not being able to repeat the exact words. He was thus prevented, by the exercise or the threat of forcible intervention, from doing the only reasonable thing which anyone desirous of preventing a collision between the police and the people would have been desirous of doing; and he believed that the peace was kept that day more from the belief in the crowd that as the day wore on such a meeting as he had described would be held. He mentioned that to show that the persons upon whom the Government relied for keeping the peace were the very people who kept the matches about amongst the gunpowder. He left Dunleer that same evening, and went north to Gweedore, in Donegal. There was there a very grave and serious danger of a collision between the authorities and the people, and he was requested by his hon. Friends to do his best to prevent a collision. In referring to the affairs at Gweedore, he should have occasion to refer to a matter which had been commented upon in the House, and upon which his accuracy had been impugned by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson). He would take care that in what he said in the House with respect to that matter he said neither more nor less than what he had already written in the public prints. His statements with respect to Colonel Dopping, the agent at Gweedore, were in print and could be contradicted, if it were in the power of anyone to do so. Now, what was the condition of things in Gweedore? The estate upon which there was difficulty was that of Captain Hill. He did not desire, and did not intend in what he said to make any invidious remarks upon Captain Hill. On the whole, Captain Hill had done as well as he reasonably might be expected to do; he had made an agreement with his tenants, which gave them more than they were at that time demanding. He (Mr. James Stuart) would do nothing to provoke soreness in the matter. He would not go back on the long past, and the question as to how much and when the rents of the tenants in Gweedore were raised by Captain Hill or his predecessors; but he would take matters as they stood at present in Gweedore. The inhabitants of that part of Donegal were an extremely interesting people, and were an extremely well-conducted people. He was informed by persons on the spot of both political Parties—amongst others, by the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Ffrench—that in that parish on the north-east coast of Donegal there had scarcely been a case brought before any of the ordinary Criminal Courts. The people were a very simple people, they were an excitable people, and they were a people for whom an immense deal had been done by their pastor, Father M'Fadden. They did not gain their livelihood on the farms on which they lived, for these were but small pieces of land with houses attached which they had built or dug out of the bog themselves; but the children worked some 20 or 30 miles off in the lower parts of Donegal and in Derry and Tyrone, and the elder members of the families were in the habit, at certain seasons of the year, of going over by boat from Derry to the South of Scotland. They were a very trustworthy people, so much so that he was informed that when one of them had once worked on a farm in the South of Scotland he was generally asked to return the following year. During the last year or two this class of work for the people of Donegal had greatly fallen off. They had had great difficulty in paying their rent, not only on that account, but on account of the great failure of their own crop. Now, there were 765 tenants on the Gweedore estate. How were these tenants dealt with under the Land Act of 1881? Only 288 got their rents reduced under that Act. These 288 got their rents reduced by one-third; but that had not brought them down to what they had been some years before. Why did not the other tenants get their rents reduced? Because, for the most part, they occupied sub-divided tenancies, and by a clause in the Act they were excluded from the operation of the Act. But surely, under the circumstances, a fair agent would have given those unfortunate people the same advantages as others got. No reduction, however, was offered to these tenants. The rents could not be paid, and the agent, Colonel Dopping, proceeded last year and this year, on behalf of the landlord, to take out a very considerable number of ejectment orders. When he (Mr. James Stuart) arrived at Gweedore these orders were really showering upon the country side. The form of notices was that prescribed by the Act. In pursuance of it a very large number of tenants were rendered caretakers on the mere notification. The whole country side was in a state of nervous anxiety, each person feeling that he would be the next victim. He held in his hand a copy of a notice that was sent just before he arrived to the various tenants. This copy, apparently, was printed in lithographic ink, which showed that there must have been many others of the same kind printed. The notice was as follows:—

"If I go to Gweedore and obtain warrants for the possession of the house occupied by you as caretaker I shall most certainly have the house knocked down. So if you wish to be retained as tenant you had better at once pay up all dues and costs to me."

In that notice there were two points of importance which showed what the feeling was in the district. The destruction of the houses of those who had made them and of those who had hitherto lived in them had been the ultimate resort of landlords in that part of Ireland —at any rate, when they had entered more or less upon a war of extermination. He held in his hand a letter of a landlord in the Gweedore district, which was to the effect that he would not now accept 99 per cent. of all the rents and costs due to him, as he was going to clear out the two townlands. The writer said he wanted his land, and he asked the people to remember that they were merely living on his land as long as he chose to let them. He said he would not regard costs in carrying out his plan; he had ample private means, and in what he was doing he was only following out the Christian precept that a man might do what he liked with his own.

"In five, or, at the most, ten years," he concluded, "there will probably not be a single family left there."

These were the sort of sentiments expressed in more quarters than one of the Gweedore district. Under such circumstances, it was not to be wondered at that there was much excitement in the district. He had in his possession a post-card which was addressed to the post-mistress of Gweedore by the agent, who was staying at the Gweedore Hotel. He said he would give her a last chance for settling before he left, and if she did not settle she would have no one but herself to blame—that if she were turned out she would lose her postal business, and would never get it back again. He (Mr. James Stuart) asked if that was a proper threat to address to a person in such a position? When he arrived there, so much anxiety was felt in the district that public meetings there had been prevented by the Resident Magistrates, Mr. Burke and Mr. Ffrench; and let him say, as to Gweedore, that he had no fault to find with the action of either of those magistrates. There were 100 policemen there who were paraded about, and there was a gunboat expected, or, at any rate, a general statement made that one would arrive. Arrangements to settle the difficulty existing had been attempted; but they had failed from the determination on the part of the agent that whatever was done he would not forego the costs. That matter of costs was a very serious matter, and one which had been referred to before by the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien). He would tell the House how it stood on that estate at Gweedore. Last year, of 66 ejectment notices the total rent was £235; but the costs incurred by the landlord in respect of those ejectment notices was no less than £346; so that the costs in the case where the ejectments were about to take place were a material part of the matter in dispute, and the agent, following out the same practice as had been followed out in the late Lord Leitrim's estate, insisted on the payment of costs as well. Such was the state of things in Gweedore when he arrived; there was an excitable people subjected to the continued harassment of these eviction notices, and also threatened with the burning and destruction of their houses, which destruction the Resident Magistrate had shown that he did not approve of by refusing to give police protection to the agent when carrying out that part of the threat. When he (Mr. James Stuart) arrived there he found a considerable commotion arising because of the attitude taken up by the agent.

That gentleman was going about with a rifle, and the day before his (Mr. James Stuart's) arrival, whilst crossing a field, a stone had been thrown at this agent by a boy. He would criticize what the agent did in words which, from the agent's own statement, he felt sure that gentleman would admit to be a true description of the case. With an angry crowd about, the Resident Magistrate having previously requested him to give up his rifle, with an eviction sturdily defended going on, when a stone was thrown at him, he "made as though" he were going to use his weapon. He (Mr. James Stuart) was merely using the phrase of one who was in authority at the time when he said that at that moment the peace of Donegal hung by a thread. The danger likely to result from the action would be more clearly shown if he read a letter which he had received from the reporter of *The Freeman's Journal*, who had been an eye-witness of the transaction, in which it was stated that when Colonel Dopping, with the evicting party, was passing behind the house of one of the tenants, a boy standing alone threw a stone at him, whereupon Colonel Dopping—

> "Lowered his rifle off his shoulder and levelled or presented it in the direction of the boy, saying, 'Mind yourself; I have my eye on you.' I do not say he took deliberate aim, but he certainly acted in the way I have mentioned."

A District Police Inspector then rushed between the Colonel and the boy, whereupon the Colonel lowered his gun. He (the reporter) might mention that the boy was so small that none of the police thought it worth their while to take him into custody for throwing the stone. The reporter went on to say that subsequently an idiot boy had thrown a stone at the Colonel, when the agent brought his rifle to the port, repeating some similar expression. He (Mr. James Stuart) had written to *The Times*, and had made the observation that he had never said that Colonel Dopping had intended to shoot either of the two boys, but—

> "That the point was that the people believed that he would shoot, that they believed the rifle to be loaded, that his whole conduct encouraged these beliefs, and that the danger to the public peace in consequence was grave."

Colonel Dopping, in making his statement of the incident to an interviewer from one of the Unionist newspapers, said—

> "That he did not usually carry a rifle with him, but that he had done so on this occasion, hearing that the police authorities themselves considered that the force was insufficient;"

and he said—

> "The Constabulary were under the orders of Mr. Ffrench, a Resident Magistrate, who had arrived the evening before. At the first house that was visited this gentleman asked me to give up my rifle to a sergeant, but I declined to do so."

It was certain an angry altercation took place between the agent and the Resident Magistrate, who order the former not to enfilade him. He (Mr. James Stuart) had also received a letter—and this was the last he would refer to—from a gentleman who, not being a politician, had asked him not to make public his name, but whose name he would communicate to any hon. Member privately. This gentleman, who was staying at the Gweedore Hotel, being engaged in sporting in the district, said that on the evening oft he day in question, he being with others at the hotel in the public room, had heard Colonel Dopping, in talking over the occurrence, say—

> "My rifle is of service sometimes, for had I not brought it down at one time to-day, and called out to the people, 'Now, look out,' we should have had a shower of stones thrown. They did not know that it was not loaded"—

or words to that effect. When he (Mr. James Stuart) arrived at the spot he, at the request of Father M'Fadden and the Resident Magistrate, endeavoured to make some terms between the agent and the tenants, so as to bring about a settlement. He had a long discussion with the agent, who would not accept the terms offered—that he (Mr. James Stuart) was willing to join in a guarantee sum in order that there might be no difficulty on that score. The agent, however, permitted him to carry the matter to the landlord. He went to the landlord and placed the matter before him in Dublin. In the meantime, happily, the evictions were suspended, although at some period not very long after there was some danger of their beginning again. But owing to the action of Father M'Fadden, and also of the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Mackay, and the Resident Magistrate, there was brought about an agreement between the landlord and the tenants which was really better than that under discussion at the time he referred to. The amount of money to be paid was about £1,500, and the evicted tenants were to be reinstated; the receipts were to be given up to November, 1887, and they were to be given not by the agent of whom he had spoken, but by another agent employed for the purpose by the landlord. Father M'Fadden had written to him several times in regard to the progress of the negociations. In one letter he said that he had not succeeded in gathering all the money that was required, as he did not like to press for it from the poorest of the poor tenants. He said he was about £195 behind hand; but eventually Father M'Fadden paid that sum out of his own pocket, being assisted to a small extent by some friends in England. At any rate, the whole sum was paid to the landlord. The curate had written to him (Mr. James Stuart) stating that in order to collect the money the people had begged hard in all directions—a fact which showed the poverty of the district and the desire of the people to pay the money. He mentioned these things to show that not 1d. was got by the ordinary action of the law, or by the action of the agent. He mentioned them to show that a reasonable offer was made to the agent, and that the refusal of that agent to accept it, and his attitude at the evictions, was leading to very serious risk to human life and very serious danger. That the offer was a reasonable one was shown by the fact that it was adopted by the Crown Solicitor and Mr. Burke, the Resident Magistrate, who endeavoured to secure it, or, rather, to secure the adoption of an offer which was better for the tenants. And, further than that, he wished the House to notice that Father M'Fadden had shown himself to be as good as his word. After having undertaken to pay the £1,500 he did so, though, it was a larger sum than he could raise from the tenants themselves. Well, after doing this good work, Father M'Fadden proceeded to a neighbouring estate, where he recommended that the combination which had been come to on Captain Hill's estate, and without which it would not have been possible to settle the matter, should be adopted. It was by no means a "no rent" action on his part. His desire was to settle the matter, which involved his collecting rents for the landlord which could not be collected in any other way. Nevertheless, he was tried and clapped into prison for his efforts on that neighbouring estate. The curate, in a letter he had written to him (Mr. James Stuart), said that the £1,500 in the case of Captain Hill was paid over to the same solicitor who was then prosecuting Father M'Fadden; as the curate expressed it—

> "What are the poor people of Gweedore to think of that? So you see Father M'Fadden collected and paid the whole money agreed to, and he is having his reward. He is to be tried on Saturday, and I hope and pray we may be able to keep the people quiet. I have them gathered every day, advising them to patience and not to give Balfour a chance."

Now, he (Mr. James Stuart) asked in all this history who was it who had been carrying about this place the sparks among the gunpowder? Who was it who had endangered the peace of Donegal, and had increased the chance of an outbreak? Why, it was the agent who was not trusting to the authority of the police, but was himself, in spite of the authorities, carrying about a rifle in a manner which was described by the Resident Magistrate as irritating. Then the imprisonment of Father M'Fadden, after he had honourably carried through one arrangement and was endeavouring to deal in a similar way with another, was not a means by which they could expect to secure either peace in Donegal or the payment of rents in the future in that part of the country. He (Mr. James Stuart) had endeavoured, by these three or four incidents, to make evident the position he took up at the beginning of his remarks—namely, that danger to order and peace arose, so far as he had seen, principally on the part of the loyal and patriotic Party, as it was called; whereas the persons who were endeavouring to preserve order were gentlemen connected with the National League. There could be no doubt whatever that, however good or however bad his (Mr. James Stuart's) judgment might have been, his position in Gweedore at this time was intended to be and did end in being a means of pacification and bringing about the payment of rent. If it had not been for such action there was every reason to believe that the excitement in the district under the circumstances he had detailed would have ended in very dangerous results.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I hope the House will be quite satisfied with the explanations given by the hon. Member with regard to Colonel Dopping; but I failed to hear any justification for the allegation that Colonel Dopping had gone about with a loaded rifle. If the hon. Member has made a mistake we can dismiss the subject; but it would have been much better frankly to admit the mistake. Several remarkable speeches have been made in the course of this debate from the Opposition Benches, and I will venture to refer to two or three topics which, I think, require some further argument. First, with respect to the speech of the hon. Member who opened the debate this evening, I think we must all have been struck by the passion—real to some extent, no doubt—which characterized that speech. But one cannot help feeling that there was a good deal of the actor about the speech. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I have yet to learn that one is not justified in stating the effect which a speech produces on one's mind provided the statement is made in courteous language. If, however, that speech was not acting, it was nothing more or less than a defiance of the law and the expression of rejoicing in the triumph of lawlessness against order. It was utterly impossible to listen to the concluding sentences of that speech without being perfectly satisfied that it was not intended to promote peace and goodwill between the various parts of the United Kingdom. We ought in dealing with such a speech to speak carefully and frame our language carefully, because the hon. Member, no doubt, has strong personal feelings on the subject. Now, we are discussing an Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), which is, in effect, a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government. I do not know whether the hon. Member was the actual framer of the Amendment. But if he was he seems to have been somewhat unfortunate in the choice of the language he has used. The Amendment begins by representing to Her Majesty that the operation of the legislation of an ameliorative character of last Session has tended to diminish agrarian crime. Now, when did the hon. Member begin to form that opinion? Why, until that Amenement was put upon the Paper there had been no Member below the Gangway who had spoken in favour of that legislation. I have read a good many of the speeches of the hon. Members below the Gangway delivered in Ireland; but I do not remember one single speech in which a word of praise has been given to that legislation. What is the cause which has led the hon. Member for Cork to take this view? It was necessary, if he could, to draw a contrast to this House between the two pieces of legislation passed by the Government last Session with regard to Ireland. It was necessary, if he could, to attribute all the success, whatever it has been, in dealing with Ireland to one measure and not to the other. In order to do that, for the first time Members below the Gangway have been obliged to represent that the legislation with regard to land has done good. Irish Members are not always true prophets, though they have sometimes shown wonderful gifts that way, and no more remarkable prophecy has ever been made than that quoted by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) with respect to the hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). But what were the words formerly used by the hon. Member for Cork with regard to the Government Land Bill six months ago? He said—

> "Rather than accept such an illusory concession to the Irish tenants who have had their rents judicially fixed, I would see the whole Bill go by the board."

It is, therefore a strange thing that hon. Gentlemen who refused the Bill as illusory in August last now desire, in a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government, to represent that the land legislation of last year was of a character tending to diminish agrarian crime. I leave hon. Members to form their own inference how much real approval there is on the part of hon. Members below the Gangway of this legislation. Whenever we venture to call attention to the sayings or doings of hon. Gentlemen opposite we are always met with the observation that they have changed their minds and that they were formerly wrong. But when it serves the purpose of hon. Gentlemen opposite to show that Members of Her Majesty's Government have changed their minds or are inconsistent, it is considered a good argument to cite speeches which have been made by those who sit on this side of the House. It seems to me that it would be a little better if there were more of the spirit of fair play in arguing with one another on these questions. The hon. Member for Cork has considered it right to disinter from its grave the suggestion which was made more than two years ago as to the so-called alliance between Lord Salisbury and the Leaders of the Parnellite Party in this House, when it was deemed desirable to turn out the right hon. Gentleman opposite. New actors and new names have been introduced into the story different from those which were at first suggested. Desiring, I suppose, to enforce what was said by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, the hon. Member for East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) to-night said that the majority in 1885 was obtained by foul means. I suppose there are some Members who still think so. Although I was not in the House, I have a pretty clear recollection of what happened at that time. Now, is it true, or is it not, that before the Liberal Government was turned out there was an arrangement, direct or indirect, between Lord St. Oswald, then Mr. Winn, and the hon. Member for Cork or anybody else as regards the terms of not again bringing in coercion, or any other matter of Irish policy? That has in writing been distinctly denied by Lord Salisbury, by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), and by Lord St. Oswald. On this subject, I will read a letter, dated July 31, 1885, and then I will appeal to the House for its view of the fairness and justice of the charge to which the hon. Member for Cork devoted three-quarters of an hour in his speech the other night. That letter ran thus—

"I have just received your letter enclosing report of Mr. Herbert Gladstone's speech at Leeds, and directing my attention to a passage in which Mr. Gladstone asserts that there is an alliance for Parliamentary purposes, and also for the purpose of the General Election, between Lord Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill on the one side, and myself and my Colleagues on the other, upon the basis—first, of the dropping of the Crimes Act; second, of the Bill for the benefit of the labourers; and, third, the passing of a Land Purchase Bill. Your letter also points out a further paragraph in the same speech, in which Mr. Gladstone is reported to have defied me, among others, to contradict these alleged facts. I can only say that there is not the slightest foundation for any of these statements of Mr. Herbert Gladstone. I have no knowledge of any such alliance, nor have any of my Colleagues. I have held no communication upon any of the public matters referred to with any Member of the present Government, or any of their officials, directly or indirectly, except across the floor of the House of Commons."

What, then, does he mean by saying that there was an understanding with the Conservative Whip made when this matter was discussed? What becomes of the bargain that the Coercion or the Crimes Act should not be renewed? The letter goes on—

"The first intimation I received of the intentions of the Government in respect of these matters was from Lord Carnarvon's speech in the Lords and that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Commons.—Yours truly, Charles S. Parnell."

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): The hon. and learned Gentleman will, perhaps, allow me to say that the only statement in my speech of the other night which is touched by the letter he has just read is the statement with reference to the communication with my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Derry (Mr. Justin M'Carthy). Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman will show what other statement is touched. There are three statements in the letter—one with reference to the non-renewal of the Crimes Act, one with reference to a Land Purchase Act, and one with reference to the labourers. The letter denies that there had been any communication on my part, or on the part of any of my Colleagues, of course as far as I was aware, with the Government or with any of their officials upon any of those three matters. There had certainly not been any communication on my part up to that date with the Government or with any of their officials on either of those three subjects. As far as I am concerned that letter is perfectly accurate, and I hold to it now just as much as I did when I wrote it. But as far as my hon. Friend the Member for Derry is concerned I undoubtedly went beyond my warrant. When I spoke for my Colleagues I should have confined myself undoubtedly to speaking for myself. There had been, at the time I wrote the letter, a communication between my hon. Friend the Member for Derry and Lord St. Oswald with reference to only one of these subjects. I do not believe that as regards him or any other of my Colleagues the other two subjects had been mentioned up to that time, although with reference to the Land Purchase Bill it was a subject which undoubtedly was mentioned at the interview between myself and Lord Carnarvon subsequently to that letter of July 31. I undoubtedly did take too much upon myself when I said that none of my Colleagues had had any communication with any Member of the Government, either directly on indirectly, with reference to the question of the renewal of the Crimes Act. I said so innocently and in perfect honour, as I was not then aware of the communication between my hon. Friend the Member for Derry and Lord St. Oswald. More than that, I had taken the pains to question several of my Colleagues before writing that letter, and they had informed me that there had been no communication between them and the Government. I did not, however, take the precaution of consulting my hon. Friend the Member for Derry, partly, perhaps, upon account of negligence, but chiefly because I had never noticed him in communication with any of the Government Whips. I adhere to every particle of that letter now just as I did when I wrote it except as regards the interview between my hon. Friend the Member for Derry and Lord St. Oswald, on the subject of the renewal of the Coercion Act. My hon. Friend's statement, which I repeated the other night in the House—namely, that Lord St. Oswald gave him to understand that the Coercion Act would not be renewed, or that the Tories did not intend to renew the Act—has not been contradicted by Lord St. Oswald, and I hope that if the hon. and learned Gentleman is able to do so he will give us a contradiction to-night.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I do not think the House will consider that I have shown any unwillingness to allow the hon. Member for Cork to make an explanation; but, in consequence of his statement, I must make one or two more observations on this matter. I care nothing for the moment about the Bill for the benefit of the labourers, and the passing of a Land Purchase Bill. That was not the sting of the hon. Member's allegation, and I appeal to those who heard his speech. The sting of the hon. Member for Cork's accusation against us the other night was that in order to turn out the Liberal Government, and in order to secure seats at the General Election, a bargain had been made with us with reference to the dropping of the Crimes Act.

MR. PARNELL: I said nothing whatever about a bargain.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I am not pretending to quote his exact words; but I appeal to any man that heard that speech, and I am willing to have the report in any of the daily papers read to see who is right in this matter. With all due courtesy to the hon. Member for Cork, I assert that he alleged the other night that there was an understanding, bargain, or alliance between Lord St. Oswald and some Members of the Irish Parliamentary Party that the Crimes Act should not be renewed. These charges were put into writing by Sir Frederick Milner, who called Lord St. Oswald's attention to them, and he replied—

> "As you asked for a reply, I can only, as regards myself, give a distinct and unqualified contradiction to the statements made, and say that there is not a single word of truth in them."

This was on the 24th of July, 1885. [An hon. MEMBER: Read Milner's letter.] The charges mentioned in Sir Frederick Milner's letter, and contradicted by Lord St. Oswald, are the same as those quoted by the hon. Member for Cork. We therefore have Lord Salisbury, the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), Lord St. Oswald, and the hon. Member for Cork himself contradicting in the most categorical and specific manner that which was alleged to be the understanding, bargain, or arrangement with the Conservative Party, and yet the hon. Member for Cork now repeats those charges. After all these denials, it seems strange that the men who are now pluming themselves on being able to disregard what has gone before, should rake up what was little less than a slander on the Conservative Party for the purpose of justifying the present alliance between the hon. Member for Cork and that section of the Liberal Party of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) is the Leader. One other observation I wish to make, and it is not an unimportant one. Reference was made by the hon. Member for Cork to the memorandum written down at the time by the hon. Member for Derry (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), and the hon. Member's remarks were directed to showing that Lord Salisbury was acquainted with Lord Carnarvon's views on Home Rule, and shared them.

MR. PARNELL: No; I did not say so.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I can only appeal again to the recollection of the House. What was the object of insisting at considerable length upon the connection between Lord Salisbury and Lord Carnarvon? The hon. Member insisted that there must have been communication between Lord Salisbury and Lord Carnarvon, and that Lord Salisbury, therefore, must have known of it —[Mr. PARNELL: Hear, hear!]—but it was unfortunate that the hon. Member did not consult the written account of the transaction given by the hon. Member for Derry.

MR. PARNELL: I said that Lord Salisbury knew what took place at my interview with Lord Carnarvon.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: That was not the point of the hon Gentleman's observations the other night. His contention was that Lord Salisbury had been cognizant of and indirectly a party to the negotiations which the hon. Member for Derry alleged had taken place with Lord Carnarvon respecting Home Rule. But if that is the hon. Gentleman's view, it is a pity that he did not consult the written memorandum, which was set down by the hon. Member for Derry, in which he stated, "Lord Carnarvon then said that he spoke for himself. On this point I remember distinctly that he said he spoke only for himself." Notwithstanding this clear and definite statement of the hon. Member for Derry, this matter has again been brought forward as an instance of want of faith on the part of the Conservative Party. However, to say the least of it, I think the hon. Member for Cork has been unfortunate in his illustrations. Now, I desire to say a word or two in regard to the action of the Executive in Ireland, which has been criticized by two distinguished men, one, the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) and by the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone). What is the duty of an Executive Government? I submit that its duty is to adminster the law impartially, fairly, and straightforwardly, and not to shrink from that duty, however inconvenient it may be. We have heard some extraordinary doctrines. I would ask right hon. Gentlemen opposite whether they endorse the doctrine that Acts of Parliament passed in one Session may be disregarded and disobeyed a few months later? We are not dealing with Acts of Parliament passed many years ago, but with an Act passed by a large majority of this House in August last. Hon. Members are entitled to hold their own views as to the advisability of passing such an Act, but no man is justified in disobeying that Act, or inciting others to disobey it. It has also been urged that the Act may be resisted because it passed through this House without the accustomed method of Parliamentary discussion. But whose fault was that? I sat in the House hours—days and nights. [An hon. Member:—You are paid for it.] Yes, I was paid for it, and I did it, but I am only mentioning this to show that I had full opportunites of judging. Over 1,000 amendments were proposed to that Bill. I make no charge against hon. Members for obstructing that Bill, but it is not very consistent of them, after the prolonged discussion that took place, extending over 40 days, to complain because certain clauses of the Bill were not discussed. If a Bill passes through both Houses, and receives the Royal Assent, it does not matter how much or how little discussion has taken place upon it. It is the duty of every subject to obey that law. I protest against the doctrine that, if you dislike an Act of Parliament, you may disobey it, instead of pursuing the constitutional course of endeavouring to get it repealed. What were the views of the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow on the subject in 1882? I will ask the House to let me read a quotation from the right hon. Baronet, which I venture to submit enunciates in a very few words what the duty of the Executive Government in such a case is. It seems to me impossible, though they may have changed their opinion of facts, that right hon. Gentlemen opposite can have changed their view of the duty of the Executive Government. The right hon. Baronet said—

> "The present Crown officials—I borrow that phrase from the Amendment Paper—went to

Ireland at the beginning of May last. They were sent there with a commission from the Crown and from Parliament, and unless they sincerely and cordially accepted that commission, they had no right to go at all. That commission was that the Crown officials should do their best to maintain the Union of the two countries, and to diminish—and, if possible, to extinguish—organized political and agrarian crime in Ireland. The duties were absolute."

What is the meaning of that language? I am only using a phrase which I have often used before in this House when I say if it was right "to diminish, and, if possible, extinguish organized political crime" in 1883, it was not wrong to do so in 1887. And I will, before I sit down, show, I trust, to this House, that what the Executive Government has been doing in Ireland has been—dealing with organized political and agrarian crime and nothing else. I mentioned, Sir, a few moments ago a very remarkable accusation brought against some parties in Ireland by the hon. Member for Leeds. He told us that there had been heard very little condemnation from these Benches of the hideous crimes of the landlords in Ireland. I wonder whether the hon. Gentleman remembers the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian from this place? I wonder whether he remembers the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian when introducing the Government of Ireland Bill, and the Land Bill which accompanied it, when he proposed to compensate the landlords of Ireland? Was there one word in those speeches to justify the suggestion that the landlords had been guilty of hideous crime?

Mr. H. GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.): I said, some landlords were guilty of oppression.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I accept the hon. Gentleman's correction, that he meant to refer to the oppression of some landlords; but I am referring to the expression "hideous crimes." That expression means something which can be brought within the pale of the Criminal Law. Speak of the conduct of the landlords as oppression, speak of it as inhuman conduct if you like, but I submit you have no right to charge any people with being guilty of hideous crime unless you can point to some criminal act committed. But that was not the only part of the accusation brought against the landlords by the hon. Member for Leeds. He said further that—

> "It was a matter of notoriety that the landlords of Ireland and the loyal minority had during the last 10 years done their best to hamper Liberal Governments and to give every assistance to Conservative Governments."

During the last 10 years! Does any right hon. Gentleman who has had anything to do with the government of Ireland say that the loyal minority did not do their best to support the Liberal Government in enforcing law and order? [*Cheers*, and "No, no!"] I am only studying the history of Ireland as part of contemporary history—for I have nothing to do with the Executive Government of Ireland—and I put this to right hon. and hon. Gentleman opposite that it is not quite a fair statement to say that the loyal minority in Ireland did not support the Liberal Government in their efforts to maintain law and order in that country. I assert again that there is no man who has studied the Irish question more thoroughly than the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, and without dealing with any question of policy or with any question of whether the right hon. Baronet ought to have done this or that, I ask the House to listen to his judgment upon this question of support by the loyal minority. In February, 1883, the right hon. Baronet said:—

> "I have heard a great deal beforehand of the bitterness of Whig and Tory in Ireland, but as far as my personal experience and observation are concerned, I never came across men more ready at a crisis cheerfully and unostentatiously to place patriotism before party than the Conservatives of the sister Isle."

I confess I do not understand how the right hon. Baronet can have swallowed his convictions in the way he has done. I am not speaking of policy, but I am speaking of his judgment on the conduct of particular men, and his judgment on the conduct of those particular men showed that the then Governments did receive loyal support from the loyal minority in Ireland. I want therefore to know on what authority the hon. Member for Leeds asserts that the loyal minority have, during the last 10 years, hampered Liberal Governments instead of helping them. I venture to think that when such an assertion is made, at least it should be supported by some facts and arguments; and I think

I am justified in saying this—that those who have followed the Irish question during the last three or four years will not come to the conclusion that the assertions made by the hon. Member for Leeds last night are justified by facts. Surely it does not tend to promote a union of hearts to bring forward that kind of accusation as a sort of pleasing incident in the course of a discussion which is supposed to be conducted for the purpose of promoting a union of hearts between two great peoples. As I have referred to the union of hearts, I must observe that the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division fell into a most curious mistake when commenting on the statistics, which I submit did prove, as far as statistics can prove, the case of the Government. The right hon. Baronet said—

> "Look at what we did. You have only reduced crime by a few paltry hundreds or so; we brought down crime by thousands."

I wonder whether it occurred to the right hon. Baronet when he spoke thus that that arose from the union of hearts between the Irish Party and the Government of 1882. Mr. Speaker, whatever may have been the work for good of the Crimes Act of 1882, it was carried in the teeth of the Opposition of the Irish Party. [An hon. MEMBER: And the Tory Party.] That observation certainly is not correct, for the Conservative Party loyally supported the Liberal Government in passing the Crimes Act of 1882. But I am dealing now not with the passing, but with the carrying out of the Act; and I say it is very strange, if it was the union of hearts which effected the reduction of crime in 1887, that there should have been in 1882, when crime was so greatly reduced, not a union of hearts between the Government of the day and the Irish Party, but the direst hatred. No language now is too soft to describe Lord Spencer; and as for the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division, he does not know himself when he hears himself spoken of by the Members below the Gangway. This was the kind of language used of Lord Spencer at that time—

> "The cold-blooded murderer of at least five innocent Irishmen within the last few months, one of whom he knew, beyond any manner of doubt, to be innocent of the crime for which he died—a nobleman whose very fingers dripped with the blood of innocent Irishmen."

That language illustrates the relation of the Parties at the time when there was no union of hearts. I shall believe in the union of hearts when the speeches of hon. Members from Ireland outside the House are more in accordance with the sentiments they express here. The second part of this Motion of Want of Confidence deals with coercive legislation, and I ask to be allowed to say a word or two upon the subject, the more so because we have had most extraordinary statements made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. He asked—"Have you crushed one single organization?" and I remember another hon. Member asked whether any branch of the National League had been effectively suppressed. I may be wrong, or I may be right, but the House will allow me to give my view, derived simply from reading the Nationalist newspapers, of the present condition of the National League as compared with its past condition. It is very easy to assert in this House that suppression has done no good, that the Members are as numerous, and that the money comes in as plentiful as before; ["Hear, hear!"]—well if money is flowing in the House would like to have some information as to what is done with it—but we are able to judge of these questions on parallel lines. It was my duty to assist the Chief Secretary in August last, and to satisfy myself as to the real condition of the National League, and my only source of information was the Nationalist papers. Members below the Gangway will remember that I called down derision upon my head because I happened to include one paper which was not Nationalist. Now what were the features of that time? One of the engines of tyranny by which persons were intimidated and oppressed was that their names were advertised in the Nationalist papers as having offended against the National League. I quoted several instances; the Chief Secretary quoted more; and the Solicitor General for Scotland, in a speech which many of us remember very well, quoted others. We pointed out that a most powerful engine, and one which was keeping alive Boycotting, intimidation, and that system of tyranny which we were satisfied existed in Ireland, was advertising people by name for having offended against the National League.

I do not suppose there are many Members of this House who read *United Ireland.* Well, let me put before them a comparison of two weeks. In the week ending the 16th of July, 1887, there were 39 individuals mentioned by name as having offended against the National League in some way or other. This meant that henceforth these men were marked men. Now, I assert that since the suppression of the branches, there has practically been no naming of persons in the National Press as offending against the League. For the week ending the 7th of January, 1888, there were in *United Ireland*, *The Nation*, *The Weekly News*, and *The Cork Daily Herald*, some 60 reports—many of them duplicates, for the suppressed branches send the papers many reports—but in these 60 there was only one reference to a person as having offended against the National League. [An hon. MEMBER: It was no longer necessary.] Why was it necessary in the middle of 1887? Because it was then part of the scheme of the National League to Boycott individuals who offended against it. Is there any honest member of the National League who will say now that he would not be glad that landgrabbers should be Boycotted? But if it were only for this one fact that now for a period of five or six months, that kind of intimidation which was of the very worst kind, which consisted of particular individuals in small parishes being held up by name as having offended against the popular element, has disappeared from the Nationalist Press, then I say that, as far as I can judge from the papers put before me, the Act has had a most useful and salutary effect. But this fact demands comment from another point of view. If these branches of the League are as strong as they were before the passing of the Crimes Act, why do they now desist from this habit? I demur to the statement of the hon. Member for East Cork that these branches are as they were. I ask those who know the place and do not simply trust to paper reports of the meetings, but who go down to the country, whether they will of their own personal knowledge allege that the same number of persons go to the National League meetings. [*Cries of* "More!"] All I can say is that there are those on this side of the House who know Ireland well, who will say that these meetings, instead of being defiant and open, are now held in secret. Do right hon. Gentlemen opposite consider that it is no advantage that the National League meetings, instead of being engines of terror, are now only hole-and-corner meetings? I should have thought that an unlawful meeting held by a small number of men in a secret place, had very much less effect on the inhabitants than a large open meeting, where people could be forced into sympathy with the object of the meeting. At any rate it is my view—[*Home Rule laughter*]—I do not know whether it is asking too much to be allowed to finish my sentence—that if in numbers the meetings are enormously reduced, as we believe they are, if their influence in the district is enormously reduced together with their power of intimidation and terrorism, the position is changed very much for the better. Some time in this debate we shall have the Chief Secretary speaking. [*Ironical Home Rule cheers.*] Well, we cannot all speak at the same time, at any rate on this side of the House; and being supposed to be the person at present addressing you, Mr. Speaker, I say that the view we take is that there has been this sensible gain to law and order by meetings being obliged to be held as hole-and-corner meetings; that now resolutions are passed condemning coercion and the action of the Chief Secretary and the Government, but the meetings do not direct their spite against individuals. Nothing, in my opinion, does the Chief Secretary more credit than his utter indifference to abuse. We shall probably some day have specimens read with some sense of shame of the language used by the Nationalist Members. However, harsh words break no bones, and we can afford to be abused if the effect of the Act has been of material good to the people. Now, I have said that the National League has been, to a very great extent, crushed. [*Ironical Home Rule laughter.*] That may not be the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite; I do not say that the work has been done, it has yet to go steadily on, but a very great step has been taken and a great advance made. But there is another side to this picture which will enable us to test this. It has been asserted boldly in this House more than once that there is no connection between the National League and crime. The hon. Member for East Cork to-night said that there was no connection between the Plan of Campaign and crime. I do not think that the experience of those who really know Ireland will confirm that view. It was all very well when the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) was giving the details of that lamentable and piteous case of the murder of Fitzmaurice to say that the Lixnaw branch of the League had disappeared before that time. I assert that no one who reads that story and sees the absence of any other motive for killing that man to see that it is impossible to suggest any other reason than that he had offended against the League. I care not for the trumpery excuse that the National League there had ceased to exist as a body—its spirit had not ceased.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork, N.E.) said, that there was not a single case of the Plan of Campaign in the County of Kerry.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I was referring to the National League. I said that I should speak of the National League and of the Plan of Campaign, but I cannot do both at the same time. I was quoting a case which was quoted in this House when the hon. Member was not present. The case was also quoted by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) the other night. I do not propose to read the record of it, but without any doubt it has intimate connection with the National League. I will at once take a case which, on the evidence before me, appears to be directly connected with the Plan of Campaign in the county of Roscommon. A man who was driving with his daughter and a labourer to a fair with live pigs in his cart was stopped by about 20 men with blackened faces; he was savagely beaten and the pigs cruelly scored with knives. They had refused to join the Plan of Campaign which they were trying to establish on the estate. Now, it is utterly impossible to examine into these cases without coming to the conclusion that the only cause which could be assigned for the outrage was that the victim, or victims, had given some offence to some party connected with the National League. If it was not so, what should we have? We should have hon. Members getting up and saying—"Oh, I can give you an explanation of that. That man had offended these people, and these people had a private spite at him." I assert, as my own opinion, that we cannot find any motive to account for these charges, except that the poor unfortunate victims had in some way or other offended the National Party, and the hint was given in one way or other—the hon. Member for Cork will know what I mean—which led to the outrages being subsequently committed.

MR. DILLON: What do you mean by "hint?" Mr. Speaker, I protest against this language. The hon. and learned Gentleman has used language in this country against me and my hon. Colleagues which is intolerable. He now rises in his place and states that a hint has been given to commit crime in Ireland—[*Ministerial cheers*]—and he points to us. Those cheers only emphasize his words when he says we know perfectly well what he means when he speaks of a hint being given. Let him be a man, if he is a man, and state distinctly what he means.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The hon. Member knows perfectly well—[*Cries of* "Withdraw!" *and* "Explain yourself!"]—that I made no suggestion, direct or indirect, against him. If he had been in the House the other night he would have heard the hon. Member for Cork tell a story about a college don who had told the people not to nail a man's ears to the pump. That was referred to by more than one speaker as an instance of a hint being given, and the hon. Member for Cork knows perfectly well what I referred to when I said that. Now, if any man can take offence out of that——

MR. DILLON: Yes; I do take offence at it, and I ask you, Mr. Speaker—[*Cries of* "Order!"] I rise to the point of Order, and I say that the hon. and learned Gentleman has increased his offence by the words he has used. The hon. and learned Gentleman has referred specifically to certain words used by the hon. Member for Cork which are common-place as being a hint to commit a certain deed, and he thereupon emphasized the charge he has just levelled against us, that we were in the habit—for that was the meaning of his words—of giving a hint to commit crime.

Now, I appeal to you, Sir, to rule on this point of Order whether it is competent to any hon. Member to make such charges against other hon. Members of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have heard nothing which calls for my intervention, or any point of Order that I could take notice of.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I never intended to make such a suggestion as that of which the hon. Member complains. I said what I have more than once put forward in this House, that it is impossible to account for these outrages without coming to the conclusion that the victims of them had offended the National Party. I simply say again distinctly that neither directly or indirectly did I intend to make any such suggestion as the hon. Member for East Mayo has thought fit to assume against me. I have never made directly or indirectly any accusation against any hon. Member of this House, and nothing that I have said justifies the attack of the hon. Member for East Mayo. Let me call the attention of the House to other cases of very considerable importance. There is the case of Thomas Grosland, Castle Island, County Kerry, who, on December 20, was fired at and wounded in the legs and hands. The poor unfortunate man applied to Father Fitzgerald for a dispensary order, but was refused, although he was entitled to it on every ground, and the only possible reason that can be suggested is that a relative of his had been a witness in a Government case in which two men had been hanged. How was it this man could not get a dispensary order? If we draw the wrong conclusion, will any hon. Member, when he comes to speak, give us the information as to what was the real cause of such an inhuman act as the refusal of the order? There is another matter to which I wish to call attention. It is perfectly evident that there are a large number of abstentions from attendance at the League meetings. It is all very well for hon. Members to say there is no falling off, but I see in *United Ireland* mention made over and over again of the fact that people have, since the proclamation of the Crimes Act, abstained from attending the meetings. I draw my own conclusion, and it is this—that it is untrue to suggest that there has been no falling off, and to say that the National League is the same powerful agency which it was six months ago. If it be true, as the Amendment asserts, that the ameliorative character of the land legislation, and not the Crimes Act, has diminished crime, what is the meaning of the continued denunciation of land-grabbing? I want to know what offence against God or man the land-grabber commits? [" Oh!" *and derisive laughter.*] A derisive cheer is no adequate reply. Let me explain what I mean by land-grabber. I understand by a land-grabber a man who, seeing that land is vacant because a tenant has been evicted or because of some dispute between landlord and tenant, enters into the occupation of it. He is called a land-grabber. I do not appeal to the Irish Party, for they would treat me with those derisive shouts of laughter to which I am accustomed, but I will appeal to those who will reason this case out. I ask the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) to explain what crime against God or man the land-grabber, as he is called, commits? I hope the right hon. Member will point this out so that we may judge, for I cannot see the crime. If it be not the object of the League to prevent good feeling between landlord and tenant, what is the meaning of the treatment of a land-grabber? I believe that this lies at the root of the Irish difficulty. Here is what *United Ireland* says about it—

> "We do not hesitate in our conviction and our advice that land-grabbers and emergency men should be shunned as vile vermin and poisonous, mean traitors for sordid gain, not merely to the class from which they spring, but to every instinct of humanity. But this we do say, resistance to eviction and Boycotting of land-grabbers and the crowbar brigade, though good things in themselves, make no part of the Plan of Campaign."

Just observe the insidiousness of that argument. But what do they say?—that Boycotting is a good thing in itself. I think the House will have no difficulty in forming an opinion as to the conclusion at which the readers of *United Ireland* would arrive. On the 25th of September the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) made a speech, and I think it shows why people are afraid to become one of that despised class, the land-grabber. He said, speaking at Tallow—

> "The chief prop of landlordism is land-grabbing—taking a farm from which another tenant has been evicted; and I can only say that I regard land-grabbing, not merely as a political crime, but as a moral crime, and a man cannot engage in it without staining his soul."

[*Home Rule cheers.*] That is cheered. Does the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) cheer it? [SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT assented.] He nods his head. Does he agree with me for once? The hon. and learned Member goes on, "For my part, I have never been squeamish as to the way in which I should throttle landlordism." ["Oh!"] Well, the truth will come out at times. That is the aim, to drive the landlords from the country. ["No!"] Hon. Members cannot shout out "No!" without contradicting their speeches. Let me quote Mr. Davitt on the subject. Mr. Davitt, in his speech at Rathkeale on the 30th of January, said--

> "While the land-grabber is a thief at any time, a man who in this manner will take an unfortunate neighbour's farm now, while Ireland's enemies are trampling on our principles, is worse than a coercionist. He is a cowardly, slimy renegade—a man to be looked on as a social leper, contact with whom should be considered a stigma and a reproach."

Do hon. Members remember the passionate appeal of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) as to the objects and endeavours of the National Party? Does the hon. Member for North-East Cork repudiate the language of Mr. Davitt or not?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Most decidedly not.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Then if he does not repudiate that lauguage, what becomes of his protests?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I do not protest.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Will the hon. Member pardon me? I am not referring personally to him. The language——

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I stated that there was a sort of Boycotting which was wicked, and which we had done more than the right hon. Gentleman to put down. I said, also, that there is Boycotting which is legitimate, and which can never be put down.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I am not sorry I gave way. Now we have heard the extent to which Boycotting is approved, and the extent to which it is repudiated. I want to know, when the right hon. Member for Derby speaks to-morrow night, whether he will endorse Mr. Davitt's observation that a land-grabber is a cowardly renegade, a man to be looked on as a social leper whose contact should be accounted a stigma and a reproach? I could quote to the House more of the utterances of hon. Members, but I have done enough in extracting from their lips in this House the admission that they sympathize with some Boycotting, and that they think a land-grabber is a man who is to be treated in that way. I have only one more word to say. As Member of a Government to which I am proud to belong, I do not suggest that we can afford to relax our efforts. I know perfectly well that there is a great deal more work to be done. I know perfectly well that we have to combat with an organization which for 10 years has exercised a baneful influence over Ireland. It is a hydra we have to fight; every one of its heads will have to be scotched and the life-blood of which will somehow or other have to be reached; we have not yet gained the end; but I do say that we have made a step in advance, and that when ignorance disappears as education proceeds, those who are now simply following the baneful influence of the National League will see on which side it is right they should be. It is said that the darkest hour is that before the dawn. I do not say that the dawn has broken; but I do say that there is light in the East, spreading its rays more and more over the whole horizon, and I believe that if the Government is straightforward and consistent in carrying out its policy, although it may take time, although they may have to surmount many difficulties, sooner or later we shall have the sunshine of full perfect liberty, and every subject of Her Majesty in Ireland will be able to enjoy and exercise his full and true Constitutional rights.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I think it will be admitted that the debate to-night has taken a rather extraordinary course. It was opened by a most formidable indictment, both personal and public, by my hon. Friend the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), and I expected while that speech was progressing that the Chief Secretary, whose conduct was so much impugned, would at once have sprung to his feet to answer the charges made against him, and to refute and re-but the extraordinary facts which the hon. Member brought forward. ["Hear, hear!"] The right hon. Gentleman ironically cheers that statement. Why did he not at once get up to answer those charges? The hon. Member for North-East Cork said, for example—I will only give one example—that his soldiers and his police themselves needed to be policed. Those were facts so remarkable that I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman would not have delayed a moment to answer them, instead of sending his secretary to rummage despatch boxes and setting the telegraph at work to the Castle at Dublin to find out whether the allegations of the hon. Member were true or not. On the first night of the Session, the right hon. Gentleman made a rather unhappy allusion to people saying things out of doors which they were afraid to substantiate in the House; but I think we have seen to-night that he is not very ready to substantiate his own allegations. Instead of the right hon. Gentleman following the powerful indictment drawn against him and his system of government by my hon. Friend, a hon. and learned Friend of mine (Mr. Finlay) got up and began by saying that he would not follow the details of my hon. Friend, as if details were not the very essence of the matter! The hon. and learned Member for Inverness gave us, instead of a reasonable and reasoned answer to the hon. Member for North-East Cork, what, with all respect for my hon. and learned Friend's abilities, I cannot but call a series of the idlest platitudes I have heard in the course of this debate. He deplored the heated language of my hon. Friend. I think his language was not more heated than could be expected in the circumstances under which he addressed the House. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness only made one remark which seems to me to deserve attention. He said that this House was the last place in the world to be made a Court of Appeal from the judgments of the Courts of Law. That is a very old story. I will call the attention of the House to what happened in regard to the Coercion Act of 1881, and in regard to the Act of 1882. When these Acts, with all the exceptional and stringent powers contained in them, were brought before the House the argument was—"We need have no fear or jealousy in passing these provisions, because the House itself will be able to supervise their administration and the way they are carried out after they are passed." But after they were passed, the very same argument was used against supervision by this House as was used by the hon. and learned Member to-night—namely, that we are the most unfit Body in the world to be a Court of Appeal. Now, I should like to say a word as to the history of this debate. Yesterday afternoon the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) brought forward a number of most serious instances of disregard of care in receiving evidence, and of disregard of judicial impartiality on the part of Resident Magistrates, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) got up and did not say one single word in disproof or in palliation of any one of those charges. He did say one thing in his rather explosive peroration, that Ireland must and would be governed. As if the right hon. Gentleman and his Order and the class to which he belongs have not had the government of Ireland in their hands for centuries, and a very nice mess they have made of the government both for Ireland and themselves. I cannot imagine a greater proof of political infatuation than this, that the right hon. and gallant Gentlemen, the present Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), should be a Privy Councillor, an important official, should be receiving, or at least, concerned in prospective and retrospective emoluments, while the hon. Member for North-East Cork is treated as a degraded criminal, unworthy to take part in the government of his own country. When we think of the distractions of Ireland, of the necessity of looking in every direction for aid in solving the enormously difficult problem with which we have to deal, I repeat it is indeed infatuation that you can find nothing better to do with a man so earnest, of such distinguished ability, so eloquent, so public-spirited as my hon. Friend than to lock him up in gaol in Ireland, while we vilify and calumniate him in England. Referring further to the history of this debate, another hon. Member, who has taken part in it, the hon. member for South Tyrone (Mr. T.

W. Russell) has permitted himself to make a remark which concerns me, and which I think most hon. Gentlemen will agree it would have been better taste to leave unsaid. It was a remark expressive of his anxiety lest certain evil communications with me should corrupt the good morals and faith of the Catholic Church. There is something particularly edifying in this solicitude in the spokesman of the Rump of the Party of ascendancy—that Party, who, when they had the power, took away from the mass of the Irish people their wealth and their temples, drove them into holes and caverns, and on account of their religion deprived them of all hope of becoming possessors of land, of becoming members of any liberal Profession, and even of deriving light from education in their own country. We know how to measure the sincerity and good faith of the innuendo of the hon. Member. The Party of ascendancy has surely fallen on evil days indeed, when, under the name of Unionists, they are going about beating the hideous Orange drum in Ulster with one hand and with the other stealthily plucking at the sleeve of Monsignor Persico. I will now offer a very few remarks upon the speech of the hon. and learned Member who has just sat down, (Sir Richard Webster). I shall certainly not follow him into his criticisms of the negotiations between the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and Lord Carnarvon and the Conservative Party. I will only point out that in a speech which the Chief Secretary made recently, either at Manchester or at Birmingham, he referred with delicacy, but still sufficiently plainly, to a temporary alliance which he admitted had existed between his Party and the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in 1885 was not so shy as he probably is now about admitting that there was coquetting between his present allies and confederates and Gentlemen below the Gangway. Speaking at St. Leonards in September, 1885, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "I wonder whether the Conservatives have forgotten a little episode at Liverpool, when two highly honourable and worthy Members of the Conservative Party refused to go to Liverpool to meet one of their great chiefs,"—

whom I think I see in his place (Lord Randolph Churchill)—

> "Or I wonder whether they have forgotten what the Conservative Members said after that famous Maamtrasna debate. I was in the House that night, and as I stood at the door of the House some Conservative Members rushed passed me saying, when they had listened to speeches from the Front Bench, 'We cannot stand this.'"

But that has very little to do with the great question before us, which is whether the state of Ireland justifies the system on which it is now being governed. The hon. and learned Gentleman asks us to say whether it is lawful to disregard an Act of Parliament because we disapproved of its provisions. But that, Sir, is not the question before the House. The question is not whether we may or may not disregard the provisions of an Act; the question is whether it is administered with dignity, or with prudence, or whether it is administered hardly, harshly, and mischievously. The hon. and learned Gentleman is quite able to appreciate the distinction. It is open to us, and it is quite natural for us, who disapproved of the policy of the Act, to criticize very sharply the spirit and the method in which it is administered. This Amendment criticizes that administration, and I believe, so far as my right hon. Friends and I are concerned, we have criticized the administration of the Act, and it is the administration which we condemn as much as we condemn the policy which inspired the Act. The hon. and learned Gentleman has admitted one or two extraordinary views, as coming from that Bench, of their aims in the administration of the Act. He says that they are dealing with organized political crime and nothing else.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Not "and nothing else." I do not think the House understood me as meaning that.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Well, I do not press it; I took the words down, but the point remains almost as strong—you are dealing with political crime. That is what we have told you all along. The hon. and learned Gentleman pointed out what he meant by crime—something brought within the reach of the Criminal Law. That is a lawyer's account of the matter, which I do not think will satisfy politicians and statesmen who have to deal with the government of the country. These somewhat pedantic and narrow distinctions do not take us far. Like the Chief Secretary, the hon. and learned Gentleman practically gave up the case on the statistics; he admitted that the statistics did not, in fact, prove the case of the Government. I think in that he was extremely wise. The hon. and learned Gentleman made no attempt to answer seriously and in detail the contention of the hon. Member for North-East Cork that the National League is as strong as ever it was, if not stronger; and as to the money that was coming in, he said he would like a little information. He said he was told that money came in very slowly to the National League. Last night, after the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary had declared that the National League exchequer was running extremely dry, I happened to take up *The Freeman's Journal*, and I found a report of a meeting of the League held on the previous day, which gave, with what looked like chapter and verse, an account of the sums received from each locality. What were the results? In the first fortnight of February, 1885, the Irish subscriptions to the National League amounted to £242; in February, 1886, to £385; in February, 1887, to £490; and in the first fortnight of February, 1888, they rose from £490 to £520. I notice, too, this remarkable fact, which, perhaps, the Chief Secretary may be able to explain—that subscriptions came just as freely, apparently, from districts where the National League was suppressed. If faith is to be placed in these figures there is no falling off in the supplies to this organization which you say that you are going to pluck up at the roots. As to the Plan of Campaign, enough has been said by the hon. and learned Gentleman. Is it true, and the Chief Secretary will have to answer this question—is it true or not that while you were wasting time in irritating public feeling in Ireland, the Plan of Campaign was in full swing? It seems to be true beyond denial. As for Boycotting, the figures were produced the other night by the Chief Secretary. I then remarked that there were other explanations on this subject than those given by the Government. A friend of mine wrote to me from Portumna, a district well known as a turbulent district, and he said that there were great numbers of men there who had been Boycotted, but that latterly every single man in Portumna, excepting the postmaster, had joined the Plan and had made his peace with the League. ["Hear, hear!"] At the same time, I am not saying whether that is desirable or not. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I am giving other explanations besides that upon which the Government alone rely. Another explanation which cannot for a moment be minimized is that landlords have given or been forced to give reductions. That has naturally produced peace in districts which previously were greatly disturbed. The hon. and learned Attorney General made one most serious remark, for which I think his right hon. Colleague will barely thank him. He made the astonishing assertion, considering what the history of Ireland is, that secret meetings are better than public meetings. I have known a great many extraordinary things said by Conservatives and Liberals too about Ireland, but I think I never heard a statement that showed such ignorance of the very curse and bane of society in Ireland as that remark of the hon. and learned Gentleman. And when you talk of suppressing meetings, when you talk of suppressing branches of the League, you forget that even if you did suppress meetings, you are encouraging that habit, that baneful habit of mind, which has been the curse of Irish society and which has even followed Irishmen across the seas. When you put down meetings do you think that men do not see one another after the mass, in the chapel yard, in the fairs, at their athletic associations? And by suppressing meetings and forcing them to arrange secret interviews, you are encouraging and fostering that habit of mind which I repeat has been one of the worst curses of the Irish people. I wish to say a few words upon the treatment of political prisoners. I do not agree with the doctrine laid down by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) that a Member of Parliament is no more than, and ought to be treated as no more than, anybody else. My right hon. and learned Friend took upon himself to say that that was the democratic view. I do not think that my right hon. and learned Friend lives in a political atmosphere which qualifies him to say what is or is not the democratic view. I cannot trust him with the utmost confidence for speaking the democratic view, but I could trust him as to the aristocratic one. On the democratic view I prefer to trust my own knowledge of the British democracy, and I do not believe that our people are bent upon anything more at this moment than that this House should be restored to its fullest dignity and its fullest authority. I am one of those who do not shrink from any reform in procedure that would add to the authority and dignity, the majesty, I may say, of this House. I would like to see it enlarged by every method; because if we do not have collectively any of that dignity which doth hedge a King, at least do not let us forget that we are the heirs of the noblest traditions in the history of freedom, that we are the possessors of vast and boundless powers for good and evil, and that we are the chosen repositories of the confidence of the people of this realm. With these sentiments and ideas, I confess that it was with a repugnance which I am sure plenty of hon. Gentlemen opposite shared, that last Friday night, for instance, I found every exit from this House guarded by bands of detectives, not to protect us, but to arrest Members of this House. I am not going to argue whether or not there was a breach of Privilege; but I am certain there was a want of common sense in those proceedings, that they constitute an indignity on this House, and that they could easily have been avoided. We are approaching through this Act a serious Constitutional position; and I put it to the House—and you who are the Constitutional Party ought not to lose sight of it—remember that you have made a permanent change in the law, you have permanently empowered the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to make new crimes. ["No!"] Oh, yes; and with the aid of a dependent magistracy—for such I must call it—you may convert any number of Irish Members into criminals, and deprive one-sixth, one-fourth, or one-half of the Irish constituencies of their Representatives. I say that these immense powers being permanent, it is my deliberate opinion that the House of Commons will have to consider whether they will not have such an alteration in the Rules of Privilege, that during the Session of Parliament the present exemption on civil process shall be extended to criminal process—["Oh!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]—except in certain grave cases, such as treason-felony and other serious matters. Well, I am not going to argue that question to-night. I will pass on to the immediate point as to political prisoners. On the last day of last Session, as the Chief Secretary may possibly remember, I ventured to warn him that public opinion would not endure the treatment of political prisoners on the same footing as if they were guilty of ordinary crimes; and I believe that what has happened since has fully borne out that opinion, for I believe that if one part of the administration of the Crimes Act has excited more disgust and repugnance than another in the country among both Parties, it is the way in which Members of Parliament and others have been treated as prisoners. The right hon. Gentleman treated us to a very smart academic repartee. He said that an offence did not become political because it was committed by a politician. Well, after all, that left the matter very much where it was; and I admit fully the enormous difficulty or even impossibility of defining a political prisoner. That difficulty was felt in the year 1866, when an Extradition Treaty was before Parliament, and it exercised some of the most acute minds in the House. Of course, in one sense, Guy Fawkes was a political prisoner; so was Orsini, who threw the bombs at the Emperor of the French; so are some of the dynamitards; and, of course, we all agree that the political complexion that may possibly be imparted to acts of this description does not exempt the perpetrators of them from the penalty which such acts deserve. So far we agree; but the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) said it was a piece of mawkish sentimentalism for Radicals to insist on different treatment for political prisoners and other prisoners, and ought not to be entertained.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I think the right hon. Gentleman was not present when I spoke. What I said was that any old Radical would have scouted the notion that a Member of Parliament was to be treated differently from a peasant.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: A Member of this House is now treated in a different way. He is treated on civil process in one way, and other persons are treated in another. If an Irish peasant has the same exemption from civil process as a Member of Parliament, I am glad to hear it. Let me say one word about the old Radical. It is remarkable that in 1867 a Petition was presented to this House in favour of certain Irish prisoners. They were Fenians, and among them was O'Donovan Rossa, of whom we have heard so much. That Petition, which was presented by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), prayed that the prisoners suffering as Fenians or on other political charges should not, in the execution of their sentences, be confined with common prisoners who were suffering for offences against the ordinary Criminal Law of their country; and the Petitioners went on to pray that in the punishment awarded them there might be none of those of a degrading nature, as such punishments seemed to the Petitioners to be inapplicable to men who, however misguided, had different motives and sought different ends from those of ordinary criminals. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Birmingham said—"With the general spirit of that Petition I entirely concur;" and Mr. John Suart Mill—who was at that time Member for Westminster—said that the Petition did not contain a single sentiment to which he did not adhere. I venture to think that these two Gentlemen were as good representatives of the old Radicalism as the hon. Gentleman, and were not inferior to him either in intellectual vigour or moral elevation. But why perplex ourselves with these considerations as to what is or is not a political prisoner, because in 1877 Parliament passed, under the guidance of the present Lord Cross, the Prisons (Ireland) Act. That Act contains two sections which bear strictly on the matter in hand. The 48th section is—

> "Section 48.—The General Prisons Board shall cause provision to be made in such prison or prisons as they shall think proper, so that prisoners convicted of misdemeanour and not sentenced to hard labour shall be divided into at least two divisions, one of which shall be called the first division; and whenever any person convicted of misdemeanour is sentenced to imprisonment without hard labour, it shall be lawful for the Court or Judge before whom such person has been tried to order, if such Court or Judge think fit, that such person shall be confined during his sentence in such prison or in some one of such prisons, and be there treated as a misdemeanant of the first division, and a misdemeanant of the first division shall be treated in accordance with such rules as may from time to time be made in that behalf under the provisions of this Act."

It was under that section of the Act, I believe, that an hon. Member of this House—the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy)—was made a first class misdemeanant. I wish particularly to call attention to the next section—

> "Section 49.—Every person under sentence inflicted on conviction for sedition or seditious libel, and any person who shall be imprisoned under any rule, order, or attachment for contempt of any Court, shall be treated as a misdemeanant of the first division."

It was under that section, I think, that Mr. O'Donel—the magistrate in Dublin—ordered that the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin—ex-Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan)—should be made a first-class misdemeanant. My contention is that if the Crimes Act had not been passed in a reckless hurry we should have been able to insert a clause similar to the 49th Section of the Act of 1877, and which should have applied to some, at least, of the offences with which the Coercion Act professes to deal. Look how absurd the law now is—that if a person charged is guilty of sedition or seditious libel he must be a first-class misdemeanant, but that if he is only guilty of what everyone in the House will admit to be infinitely less serious than the graver form of sedition—if he is guilty of such an offence as was committed by the hon. Member for North-East Cork — then there is no compulsion in the Crimes Act to treat him as a first-class misdemeanant. I submit to the right hon. Gentleman opposite that this has placed the House in a ridiculous position, because it was not the intention of Parliament—still less was it the intention of the constituencies—that Members who committed such an offence as that of the hon. Member for North-East Cork should be treated as if guilty of degrading crimes, and should be subjected to the same discipline as degraded criminals. I will not go further into this matter. I only wish to protest as strongly as I can—and I believe I speak for nearly all of us who sit above the Gangway as well as those who sit below—against this treatment of men who have not been guilty of dishonourable and degrading crime, and that we find it thoroughly odious and repugnant to all sound feeling. The hon. Member for North-East Cork to-night hit the true root of an evil in this Act and in its administration with which we are more immediately concerned. He said most truly that the Act had been drafted on the theory that the people of Ireland were pining to be relieved from the pressure of the National League. What you confound with intimidation and pressure is, in fact, public opinion. I do not care where you look for public opinion in Ireland, I do not care what your tests of public opinion may be—whether you look at the popular Press over a large area of Ireland, whether you look at the attitude of the clergy, whether you look at the attitude of the Parliamentary Representatives or at that of the municipal representatives — in every case you find public opinion is against your policy and against the way in which it is carried out. What the right hon. Gentleman regards as public opinion in Ireland appears to be that which is held by the majority in Belfast, and by so small a minority in Dublin, that it could not win one single division of the capital city. The Government, by the course they are taking, are doing the best that could be done to rouse men who have never before taken part in political agitation to a sense of the humiliation of their country. I cannot forget that when I was in Dublin the other day one of the foremost physicians in that city came on the platform and said that he had never been at a public meeting before, that he had never been an agitator, and that he had never sympathized with Home Rule; but that the tyrannical despotism of the administration of the right hon. Gentleman had compelled him to join those who wished to bring about an organic change in the government of their country. Do not let the right hon. Gentleman suppose that this is an isolated case. There are thousands and thousands of men in the middle classes in Ireland, quiet men who only wish to live in peace, who are animated by the same feeling. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman may shake his head, but he is not well placed to see such things. The right hon. Gentleman is the last person to know who are now rallying to the national cause. When the Coercion Act was in the House last year the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) described it as an "emancipating Bill." Why, we saw a specimen of the way it worked the other day, on the occasion of Father M'Fadden being taken to Dungannon to undergo his trial, when there was a perfect *corps d'armée* to receive him. There were dragoons, hussars, foot soldiers, and constabulary—I am not sure that there was not a gun—but there was a total force of 500 men to carry out the emancipation of the peasantry of Gweedore from a single priest. The language of the right hon. Gentleman merely illustrates the delusion with regard to Irish affairs under which the Government and, I am sorry to say, the majority of this House appear to labour. When the right hon. Gentleman was in Dublin he showed his ignorance of Ireland by saying that he wished he had time to go all through the country in order to explain to the people how they were being cajoled and duped. I should like the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for North-East Cork to go together through Ireland on a journey and to let us see whether the right hon. Gentleman could persuade his audience that the hon. Member was cajoling and duping them. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), to whom I always listen with the greatest interest and respect, said the other night that his countrymen are not a law-abiding people. I certainly recollect that the hon. and gallant Member did on one occasion use threats and menaces of what he would do in the event of a Home Rule Bill being carried, which went to show that he, at all events, was not a very law-abiding person. But is it an innate necessity of the Irish nature that they should not be a law-abiding nation? We find that the moment they remove to Australia or to Canada they become—with the exception of a few rowdy Orangemen now and then—a most law-abiding people. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary again shakes his head, but I will refer him to a book—to read when he has spare time, which, I hope he will have before very long—on Australia in which he will find it stated, with indisputable instances, that the Irishmen in that country are as law-abiding as any Englishmen or Scotchmen. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh put a question to me. He said that he was curious to know whether I had come back from Ireland still convinced that the Irish were a loyal people. Well, Sir, a civil question shall have a plain answer. I have come back more persuaded than I was before that the Irish will be a loyal people when you give them institutions which are worth being loyal to. How can you expect them to be loyal to this Parliament when, as you all know—who know anything of Irish history—that no boon has ever been got from this Parliament which has not been extorted by agitation and pressure? How can you expect loyalty to grow in a soil of that kind? If you govern Ireland with somewhat less of the pedantry of a collegian and somewhat less of the discipline of a martinet of the barrack, if you approach them sympathetically, if you do not irritate and exasperate them with small and petty bits of vindictiveness, they would become loyal, and rally fast enough to your flag. The hon. and gallant Member quoted something which he stated the Mayor of Waterford said to me. He alleged that the Mayor of Waterford said, "I am a rebel, and I always shall be a rebel." As a matter of historic fact—if it is worth going into—what the Mayor of Waterford said, was that he was born a rebel, and always would be a rebel against such despotism as that of the right hon. Gentleman. That does not strike me as a very pernicious or treasonable sentiment. Every heated word which comes either from the Mayor of Waterford or from any Irish Member below the Gangway, or any Irishman anywhere else, is chronicled, exaggerated, and printed in capital letters. The most curious thing is that we are urged to believe that whenever they say anything bad or heated they mean it, and when—as now—they say things which are pacific and good then we are assured that they do not mean it. That is a piece of unfairness which does a great deal of harm and against which I very warmly protest. In conclusion, I have only to remind the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he is at this moment in the very same fool's paradise in which Mr. Forster was when he came here in the beginning of 1882 and congratulated himself and the House upon the success of the Coercion Act. I was not then in the House, but I take credit to myself that I never for a moment believed, or, so far as I could help it, allowed others to believe, that there was any reason for congratulation. I warned him that there was mischief. Mischief indeed there was. Again, when Lord Spencer's administration had run its course, when he thought that he had achieved some degree of success, the moment came when he, too, found that he had been, as Mr. Forster had been, and as the right hon. Gentleman now is, in a fool's paradise. Lord Spencer found the waters rising up to his chin—those I think are his own words—the waters of disaffection, turbulence, and trouble. If the right hon. Gentleman could see for himself he would find out that his officials are telling him what they believe—what it is their professional interest to believe—but what he may depend upon it, as the months roll by, he will find to be untrustworthy and insecure, and which he will find the people of this country will not much longer endure.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Mr. Speaker, at this hour of the night (12.55) I will be as brief as the subject can possibly admit of. The Metropolitan Board of Works, to which my Motion refers, administers, to a large extent, the municipal affairs of an area comprising 122 square miles, and that area is inhabited by a population numbering over 4,000,000; it has a rateable value of over £30,000,000; it raises for the administration of the affairs of that area a yearly income of over £1,700,000, and it is responsible for a gross debt of £27,000,000, and for a net debt of £17,000,000. I shall not be exaggerating if I say there are many independent Sovereign States in Europe who would envy the dignity of those administrative proportions. And I shall be equally in agreement with the House when I assert that it is perfectly obvious, even to the most warped and prejudiced intelligence, that a body administering affairs so large is bound to possess, if it is to be efficient, the most entire public confidence which can well be imagined. If it does not possess that confidence, and that large amount of public confidence, it will be inefficient, and it cannot in the nature of things perform its duty as it ought to do with respect to the people it is supposed to provide for. That is my first proposition, which I do not think anyone will controvert. My second proposition is, and no one will controvert it—although there are several respected members of the Metropolitan Board of Works in this House—my second proposition is that the Board does not possess that public confidence. On the contrary—for reasons which I do not care now to examine—there has been a growing diminution of public confidence in the Board of Works amongst the inhabitants of the Metropolis. The Board has altogether fallen upon evil times, and the great services the Board of Works has undoubtedly rendered to London in the way of great Metropolitan improvements has been to a large extent forgotten. The vast body of opinion in the Metropolis and outside has ceased to look to the Metropolitan Board of Works with that confidence which I venture to assert is essential to the efficient performance of its duties. Now, I do not want the House to suppose for a moment I make myself any party whatever to the allegations which have been made against the honour of the Metropolitan Board of Works as a body. I do not. But I cannot blind myself to the fact that allegations of a serious character have been made against the Metropolitan Board of Works; against their character for incorruptibility, and against their character for provident management of the vast funds which they administer. These allegations have been made from many quarters, and these allegations do not stand altogether by themselves. These allegations had been supported by public opinion in the Metropolis, and the ground on which I base my Motion to-night is not that the allegations have been made by newspapers and individuals; the foundation for the Motion which I make to the House is that these allegations have been given force to by the conduct of the Metropolitan Board of Works itself. Now, Sir, let me for a moment summarize what these allegations are. I have taken the trouble to extract them from the various quarters from which they have emanated. In the first place, it is alleged that members of the Board and officers of the Board have been interested in syndicates or companies formed for the purpose of speculating in property required for the public use, and have gained advantages by buying or leasing property from the Board through privileged channels. It is alleged, further, that architects hold seats at the Board, and sit in judgment upon applications for building sites, being at the same time in the paid service of the applicants. It is alleged that a member of the Board was the architect for the Pavilion Music Hall; he was only nominally the architect in order to get the plans through, there being associated with him a private architect who did the work and drew the fees. I make myself no party to the allegations I have now read; but as to the latter allegation, I believe it is the fact that a member of the Board, an architect, signed the plans for the Pavilion Music Hall and the Hotel Métropole in the Northumberland Avenue. Now, it is further alleged that a member of the Board was architect of the Grand Hotel, another great hotel in Northumberland Avenue, and of a large portion of the Queen Victoria Street buildings. It is further alleged that members of the Board engaged outside in professional duties used their personal influence inside the Board in favour of schemes submitted to the Board in which they were professionally interested. It has been alleged, and it is a general allegation which is part of the former, that the letting of Board land has been in the hands of a clique which has been guided by interested and personal motives. But, Sir, these are the allegations against the Board, and I make no scruple in admitting that these allegations have been made by a newspaper—mainly by a newspaper—of no insignificant circulation, and I am told of no inconsiderable authority, *The Financial News.* That paper has generally summarized the public opinion which is either hostile to or suspicious of the

Board of Works, and has made itself the main channel of public accusation against the Board of Works. But there are other allegations of serious import also. It is undoubtedly alleged, and I believe there is a certain amount of *primâ facie* evidence in support of the allegation, that members of the Board have owned newspapers or have maintained newspapers — have run newspapers, relying mainly for the support of those newspapers upon the advertisements it was necessary for the Board of Works to insert in newspapers in pursuance of their business. And I came across an article the other day in a newspaper which I hope will not excite derision in the House, as I believe it is a newspaper of influence amongst the Nonconformist Body, which contained a very remarkable statement. The paper is called *The Christian Commonwealth*, and on the 21st of July, 1887, this paper stated that the Board of Works is the most corrupt public body in London, that it is quite notorious amongst architects and builders that officials of the Board had been bribed. The paper states that it made the same accusation two years ago, giving names, giving facts, and it goes on to state that the proprietors were threatened with an action for libel unless they withdrew or apologized for the charges they had made, but that they declined either to withdraw the charge or to apologize for having made them. No action was brought against the paper. Well, Sir, these are the allegations, and, as I said before, they are undoubtedly allegations of a vague and general character, of an indefinite character. If they rested on the authority of newspapers alone or upon the authority of irresponsible individuals, I do not think anyone would dream of asking the House of Commons to appoint a Royal Commission, and especially one armed with the powers I propose to investigate them; but these allegations derive their force, and their strength, and their disagreeable appearance mainly from the conduct of the Board as a whole, and the statements of members of the Board made publicly at the meetings of the Board. Now I will first of all read to the House statements of members of the Board. At a meeting of the Board held on the 30th of July last year, the senior member of the Board—Mr. Richards—a man, I believe, above all suspicion of any sort or kind—a man of most honourable character, stated publicly that a Royal Commission was necessary, as in the Board's own minutes a record appeared to the effect that some of the members had made themselves very busy about sites. Mr. Laurence, a member of equally high character but not of such long standing on the Board, made a statement of immense importance at a Board meeting. He said the Estate Office was corrupt from top to bottom. Now, that statement, I believe, he made first in a different form. He said the Board was corrupt from top to bottom, and that was naturally objected to. The Chairman of the Board called upon Mr. Laurence to withdraw the statement, and he said he had used the word Board by mistake, what he meant was the Estate Office. He said the Estate Office was corrupt from top to bottom, and that statement passed without contradiction. According to the proceedings of the Board that modification of the accusation was accepted and no protest was made against it. At the same meeting Mr. Williams, another member of the Board, stated publicly that he had been informed that a man had bought a particular piece of land, and had made a profit of £400 out of it. No one contested the statement; no one thought fit to inquire into the truth of it. Well, then, we come to a very odd story in connection with a gentleman of the name of Robertson, District Surveyor to the Board. His conduct in connection with the Pavilion Music Hall was brought before the Board, and he stated before a Committee of Inquiry that a certain Mr. Walker, who is a District Surveyor, and therefore a man in a position to know a good deal—had imputed that he, Mr. Robertson, had received £6,000 from the Colonial Institute, and that he had settled £30,000 on his wife. Mr. Robertson and Mr. Walker were summoned before the Board, and Mr. Walker denied that he had made the statement; but Mr. Robertson informed the Chairman publicly that he could tell him the name of a member of the Board who had told him Mr. Walker had made the statement. The Board did not press the matter further. Well, now I come to another very serious statement, not made by a member of the Board, but made by a Metropolitan

Member of Parliament, who sits near me—the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex (Mr. Dixon-Hartland), who went to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) on a deputation with regard to London theatres. The hon. Gentleman stated publicly—and his words were reported in *The Daily Telegraph* of the 16th of December last—that some of the officials of the Board applied to the theatrical managers for free tickets, pointing out that if they did not get what they wanted they had power of inspection.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): What is the date?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The 16th of December, 1887. I have nothing to do with the rights or the wrongs of that statement; but that statement was publicly made and reported in all the Metropolitan newspapers. It has never been noticed by the Board; and no effort has been made to disprove it. I have given the House the general allegations which are made against the Metropolitan Board of Works. Now, if the House will bear with me, I will endeavour to bring before it the force which attaches to these statements from the conduct of the Board itself. The conduct of the Board itself must be examined from two points of view. It must be examined from the point of view of the manner in which it dealt with certain specific charges against individuals; and it must be examined from the point of view of the manner in which it dealt with regard to the motion made, by member after member, in favour of a public and independent inquiry. There were two distinct charges against officers of the Board, which were examined into by the Metropolitan Board of Works. The first was a charge which arose, in 1885, against Mr. Robertson, who was Assistant Surveyor to the Board of Works, and who, I believe, was the principal and the most active officer of the Estate Committee. Mr. Robertson was charged with having used his position for the purpose of making money for himself out of the leasing of sites belonging to the Board of Works. I do not wish to go into the case of Mr. Robertson; it is a very long case, and would take up too much of the time of the House; but the House can judge of the nature of the case of the Board of Works with regard to it. The Board of Works thought the charge so serious that it appointed a special committee to inquire into it. I may mention that the action of Mr. Robertson involved the Board in a charge of having improvidently disposed of the property of the public. The Board leased a very valuable site of land —I think it was the Piccadilly Circus— to a Mr. Villiers, who had been owner of the London Pavilion. The Board leased this site for a rent of £3,000 a-year, with a premium of £15,000 paid down. It was not denied that at the time an offer of a rent of £4,000 a-year was made to the Board.

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): The offer was not made at the same time.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I know my hon. Friend is well acquainted with the affairs of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but, at the same time, I am well informed.

MR. TATTON EGERTON: As the offer was made through me, I think the noble Lord has been wrongly informed.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Though made subsequently to the offer of £3,000 a-year, an offer of £4,000 a-year was made.

MR. WEBSTER: I rise to a point of Order. I should like to know whether if the hon. Gentleman, who was a party to the transaction, knows that the noble Lord is making an inaccurate statement, he is not in Order in stating that the noble Lord's statement is inaccurate.

MR. SPEAKER: The noble Lord is in possession of the House; and if the noble Lord does not give way, he is entitled to continue his remarks.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I was very careful in making this statement; and I felt that my information was above all suspicion. The fact of the matter is, this property was let for £3,000 a-year with a premium of £15,000 paid down by Mr. Villiers. Before the contract was signed an offer of £4,000 a-year was made for the same property; but it was not considered. The Board thought they ought to stand by their word. But there is this also very awkward fact as regards the charge of improvident dealing with the property of the public, that within a year this very property was sold by the lessee to a

Joint Stock Company for £115,000 and £6,000 in debentures of the Company. If we take that as the value of the property, we cannot acquit the Board of having made an uncommonly bad bargain for the public. Quite apart from the question of whether the Board made a good bargain or not, we have the case of Mr. Robertson, who is accused of having derived advantage for himself and relatives out of the transaction. What was the result of the Special Committee appointed to inquire into the matter? The Report which the Committee submitted to the Board was to the effect that Mr. Robertson had been injudicious in allowing relations to become tenants of the Board without informing the Board; but they did not think there was anything worthy of more censure. The Report of the Committee was brought up to the Board; but it did not satisfy the general feeling of the Board, and an amendment was moved to dismiss Mr. Robertson. That amendment was lost by 25 to 19, upon which another amendment was moved to this effect—

> "That the Board is of opinion that none of its officers should be interested in a financial sense in dealings with the Board's property. Considering that Mr. Robertson admitted financial connection with his brother under the assumed name of Gray in such a dealing, and considering the unauthorized substitution of one of his brothers for Mr. Foster, a tenant appointed by the Board, the Board consider such conduct is most improper and deserving of censure."

The Board, as a whole, considered the conduct of Mr. Robertson worthy of censure. At the same time, they would not dismiss Mr. Robertson, who had been liable to the charges set forth. Very well, this censure was passed, apparently rather hastily and without notice, and there was considerable doubt as to whether it should be confirmed by the Board or not. After repeated delays the censure was confirmed on the 11th of November, 1887, and on the 18th Mr. Robertson was removed from his department. He was considered to be no longer worthy to entrust with the dealings of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but from that date to this date—the 16th of February, 1888—the position of Mr. Robertson has been under the consideration of the Board, and he has been in the enjoyment of a holiday on full pay. The fact remains, that there is now in the employment of the Board of Works a man who has been censured twice—formally censured by the Board for dealings with the property of the Board, which, to say the least of it, were of a grossly improper character. That is the first case, and it is undoubtedly the fact that there is an impression in the public mind that Mr. Robertson's influence is so great with many members of the Board that the Board dare not dismiss him. It is believed there is a feeling on the part of the Board that if he were dismissed, and if, therefore, his tongue were unloosed or freed from all official responsibility in connection with the Board, he would make disclosures which might be very unpleasant. It is certainly clear, and admitted, that great efforts were made by the Board to prevent such action being taken in respect to Mr. Robertson which would have immediately been taken by any private commercial concern. Those efforts have, up to the present moment, been successful. There was one more case which attracted, if possible, more public attention, and that was the case of Mr. Hebb, who was Assistant Architect to the Board. This was called "The Theatre Scandal." Mr. Hebb, the Assistant Architect to the Board, wrote to Mr. Augustus Harris, of the Drury Lane Theatre, asking for tickets for private boxes or stalls, and the letter was published in the columns of a daily paper. This does not seem, at first sight, a very important matter; but it is, nevertheless, a matter of great importance. Mr. Hebb's duty was to look after the theatres in the Metropolis, so far as the Board was concerned; he had to see that the theatres were in a state consistent with public safety. He could make reports which might induce the Board to call upon managers of theatres to undertake certain expenditure, and Mr. Hebb, holding such a position, thought it consistent with his position to apply to the manager of Drury Lane Theatre for tickets for private boxes for himself and his friends. It has also been alleged—and not denied—that members of the Board used to apply for boxes and stalls at the theatre. Well, now, the Board thought this was a very serious charge, as indeed it was, and they appointed a committee, as they did in the case of Mr. Robertson, to inquire into the matter.

The committee of the whole Board recommended that Mr. Hebb be called upon to resign. It was a much stronger committee, and a much more intelligent committee — I should say than the one which dealt with Mr. Robertson—and they recommended that Mr. Hebb should be called upon to resign. That was on the 16th of December, 1887. No decision was come to upon this recommendation, and the meeting was adjourned over the Christmas recess. On the 20th of January another report was brought up, stating that, in the opinion of the committee—now, mark this, a change had come over the spirit of the dream of the committee—having in December declared that Mr. Hebb ought to be called upon to resign, in January they said that the justice of the case would be met by the Board expressing their condemnation of Mr. Hebb's conduct, and prohibiting such practices in the future upon the pain of instant dismissal. There is a marked difference between calling on a man to resign and allowing a man to remain on, contenting themselves with a censure. But my hon. Friend the Member for the Knutsford Division (Mr. Tatton Egerton) was extremely dissatisfied with the latter view of the committee, and he moved an amendment to remove Mr. Hebb from the supervision of the theatres, an extremely good amendment. My hon. Friend was defeated upon a division, 25 voting for his amendment and 25 voting against it, the noble Chairman (Lord Magheramorne) declining to vote. There were equal votes, and therefore the amendment was defeated, and the original motion, which declared that the justice of the case would be met by a censure, was carried by 25 votes to 17. I am informed that since their decision Mr. Hebb has been relieved of this particular branch of his duty—namely, the superintendence of theatres. But the fact remains that Mr. Hebb, who it is admitted has grossly misused his official position, remains, like Mr. Robertson, in the employment of the Board. These are two important cases, and they refer to very important officials of the Board, and I cannot help thinking that the House will be of opinion that it is not to be wondered at that the Metropolitan Board of Works does not command the public confidence. Now I come to the last matter which I have to bring before the House, and which, I think, is certainly the most important of all, and that is the action of the Board with regard to the motion made at the Board meetings in favour of a public and independent inquiry. I do not wish to blame the Board for the attitude they have taken up. They are, no doubt, a body of high public spirit, who are conscious of having rendered great service to the Metropolitan public, and it is natural they should be most unwilling to commit themselves to anything which might be supposed by the public to condemn themselves. The resolutions of the Board with regard to the necessity of a public inquiry show plainly how easy is the feeling of the Board in respect to these charges. On the 29th of July, 1887, after the case of Mr. Robertson, and before the case of Mr. Hebb, Mr. Fardell—a member of the Board—moved that the Government be requested to appoint a Committee to inquire as to the charges made against members and officials of the Board with reference to the sale of certain lands. This was lost on a division by one vote —17 voting against it and 16 for it. However, the majority of the Board thought they ought to do something themselves, and they appointed a special committee of their own body to inquire as to the truth of certain statements in the newspapers against officials and members of the Board with reference to the sale of land other than by public auction. Well, that committee came to an abrupt and unsatisfactory conclusion. The members of the Board who formed the committee found that no evidence was brought before them. The fact of the matter was, people declined to give evidence, and the committee had no power to examine witnesses on oath. Although the committee inquired, and although no evidence was laid before it such as the Board considered injured its character or the characters of its officers, the Board could not feel quite happy in its mind. Mr. Fardell again proposed to take steps to secure an independent public inquiry into the charges of irregularity preferred against the Board, and to communicate with the Secretary of State for the Home Department for that purpose. That motion was not pressed to a division. The mover was afraid to proceed with it, and the opponents were afraid to oppose it. A compromise was proposed, and an amendment was moved in the following terms:—

> "Inasmuch as numerous Vestries and District Boards are of opinion, and on their part desire, that a public inquiry should be instituted into the charges made against the Board and its officials, a communication be addressed to the Home Secretary informing him that the Board will give every assistance if such an inquiry be instituted."

That was agreed to, and such a communication was addressed to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary; but I am informed that up to this date the right hon. Gentleman has not been able to give any answer to it. I hope the House sees my point—namely, that the conduct of the Board itself with regard to resolutions affirming the desirability of a public inquiry shows plainly that an inquiry is absolutely necessary. If the House bears in mind what the conduct of the Board has been and recollects also the general allegations against the Board, allegations made by individuals of the public, by members of Vestries at Vestry meetings, and by the Metropolitan Press as a whole, I think it must come to the conclusion that inquiry into the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works is needed. I can understand that there are some hon. Members who will think a Parliamentary Committee preferable to a Royal Commission. I think a Parliamentary Committee has many advantages, but there is this great disadvantage about such a Committee—that owing to its composition, and to the character of the House of Commons, a Parliamentary Committee cannot prevent itself from being more or less of a Party character. I think it would be most dangerous to the interests involved in connection with the Metropolitan Board of Works, and most dangerous to London government, if the House of Commons gave a shadow of encouragement to the introduction of Party spirit into this matter. There is this also to be said—that a Committee is rather irregular in its sittings. Its attendance is fairly good; some hon. Members attend one day and some another; and a Committee may be always brought to a conclusion by the termination of the Session, or the termination of a Parliament. I think that from every point of view, if the House comes to the conclusion that an inquiry ought to be held into these matters, a Royal Commission composed of eminent men, beyond all possibility of being suspected of any Party feeling, would be a preferable body to a Parliamentary Committee. Well, Sir, I feel I have detained the House too long. Parliament owes a great duty to the people of London. The people of London have no municipal institutions in the sense that other towns in the country have—therefore Parliament has a peculiar and special duty with regard to the people of London. The people of London unanimously demand this inquiry. There is not a single Metropolitan Member who will get up and oppose the inquiry; but the enormous majority of Metropolitan Members are in favour of it. The entire Metropolitan Press clamour for it, and on such a subject the opinion of the Metropolitan Press has great weight. Twenty Local Bodies and Vestries, representing a rateable value of over £16,000,000 out of the £30,000,000 which is the rateable value of the whole area governed by the Metropolitan Board of Works, have either petitioned Parliament, or have passed resolutions, or have written letters to the Board of Works, insisting upon and demanding inquiry. In these circumstances the House of Commons and the Government have really only one duty to perform, and that is to grant an independent public inquiry; and to be certain that the inquiry which they grant shall be a *bonâ fide* one—a genuine one—shall be animated by no other desire than to get at the truth. That is the plain duty of Parliament, and I venture to think there is no other duty to perform. Of course, if the Motion is acceded to, the duty will rest upon the Government of pressing whatever legislation may be necessary to empower the Royal Commission to do its duty efficiently. I beg to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to the Crown, praying that a Royal Commission, empowered by statute to take evidence on oath, to compel attendance of witnesses, to grant certificates of indemnity to witnesses in such cases as may be desirable and proper, and to call for all necessary records and documents, be appointed to inquire into and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith."

MR. SPEAKER: I think a slight alteration in the form of the Resolution is necessary in order to give efficiency to the Royal Commission, and to enable it to carry out its duty. A better form would be—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into and to report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith, and to assure Her Majesty that this House will concur in empowering such Commission to take evidence on oath, to compel attendance of witnesses, and to call for all necessary records and documents."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: If you will allow me, Sir, I will move the Motion in the form you have suggested.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) seconded the Motion. There was, he said, no doubt that the Metropolitan Board of Works had lost the confidence of its constituents, and had, in the words of one of their own committee, "given rise in the mind of the public to grave suspicion and mistrust of the administration." The noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) had quoted from the statements of many members of the Board and others as to the state of affairs; but, with reference to the Pavilion or Robertson case, he had omitted to state the large sum—he believed over £70,000—the Board paid the lessee for his old lease before granting him the new one at so inadequate a sum. He thought it would be of the greatest advantage to the Metropolitan Board itself that a Royal Commission should be allowed to sit, for it would enable that body to show that it was not guilty of the scandals imputed to it. It was said that the Board could not deal with its own officials, and in endeavouring to whitewash them, had taken their place at the bar of public opinion to answer the heavy indictment that had so long been accumulating against them, and therefore the sooner the Commission sat the better.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith, and to assure Her Majesty that this House will concur in empowering such Commission to take evidence on oath, to compel attendance of witnesses, to grant certificates of indemnity to witnesses in such cases as may be desirable and proper, and to call for all necessary records and documents."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, that in a very few words he wished to state the attitude the Government proposed to take in regard to the Motion of the noble Lord. In one sentence he would say that the Government assented to the Motion; but he would accompany that assent with one word of caution. This Royal Commission was a tremendous engine to set in motion, and one which the House of Commons ought to hesitate to set in motion merely on newspaper charges, or charges in the mouths of the public which had not yet assumed any shape of proof in the form of a civil action. If precedents were looked into, he believed that something more than mere rumour was necessary to justify the assent of the Government to an inquiry of this kind. He had, however, received communications from 27 Vestries—all the Vestries, he thought—from Boards of Works, and different Governing Bodies of London, all praying that the inquiry should be held. That, perhaps, might not be sufficient; but he had two communications from the Metropolitan Board itself on the subject. In the first, they stated that they had received numerous resolutions from local Vestries in favour of the institution of an inquiry; and that if an inquiry were instituted, and the Government would communicate with them, they would render every assistance in their power. That was not inviting an inquiry, but informing him that they would be willing to assist him if an inquiry were held. Yesterday, however, he received a further communication from, he believed, the Chairman of the Inquiry Committee, which was too long to read in full, but in which the writer stated that evidence had been collected, and urged the Government to assume the responsibility of instituting an inquiry, or to give support to the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) when he brought forward his proposal for the appointment of a Commission, with power to take evidence on oath and to compel the attendance of witnesses.

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): That is not from the Metropolitan Board of Works.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: That is from the Chairman of an independent Inquiry Committee.

Mr. MATTHEWS said that, at all events, the Metropolitan Board was an assenting party; therefore, he thought this formidable engine should be set in motion. In assenting to the Motion, he must not be taken as endorsing the charges made against the Metropolitan Board; in fact, he trusted the result would be to exonerate them.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he did not rise to oppose the noble Lord's Motion; but he would like the noble Lord to give them some information as to the scope of the inquiry he proposed to set on foot, for he need hardly remind him that the Metropolitan Board of Works had been the local Governing Body of London since the year 1855; that of the 59 members of the Board there were no fewer than 27 who had been elected since 1885; and that it was previous to 1885 that the circumstances upon which the two main charges made by the noble Lord rested occurred. Now, he (Mr. Webster) was not a member of the Board when the circumstances occurred, and it would be as easy for him, or for any other member of the Board, to defend the Board from those charges as it would be for the present War Office to defend the administration of their Department from charges brought against it founded upon circumstances which took place during the Crimean War. The noble Lord might be able to point out two or three small slips which might have occurred in the various departments of the Metropolitan Board of Works since 1855; but that two or three small slips might have occurred was not to be wondered at when it was remembered that in one year alone the Board had to decide on something like 300,000 questions respecting the Metropolis. The noble Lord had referred to the *laches* of two men in one department of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Well, only two days ago it was stated by the Home Secretary in the House that he could not be responsible for the action of every policeman in the whole of the Metropolis. The right hon. Gentleman had apologized in the House for the fact that a policeman had—and in this he (Mr. Webster) quite agreed with hon. Gentlemen opposite—failed in doing his duty in a fit and proper manner. Well, when it was known that the Metropolitan Board of Works had no fewer than 1,248 officials at the present time responsible to them for their action, it would be seen that, however careful the present administrators of the Board might be, they might not always be able to prevent small slips. It was desirable, under the circumstances, that the scope of the inquiry should be known. Was it proposed to examine and inquire into each and every transaction carried out by the Board since 1855? Were they going through millions—he might say tens of millions—of matters that the Board had to do with? Why, in 1880 not a quarter of the present Board were members of that body; and how could the Board, therefore, be expected even to know what had taken place, much less be responsible for it? Certain statements had been made with regard to the working of the Board. He could not speak as to what the working had been in the past, as he was only a new member of the body, having sat on it but a couple of years; but he could say that the Board now did its work in a very efficient and business-like manner. There were 59 members; and out of that number from 54 to 56 were constantly in the habit of attending the meetings. The work of a member of the Metropolitan Board was, with the exception of a very short recess in the autumn, continuous; and they were unable, therefore, to find time to take tours, as hon. Gentlemen and noble Lords were, in Russia and elsewhere. He himself had done his duty to the best of his ability, and during the past winter and autumn had given from 20 to 30 hours per week voluntary service in the Board's work. In 1885 there had been no fewer than 388 meetings—Board meetings, committee meetings, and sub-committee meetings. The House of Commons had from time to time thrust on the Metropolitan Board of Works very difficult duties. They had placed upon them the responsibility of carrying out 100 Acts of Parliament relating to drainage, Thames floods prevention, Metropolitan improvements, parks, and open spaces. As to the question of parks, he might state that the Board had under its jurisdiction and control 2,300 acres of parks and open spaces, 300 of which had been removed from the control of the First Commissioner of Works to that of the Metropolitan Board of Works by the Parks and Open Spaces Bill of last Session. As to who was the noble Lord's informant as to the working of the Board, no doubt it was Mr. Fardell, who was Chairman of the Finance Committee for two years. From the statements in the papers and the statement of the noble Lord to-night it was no doubt this gentleman who was supplying the noble Lord with information.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the hon. Gentleman himself was, to some extent, his informant, for he had seconded the motion for inquiry made at the Metropolitan Board of Works by Mr. Fardell.

MR. WEBSTER said, the noble Lord went rather beyond his (Mr. Webster's) views in seconding the Motion. His intention in seconding the Motion was this. He had stated pretty distinctly that he did not think the Metropolitan Board of Works required inquiring into for any *laches* on their part; but he had been of the same opinion as the noble Lord that there was a general feeling in the Metropolis that after this Board had been in working for 33 years, and there had been a newspaper published apparently for no other purpose than to abuse the Board, and after various Vestries in the Metropolis had asked for an inquiry, an inquiry was desirable not, as some would think, as an attack upon the Board, but rather for proving to the Metropolis and to the country the excellent and efficient work the Board had done. The Board had had to take over important bridges; they had important duties to discharge in regard to the Fire Brigade of London, and it was a fact that the cost of the Fire Brigade to the inhabitants of London was only one-ninth of the cost that fell upon the inhabitants of New York. If they were to have an inquiry which was to ramble over all the questions which the Metropolitan Board of Works had dealt with since 1855, they might go on inquiring for the next 50 years. The Board had to carry out the various Acts of Parliament respecting buildings in the Metropolis. They had to make arrangements regarding the testing of gas, with a view to seeing it was of the quality prescribed by Act of Parliament. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to be in a right good humour. If he were allowed, he would add to their amusement by stating various other duties which the Metropolitan Board of Works had to perform. The Board had to look after slaughter-houses, the storage of petroleum, Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, and the storage of explosive substances. The gentleman to whom the noble Lord had alluded was for two years the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board. What did that gentleman say in bringing in his report of the Estimate for the year 1887? He said—

> "I also desire to again express my appreciation of the admirable manner in which the books and accounts are kept, as well as my obligations to the officers who have assisted me in dealing with a somewhat difficult and complex subject."

When the friend of the noble Lord made those observations, he was not altogether in unison with the noble Lord on all points. For instance, he severely criticized the speech the noble Lord made when a certain deputation went to him asking for a renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues. It was not only the noble Lord who was mistaken in regard to matters in which the Metropolitan Board of Works had to deal, but the Treasury also laboured under the wrong impression. In 1883 it was stated by the Treasury that the debt of the Board amounted to £19,000,000, but at that time it was clearly shown that the Board's net indebtedness only amounted to £14,815,000. The Treasury, therefore, were misinformed to the extent of between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000 sterling. There was one fact deserving of notice; it showed the confidence felt by the mercantile community in the work of the Metropolitan Board of Works. In 1874 the Board issued a loan at the rate of 3½ per cent. That loan was taken up at £94 and some odd shillings. In December of last year the Board issued a loan at 3 per cent, and it was taken up at £100 and some odd shillings. Now he did not intend to dwell upon the Robertson incident, though invariably, in the course of the discussions at the Board, he voted with the minority. He would, however, refer in some detail to the more recent case of Mr. Hebb. Whilst he voted with the minority for the instant dismissal of Mr. Hebb, he acknowledged that subsequently, when he made close inquiry as to the work done by Mr. Hebb in regard to theatres, he found that Mr. Hebb had done his work in a most strict and honourable way. He voted for the dismissal of Mr. Hebb, because he considered that official had written letters of an improper nature, because he had proved himself unworthy of the confidence of the Board, though he had not injured the business of the Board. But it should be borne in mind that the existence of those letters was long known to a gentleman who had not now a seat in the House of Commons, and to another Gentleman who was now a Member of the House. The existence of the letters was known three years before they were disclosed, either to Members of the House of Commons or of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He contended that when gentlemen heard of the letters it was their duty to bring their existence to the notice of the Metropolitan Board, but they did not do so. They kept the letters in their pockets till it was understood a Bill to regulate theatres in London was to be introduced by the Board of Works. He was glad to hear the Home Secretary state that he intended to bring in a Bill for the protection of life against the danger of fire in theatres throughout the country, and he hoped that, in conducting the Bill through the House, the right hon. Gentleman would not forget the action of certain managers of theatres in keeping back the fact that the letters in question had been written. The work which the Board had to do was of an administrative and not a legislative character, and he contended that the Governing Body in London was responsible for very important undertakings directly connected with the welfare of the Metropolis of the Empire. The administration of local government in the Metropolis should be the best in the country, and in his belief, as far as the Board of Works was concerned, he was not sure it was not so at present. He was not going to refer to the fact that there were many towns in the country whose rates were very much higher than were those which prevailed in London, and that whilst the Metropolitan Board, for the last 33 years, had the management of most of the important local questions affecting a population of over 4,000,000, and had been attacked, time after time, regarding the various important works they had constructed, on nearly every occasion popular opinion had been wrong, and the Board right. He was not going to lay very much stress on the fact that since the Metropolitan Management Act was carried in 1885, and since the Metropolitan Board of Works had come into existence, that the death-rate in London had fallen from 29 per 1,000, to 19 or 20 per 1,000, due, no doubt, to the colossal works of main drainage. It was easy, and it was simple, for the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, amidst the millions of transactions which were undertaken by the Board, to pick two or three matters in which not the public Press alone, but also public opinion, had come to incorrect conclusions. But he did say to such that the inquiry, if one at all were held, should be of a thoroughly satisfactory character, because he believed that if it were carried through it would show the tremendous amount of work of a useful and valuable character that the Metropolitan Board of Works had done since 1855, and it would show also how well that work had been accomplished, beginning with the construction of the Thames Embankment, and coming up to, he believed not ending by, the opening of Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road, Putney and Hammersmith Bridges, and many parks and open spaces in and around London. The inquiry, in his belief, could only strengthen the present government of London; and though some of the hon. Members opposite might desire to see it based on more democratic lines, they were not likely to secure their aim by bringing forward matters of complaint for which there was no good foundation. The Metropolitan Board of Works had now such undertakings under their charge as the making of the Blackwall Tunnel, the purchase of land for a people's park, and great works of draïnage and new streets. They had brought about the erection of a large number of artizans' dwellings. But when they were transacting this kind of business, the Press took no notice of their doings. These matters were treated as comparatively unimportant; but immediately a reporter was able to find out some little scandal, the publication of which was likely to sell his paper, then a great deal of fuss was made over it. He would support the Motion of the noble Lord. He would not go as far as saying that, amidst the countless transactions, one or two mistakes might not have been made; but he believed the work generally would be found to have been done not only efficiently, but honourably also, and he hoped the inquiry would be made a practical one.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he wished to move an addition to the noble Lord's Motion. He would ask the House to add after the word "therewith," "and also in the transactions of all such of the London Vestries and District Boards as the Commissioners may deem necessary." He was very glad to hear the noble Lord say that he was desirous of making this inquiry full, complete, and effective; but it was impossible for the noble Lord to accomplish that without adopting the words which his (Mr. Broadhurst's) Amendment suggested. The object should not merely be to secure an inquiry into the working of the Board of Works, but into all questions arising within the Board of Works; and any Commission that might be appointed would soon discover their movements hampered to a serious extent, if the noble Lord's Motion were carried in the form proposed. The fact was that the Board of Works and the London Vestries were inextricably mixed up, and unless a Commission had power to inquire into the doings of the Vestries as well as of the Board of Works the appointment would be useless, and no good results could ensue. The Vestries were constantly engaged in large and important financial transactions, and while he was not proposing to make any specific charge against any individual Vestry that night, yet he ventured to say that there were transactions in connection with those bodies that required an independent inquiry. He understood that an objection against the Amendment was that it would unduly prolong the inquiry; but in reply to that he had to point out the terms of the Proviso were entirely permissive, and it would not be compulsory on the Commissioners who might be appointed to inquire into the doings of anyone of the Vestry. They could let them alone if they thought fit, but if they came to the conclusion that there was necessity for an inquiry, then they would have full power to make that inquiry. He therefore ventured to submit that the addition of the words he had proposed would not in any way increase the length of the inquiry, yet it would make the investigation thorough and complete; and he sincerely hoped that the House would agree to add the words. He might say that Mr. Mark Judd, one of the noble Lord's constituents, who was a great authority on London municipal affairs, had written a letter, strongly supporting his Amendment; and he would, in conclusion, only say that he relied on the common sense of the Home Secretary, who had charge of that question, to secure the adoption of the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "therewith," to insert the words "and also in the transactions of such of the London Vestries and District Boards as the Commissioners may deem necessary."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, that, as a London Member, he rose to support the Amendment, and to express satisfaction with the original Motion, so far as it went. He thanked the noble Lord for having brought it forward, because it was likely to prove exceedingly useful, and he believed it would be rendered even more useful by the addition of the words proposed by the hon. Member for West Nottingham. The Metropolitan Board of Works was founded on the Vestries. The whole system was one system. It would stand or fall as a system; and if there were corruption, it was corruption throughout, and the charges which were made against one were, to a large extent, equally applicable to the other. He believed the inquiry could not be sufficient without the addition of the words contained in the Amendment. And he further was of opinion that the investigation would afford admirable material for their future consideration when dealing with the government of London.

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) said, that though he agreed with the Motion of the noble Lord, he did not quite coincide with the reasons advanced in support of it. The Board had been attacked on two particular grounds—the Robertson case and the Hebb case. He was sorry to have to traverse the statements of the noble Lord, but he felt compelled to do so. It had been asserted that £3,000 was offered by Mr. Villiers as rent, and £15,000 down as well. The fact was that the rent was to be £3,000, and the £15,000 represented the value of the licence when obtained. It was further stated that a rent of £4,000 was offered simultaneously by another gentleman. But, as it happened, that latter offer was not made until after Mr. Villiers' terms had been accepted, and the Board had decided to give Mr. Villiers the plot of ground on the terms of the architect's valuation. The question was thoroughly discussed, and the Board came to the conclusion that a tenant who had been able to maintain a licence was a valuable tenant, and one to whom the plot should be sold, not alone on the architect's valuation, but also on the valuation obtained from independent valuers. As to Mr. Hebbs case, a grave charge had been made, and it had been made in a most improper manner. The letters on which it was based had been suppressed; indeed, they had only been brought up for a particular purpose. The gravamen of the noble Lord's charge was that the Board did not immediately dismiss Mr. Hebb. He (Mr. Tatton-Egerton) could not vote—he could not agree with some of his Colleagues that there should be any dismissal at all. He could only agree in removing him from his work in connection with the theatres—work upon which he had been engaged for a long time—and he did not think that there ought to be a dismissal simply because he had committed an offence of that kind, especially as he had not re-committed it subsequently. He believed that the accusation made in the newspapers was unsupported, and when an inquiry was offered—when a public inquiry was offered—there was no proof forthcoming in support of the allegations against Mr. Hebb. They must remember that he had done good service for the Board for many years, and the case was not one in which dismissal was called for.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that on behalf of the Government he was unable to assent to the Amendment. A Commission that was intended to possess power to give indemnity to witnesses presupposed that there had been something criminally wrong, and that it was impossible to discover it without giving indemnity to people who might be called upon to incriminate themselves. He believed that an inquiry into the work of the Vestries was entirely outside the necessities of the case. There were no charges whatever suggested against any one of these Bodies, and it struck him that the House of Commons should hesitate to say at half-past 2 in the morning that they would grant a Commission such as had been asked for. Not a single Vestry had been named, not a charge had been mentioned, which ought to have been inquired into. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had merely suggested that the Metropolitan Board of Works was connected with the Vestries, and that they were based upon one system. But it did seem to him that in the absence of any definite charges he ought not to be called upon to assent to the proposed addition to the Motion.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, it was a source of satisfaction to him that the Government had assented to the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington. During the last Session, he (Mr. Rowlands) suggested to the First Lord of the Treasury that it was desirable that a Commission of that kind should be appointed. He looked upon this as a very serious matter indeed. He did not think, with all due respect to hon. Gentlemen who sat upon the Metropolitan Board of Works, that all had been said with regard to that Board that could be said in connection with the Hebb and Robertson cases. He wanted to have a thorough investigation into the various transactions of the Board of Works, and he was not afraid if they went back for the purposes of the inquiry to the year 1855. He did not stand there as a defender of the Vestries; but he knew a great deal about them, and he was certain that their transactions alone would form ample work for a special and separate Commission. He hoped that the Commission would not be endangered by the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham; but he was prepared to go with him entirely in a proposal for a separate investigation into the conduct of the Vestries of London.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) said, he was in a position to state that some of the observations made by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington were of doubtful accuracy; for instance, the increased price obtained from a company by Mr. Villiers for the Pavilion site, he believed, included the building, which had cost £50,000 at least. He did not intend to oppose the Motion for a Commission; but he hoped the House would quite understand that the newspapers were inclined to exaggerate what had taken place. The Metropolitan Board of Works itself could not ask for a Commission; but they were only too glad that the Home Secretary was willing to grant one, and that some Member had taken upon himself the responsibility of asking for its appointment, because they would be relieved of the accusations which had been levelled against them for so long a time. With regard to the Hebb case, he wished to remark that when the committee first recommended the Board to dismiss Mr. Hebb they had not heard him in his own defence; they came to a too hasty conclusion; but after the Board had heard him, and bearing in mind the services he had rendered them in the past, they felt bound not to adopt the committee's recommendation. He was glad that the Commission was to be appointed; because he believed that the members were free from any blame in connection with the charges which had been brought against the Board, and he was also convinced that in the result it would be found that the allegations made against the officers of the Board were in the main unfounded.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 39; Noes 130: Majority 91.—(Div. List, No. 4.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be greatly pleased to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith, and to assure Her Majesty that this House will concur in empowering such Commission to take evidence on oath, to compel attendance of witnesses, to grant certificates of indemnity to witnesses in such cases as may be desirable and proper, and to call for all necessary records and documents:—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members:—Mr. Barclay, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Cubitt, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Halsey, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Mowbray, Colonel Nolan, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Stansfeld, and Mr. Whitbread were accordingly *nominated* Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

SELECTION.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Ten Members:—Dr. Cameron, Lord Edward Cavendish, Mr. Cubitt, Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Whitbread, and the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders were accordingly *nominated* Members of the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

BREACH OF PROMISE OF MARRIAGE BILL.

On Motion of Sir Roper Lethbridge, Bill to abolish Actions for Breach of Promise of Marriage, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Roper Lethbridge, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Caine, Dr. Commins, and Colonel Makins.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 128.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 17th February, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Mortmain and Charitable Uses * (16).
Second Reading—Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services * (3).

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS.

QUESTION.

EARL SPENCER asked the Lord Privy Seal, Whether he could answer the Questions which his noble and learned Friend (Lord Herschell) put to him last Monday as to certain Returns bearing upon the present state of Ireland?

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN), in reply, said, that all the Returns which had been asked for on Monday would be supplied with two exceptions. The noble and learned Lord opposite had asked for a Return showing the number of persons proceeded against under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, the number of those acquitted and convicted respectively, the nature of the charges, and the result of appeals. Directions had been given for the preparation of these Returns. The noble and learned Lord had also asked whether the names of the acting magistrates could be given in the Returns? With this request the Government could not comply. A Return was also asked for of the number of cases which had been brought to the notice of the Government, including the cases which had not been followed by prosecution. That was rather a vague request, and the Government could not consent to prepare such a Return. The noble Earl (Earl Spencer) had asked for information as to the number of derelict farms. Now, such information had never yet been collected with the object of publication in statistical form, and the Government were at present inclined to agree with their Predecessors that it would not be convenient to publish the figures as a Return; it would be most difficult to present such a Return in a complete and accurate shape. The Return which the noble Earl desired of the number of people under protection would be prepared and produced as soon as possible.

Lord HERSCHELL asked, whether there would be any objection to publish the names of the magistrates who had heard cases if they were not connected with any particular trial? Further, their Lordships were aware that the Land Act of the Government had rendered evictions unnecessary, and had substituted a notice which had the effect of turning a tenant into a caretaker. He did not know whether the Government possessed a record; but if they had, he hoped they would consent to a Return showing the number of cases in which this substituted proceeding had been taken advantage of.

Earl CADOGAN said, he would confer with the Chief Secretary for Ireland upon the point.

Earl SPENCER said, that the other day he spoke entirely from memory on the subject of derelict farms. He had not had an opportunity of inquiring at the Irish Office as to what the practice had been; but he certainly was under the impression that an attempt was formerly made to collect some information of that sort, though not in a form intended for publication. He thought, however, information might be prepared for publication in a shape similar to that taken in the Returns relating to Boycotting. These Returns showed the number of people wholly Boycotted and the number olny partially Boycotted. As to the Return of persons under police protection, he wished to know whether the noble Earl proposed to give a table comparing one period of six months with another period of six months?

Earl CADOGAN, in reply, said, that it was intended to renew the Return presented in July last, and put it side by side with the Return of the 31st January. As to derelict farms, he might add that it would be very difficult to obtain any Return which could be considered complete. At all events, the information could only be obtained through the police, who might not be the best judges as to whether a farm was derelict or not. The Return would therefore be incomplete, and, perhaps, hardly trustworthy.

THE TREATY OF WASHINGTON.

QUESTION.

The Earl of ROSEBERY asked the Prime Minister, When he would be in a position to lay on the Table the text of the Treaty which had just been concluded at Washington and the Protocols of the Conference?

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury): I hope the noble Earl will not consider me disrespectful if I answer laconically when I can get them.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: But they will be laid on the Table?

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Oh, yes.

THE LONDON THEATRES—CAPTAIN SHAW'S REPORT.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

The Earl of STRAFFORD, in rising to put a Question to the Government, remarked that he believed he was correct in saying that in 1882 Captain Shaw inspected and reported on all the London theatres. This work was thoroughly done; the results of the investigation in each case were noted, and changes and improvements in the structure and accommodation of the various buildings were suggested. If this document had seen the light it would have served as a valuable reference both to London and country theatrical managers and to the public. In London it was stated that there were 50 theatres with a holding capacity of 70,000 persons, while there were upwards of 475 music-halls, 31 concert-halls and so-called "palaces," with a holding capacity of 445,000 persons. It was said that upwards of £4,000,000 capital were invested in these places of amusement, and that they afforded direct employment to about 150,000 people. At no time probably were theatrical entertainments more popular than they were now; managers and performers were reaping rich harvests from the support of the public; and the public had a right to expect that, so far as human foresight and appliances could avail, they should be protected from the dangers of overcrowding and the still more hideous dangers of fire. Within the last few years there had been some terrible calamaties from the burning of theatres; the Ring Theatre at Vienna, the Opéra Comique at Paris, the principal theatre at Exeter, the Grand Theatre at Islington, and the theatre at Bolton had all suffered in this respect; and it was clear that better precautions ought to be adopted for the security of the audiences. It was true that from time to time officials from the Lord Chamberlain's Department and from the Metropolitan Board of Works visited the theatres and were presumed to make suggestions for the better comfort and security of the audiences; but these recommendations had not the same weight as those emanating from so distinguished and competent an authority as Captain Shaw. If it were true that the Government intended to deal with the subject of the safety of theatres, he thought that it was desirable before they did so that the public should know the opinions of Captain Shaw. Believing also that his Report would be of much use for the future guidance of theatrical managers, he ventured to hope that it might be presented to Parliament. He would conclude by asking Her Majesty's Government, in the terms of the Notice, Whether there would be any objection to produce the Report made by Captain Shaw, head of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, in the year 1882, upon the condition of the London Theatres, and their probable safety from fire, the said Report having been sent to the Home Secretary and printed by the Metropolitan Board of Works "for the consideration of Members of the Board only?"

LORD MAGHERAMORNE said, that as Chairman of the Metropolitan Board he desired to state that since this Report every theatre in London had been thoroughly andefficiently inspected, and successive Home Secretaries, including Sir William Harcourt, ViscountCross, and the present Home Secretary, considered that it would not in any way conduce to the public interest to make this Report public. In his opinion the publication of it would produce unnecessary alarm, because it had been considered and acted upon, and many of the defects which it pointed out had been remedied. Some theatres had been shut up because they were not in a proper condition as to safety, and every new theatre had been thoroughly inspected. Many music-halls had been dealt with, and others were still under the consideration of the Board. Many and many a weary day had been spent in going over theatres from top to bottom for the purpose of testing their safety. He did not say that everything had been done that ought to be done, because the powers of the Board were circumscribed. When he was in the House of Commons he introduced a Bill for the purpose of increasing the powers of the Board; but, unfortunately, it met with obstruction. Another Bill was now before the House in charge of his hon. Friend and Colleague the Member for Knutsford (Mr. Tatton Egerton), whose success, he hoped, would be greater than his own had been.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): In the absence of my noble Friend the Lord Chamberlain (the Earl of Lathom), I have been requested to say, in answer to the Question of the noble Earl, that the Secretary of State for the Home Department has consulted the Metropolitan Board of Works, and he has received from them an opinion very much of the character which my noble Friend behind me has just given. The Report of Captain Shaw is dated as far back as 1882, and since that time a great deal has been done, and many alterations have been made, while some theatres have been shut up by the action of the Metropolitan Board, and of the Lord Chamberlain's Office. We are of opinion that it would produce a false impression upon a subject on which a false impression would be eminently undesirable if the Report of Captain Shaw, so much out of date, were now laid upon the Table.

HOUSE OF LORDS—HOUR OF MEETING.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL BEAUCHAMP asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it would not tend to general convenience if the Public Business of the House before Easter was ordered to begin at 5.30 instead of 4.30? The noble Earl said, that until a few years ago Public Business began at a quarter past 5 o'clock, the House assembling at 5; but on the Motion of a noble Earl opposite the House began to meet at 4.15, Public Business commencing at 4.30. The idea was that then debates would be usefully lengthened by affording opportunities to speak to younger Peers who, under the former arrangement, were said to have been deterred by the fear of infringing upon the dinner hour. But he did not think the expectation as to the encouragement of younger Peers and the development of latent abilities had been realized, while in the earlier part of the Session the present arrangement led to the rising of the House at a time which left a considerable interval before dinner, and that interval could not be used for exercise in the open air, because it was too dark until Easter; and noble Lords who were engaged in Judicial Business or on Committees were deprived of the opportunity for such exercise between 4 and 5 by the present arrangement for Public Business. If the change that was made some years ago had produced the results that were anticipated, he would not think of raising the question; but in the absence of such results he thought the matter worthy of reconsideration.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, that this subject came before their Lordships' House some 10 years ago, and was referred to a Select Committee presided over by the Earl of Carnarvon, and was afterwards repeatedly and fully discussed, and the House decided without any Division to meet at an earlier hour. In spite of what had been said by the noble Earl (Earl Beauchamp), he believed the results of the change made had been perfectly satisfactory, and debates of importance would probably have been cut short if the House had met at a later hour. Of course, there were occasions when there was only a little Business before their Lordships' House, and when the House in consequence rose at an early hour; but he did not think that those occasions could be set against the numerous instances in which more time was required than could be given between half-past 5 o'clock and 8 o'clock. The present arrangement enabled noble Lords who were on Committees to come straight to the House. So far as Ministers were concerned, he could quite conceive that it would be convenient to them if their Lordships met at a later hour; but, upon the whole, there were very strong grounds for supporting the existing arrangements.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, that, so far as he could gather the opinion of the House, he was bound to say that it was decidedly Conservative in this as in other matters. He did not think that, from the point of view of the Government, it made much difference; and the only Member of the Government to whom a later hour would be attractive was the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who was now frequently obliged to leave an Ambassador in the middle of an interview. He was very much surprised to find that the noble Earl who held that position when the change was made was one of the strongest advocates for meeting at an earlier hour. Now that the change had been made, and their Lordships had fixed all their arrangements accordingly, it was very undesirable that they should make a further alteration. He quite agreed that no great change should be made in Constitutional principles until a necessity had been shown for it. He was sorry to see that there was a spirit of alteration in the air, and he noticed that the House of Commons was proposing to meet at 3 o'clock. He did not know how far the noble Earl would insist on following that proposal.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that he was pleased to be able to concur with the Conservative view of the case. He quite agreed with the noble Marquess that the Foreign Secretary was the Minister most affected by this change, and if he did not object nobody else was likely to do so. The noble Marquess said that owing to the early hour at which the House met he sometimes had to break off an important conversation with an Ambassador. He was not perfectly clear whether that was not on some occasions rather convenient. He was under the impression that the Rule had worked well, and that in consequence they had had a great many debates in the last two years which had gone on till 8 o'clock, and which would otherwise have been cut short, while if there was no Business more time was obtained for other Business, or for recreation, or for catching a train. He noticed that the disposition to go away at 8 o'clock was not confined to their Lordships, but that in the House of Commons it was actually proposed to suspend the Sitting at that hour. He agreed with the noble Marquess that it would be much better that they should remain as they were.

COLONIZATION—ANSWERS TO CIRCULAR.

LORD SANDHURST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether replies have been received to the Circular addressed to the Colonial Governments last year on the subject of colonization; and, whether the Circular and the replies will be laid on the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (The Earl of ONSLOW), in reply, said, that a Circular was issued by his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to all the Colonies with the request that they should send their replies before the opening of the Imperial Parliament. But the Government had received replies from only five Colonies—namely, the Cape, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia, and Fiji. He was sorry to say that the subject did not seem to have been taken up with any great warmth; indeed, the replies were all more or less unfavourable to the proposals set forth. He thought it was desirable that they should have the views of all the Colonies on this subject, and the Colonies would be requested to furnish a reply as speedily as possible. As soon as all the replies had been received they would be laid on the Table of the House.

FRANCE (PRICE OF BREAD).

QUESTION.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he would lay on the Table any recent Consular Reports showing the price of bread in France?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): They will be laid at once on the Table of the House; but it will take some considerable time before they are circulated.

TRURO CATHEDRAL FABRIC AND SERVICES BILL.—(No. 3.)

(*The Lord Steward.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD STEWARD (The Earl of MOUNT-EDGCUMBE), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to provide, annually, a fund for the repair and services of the Cathedral Church of Truro by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners out of the income of certain estates in their hands. The sum which the Bill asked for was £3,000, and it was to be applied for the maintenance of the fabric of the Cathedral, and the defraying the stipends and expenses of the minor canons, missioners, preachers, organists, choir, sexton, officers, and servants of or belonging to the cathedral, and all other expenses incident to the performance of Divine Service therein, and such sum should be vested in and administered by the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral. The money, he might say, was sorely needed, and might fairly be claimed. The Commissioners had more than once recommended such a proposition, and the application was justified by the past action of Parliament. Comparing the resources available for the Cathedral with those which the Legislature had sanctioned for the use of Exeter Cathedral, he would state that Exeter received from the Common Fund £15,000, which sum did not include all the revenues of the Cathedral, while Truro received only £1,800 from the same source. Of the sum received by Truro £800 went to the Bishop to make up the voluntary endowment, and the remaining £1,000 was distributed between the Archdeacon of Cornwall, the Precentor, and the Chancellor. There was absolutely not one penny available for the expenses of heating, lighting, maintaining the fabric and the services, preachers, missioners, repairs, or even for sweeping out the building. With the exception of the rectory there were no buildings for the clergy, and the Bishop of Truro himself had to pay a considerable sum annually for the house in which he resided. He felt justified in pressing the claim for the Cathedral of Truro on the principle that those had the best right to assistance who had shown their willingness to help themselves. Cornwall had raised for that Cathedral £113,000, besides £70,000 contributed for the endowment of the bishopric, making together £183,000 from voluntary sources. He thought that principle of granting funds in response to benefactions was one which was universally adopted in regard to church grants; and it was only fair to consider that the large sum of £183,000 derived from voluntary sources as giving the county of Cornwall some claim to such aid. As far back as 1855 the Cathedral Commissioners reported that a diocese of Cornwall was urgently needed. In 1883 they recommended that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners be empowered and instructed to provide such allowances out of the late capitular estates of Exeter, which were situated in Cornwall, as might secure the usual performance of Divine Service. In 1885 they said that the intention of the Legislature was obvious in the Act of 1866; they gave a list of claims of Cornwall founded upon it, and concluded by earnestly pressing the importance of cathedral organization and influence in these days. The action of Parliament in sanctioning the formation of the Diocese of Truro also gave them a strong claim. One-third of the population—and that the poorest portion — of the former Diocese of Exeter had, by the action of Parliament, been cut off from a share which it had enjoyed for centuries in the benefits of Diocesan organization without any provision for re-establishing that organization. They now asked for less than one-third of what was now enjoyed for those purposes in the other portions of the old Diocese of Exeter, and far less than would be required. He was aware of the depression of agriculture, the distress of the clergy, and the many claims on the funds of the Commissioners; and if he did not think that the Cathedral of Truro had already become, and would become still more, a centre of spiritual life, and that agencies were there at work by which the highest interests of the clergy, the laity, and the Church at large would be promoted, he would not have introduced that Bill. No one who had taken part in the work of the last seven years, while the Cathedral was building, or had been present at the services connected with its consecration, could fail to see that the influence of that work and those services was real and widespread; and it did seem hard that just at the time when the energies of the Bishop and of his very small staff were specially needed to take advantage of that influence, they should have to remain ecclesiastical beggars for the rest of their lives because they had not the means of carrying out the organization that was necessary for their work. It was not intended to call on the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to pay over the full amount of £3,000 a-year to the cathedral of Truro at once, but only from time to time, as circumstances might permit. The words originally contained in the 1st clause said that they should appropriate such sums "forthwith;" but that had been altered, and he was ready to modify the clause in any way which would make the intention clear. He was prepared also to postpone the further stages of the Bill, including the second reading itself, if necessary, so as not to commit the House to the principle, if the whole question should be referred to a Select Committee. If his noble Friend who was connected with the Commission would approve that course, he should be glad to allow the Order to remain as a dropped Order, without, if possible, withdrawing or negativing the Bill; and he would propose that a Committee should be appointed to consider the best means of making provision for the maintenance and the services of the Cathedral of Truro. If it was consistent, he would now move the second reading, as he would like to hear what his noble Friend might have to say on the subject.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Steward.*)

THE BISHOP OF TRURO said, that if he had consulted his own feelings he would rather have been silent. He was aware that in many minds the idea still lingered that there was very little vitality connected with a cathedral. He remembered a lecturer many years ago describing a man who, as he said, had nothing particular to do, and whom Nature had admirably fitted for that position; and then, looking up to the gallery, certain that he would bring down cheers, the lecturer added that the man was of that sort whom they generally found in a cathedral close. Now nobody, at any rate at his time of life, liked to stand up as the representative of what was regarded as the abode of indolence and incapacity; but he felt that it would not be respectful to their Lordships if he remained entirely silent as a Bishop of the National Church when a Bill was being discussed in that House in which, to a large extent—and he used the words with a deep sense of responsibility—to a very large extent the national as well as the ecclesiastical life of Cornwall in the future, and the very near future, depended. Therefore, in the briefest possible manner he would ask their Lordships to bear with him while he endorsed some of the points which had just been so clearly brought before them by the noble Earl. He endorsed what the noble Earl had said with reference to the 1st clause. The draftsman proposed to insert the word "forthwith," but he refused to allow it to be inserted. He was a Member of the Ecclesiastical Commission, and he knew the difficulties by which that body was at present surrounded on every side to provide for the many pressing claims made upon their funds. He took care, with the concurrence of the noble Earl, to fix the modest sum of £3,000, which was not at all adequate to the needs of the diocese. In addition to his being an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, he was also a clergyman, and he knew the distress of his brethren at the present time. Many a parsonage in England silently and without a word of complaint had endured hardships of which probably few in that House had any idea. A clergyman and his wife had sometimes to rear and educate a family on £100, £120, and £150 a-year, having even to deprive themselves of meat for some days in the week. He would never have allowed the Bill to be presented to their Lordships had he not been satisfied that, with the help of the noble Earl and that body of laymen who had rallied to the Church in the days of his Predecessor in Cornwall, there would soon be developed such an amount of activity and spiritual life as would in a very short time tend to the augmentation of the poor livings, and relief of the many forms of distress by which the Church was afflicted in his diocese. He had merely been the instrument of carrying out the plans of a far greater mind than his own. It was the Archbishop of Canterbury who planned and developed the work. Everywhere the enthusiasm felt for the Cathedral was simply wonderful, not by Church people alone, but by Nonconformists as well, who were as proud of the edifice as Church people. This enthusiasm was not of that kind which consisted in singing hymns and coming to the services. The Cornish people were a practical people. Ten years of toil had resulted in the collection of £113,000. The helpless and the poor had contributed what sums they could spare; and it was gratifying to know that the enthusiasm was real. It was a recognized principle, he believed, in every Department of the Public Service, certainly in the Ecclesiastical Department, to help those who help themselves. He asked, therefore, whether a county which had so helped itself had not some claim upon the funds of that great Church which he represented? They had no fear, if only a nucleus were given, of gathering all that was required.

EARL STANHOPE said, that while entirely sympathizing with the object contemplated by the Bill, he trusted that the noble Earl in charge of it might be induced to discharge the Order for the second reading, and that a Select Committee, strongly constituted, would be appointed to inquire into the whole question, and see what could be done. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners felt bound to oppose this measure on the sole ground of want of funds for carrying it into effect. In 1884 the Commissioners had been able to expend £25,000 per annum, or a capital sum of £750,000 each year in augmenting small livings and in meeting the spiritual needs of populous places; but, owing to the agricultural and commercial depression of recent years, the amount at their disposal for such purposes had been reduced by one-half, with a still further reduction of their income being in prospect. This last year the Commissioners were only able to vote £12,500 per annum in perpetuity; in the present year they had been obliged to reduce this amount to £6,000 in perpetuity; next year it would probably fall to £3.000. In these circumstances, if this measure were to pass, the amount they devoted to such grants would be swallowed up for a whole year, and they would be compelled to suspend all their ordinary grants from their Common Fund for a whole year. He fully admitted the claims of the diocese in question to consideration, inasmuch as it had subscribed the sum of £180,000 towards the cost of founding the new cathedral. But some of the old Chapters were seriously effected, and were unable to pay the statutable incomes to their Deans and Chapters, and they might fairly insist on their right to be considered before the newly-created dioceses. He was willing to move that the Order of the Day for the second reading of the Bill be read and discharged, with the view to the whole subject being referred to a Select Committee.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, he thought that the noble Earl who had just sat down, and who represented the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, had scarcely done justice to his own case. It was perfectly true that the Diocese of Truro had subscribed a large sum of money to build its cathedral; but others of the new dioceses had subscribed quite as much during the last 20 years, and one a great deal more, for the far more necessary purpose of saving old ones from ruin and adapting them for service. Not only that, but Truro had already got, through the management of Bishop Philpotts, an endowment of £1,000 a-year from a fifth Canonry of Exeter reserved for this purpose, which no other of the new cathedrals did. So its only exceptional position was that it alone had got a capitular endowment, and now wanted to make it four times as much. If the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were to subscribe the sum asked for to the support of the Truro Diocese, they would be bound to subscribe equal sums towards the maintenance of the other new cathedrals; to which they would truly reply that they could not, because Truro had got their last farthing. And yet it had very much the smallest population of all the new dioceses, and not half as many benefices as either Southwell or St. Albans; and the Commissioners certainly had estates in both those dioceses, as well as in Cornwall. The Bill proposed to devote £3,000 a-year to the maintenance of choral services in Truro Cathedral, and to founding what were called in the Bill missioners, functionaries unknown to the law of England, and mere intruders, whom the Bishop could not legally authorize to preach in any pulpit or even in any street without the leave of the incumbent. He knew that they had been foisted into the two Acts of last year, but without any attempt to endow them. That Act and this Bill together would enable the Bishop to complete the Chapter by calling two of the honorary Canons missioners and endowing them out of this fund. He was in favour of choral services, but not when the money had, as in this case, to be taken away from the parochial clergy. If people wanted choral services—fancy services—they ought to pay for them. It was originally provided by Act of Parliament that there should be no Dean and Chapter of Truro until there was an endowment fund of £1,000 a-year for the Dean and £300 a-year for each of the four Canons. Somehow or other they had shot past this, and, without any express repeal of that Act, there was now a Dean and Chapter, the Bishop being the Dean. He did not know what was the use of new Deans and Chapters. They got on very well without them at St. Albans. The frequent Cathedral Commissions and Cathedral Statute Bills proved that they were puzzled to know what to do with Deans and Chapters; their chief function was now said to be to quarrel with the Bishop. Every Act that had been passed, and all of them by the political Predecessors of the present Government, contained an express prohibition against diverting any of the common or parochial fund of the Commission to capitular purposes; and that prohibition had been repeated twice over in the variety of Acts which Truro alone had been continually getting by the pertinacity of its Bishops, and now with the significant assistance of the Cornish Member of Her Majesty's Government. That clause of the General Act of 1866 which was recited in the Bill, and relied on by its advocates, told exactly the other way; for everyone who was capable of reading Acts of Parliament must see that the words "the Cathedral or Collegiate Church" at the end of it, meant the old cathedral or church, such as Southwell, for instance, which had been robbed of every bit of its old capitular endowment, besides being torn away from its old Province of York; and now £3,000 a-year of that endowment was simply to be translated to Truro, besides the previous £1,000. And yet all the Bishops were either absent or sat still and left the defence of the parochial funds of the Ecclesiastical Commission to the noble Earl who spoke just now, and to the chance of any stranger such as himself. If the subject was referred to a Select Committee, the whole question of the new cathedrals ought to be referred, and not merely this attempt of one of them to steal a march upon the others.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, that it was somewhat singular that the noble and learned Lord who had so munificently restored the Cathedral of St. Albans should have provided the splendid casket with so much indifference as to the jewels which it might contain. The peculiarity of the case of Truro seemed to be that it differed from the other cathedrals spoken of by him, inasmuch as within the limits of the diocese there were large estates given for cathedral purposes which came within the spirit and meaning of the Act passed by the Archbishop of York, which provided that where any estates existed belonging to a dean and chapter the Ecclesiastical Commissioners might use the money produced by them for purposes enumerated. With regard to Truro that provision did not apply, the estates having belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Exeter, and it required legislation to bring Truro within the clause. Various matters to which allusion had been made were fit questions to be discussed in Committee. Since the institution of the new Bishopric of Newcastle not less than £243,000 had been collected for Church purposes in that diocese. That was quite a new fund, as it were, coming into the Church. They all sympathized very much with what had been said with regard to the distress of the clergy, and the necessity of extending assistance to them; but he believed that the clergy were much more likely to gain by the new agencies than by any small increases in their stipends that were continually added by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He thought his noble Friend (Lord Stanhope) would much rather have a contest with regard to one particular diocese, in the first instance, instead of having the circumstances of all the new dioceses brought under the consideration of the Select Committee. These were great questions, which had arisen in consequence of the changed state of things in the Church of England. Distress had fallen upon many cathedrals. It was notorious that not only the canons of some cathedrals, but the minor officers also, were, in consequence of the hard pressure of the times, deprived of the income which they expected, and he thought it might be only just that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should be called upon to review what they had done for certain cathedrals. In point of fact, those cathedrals which received money instead of land were in a perfectly good condition, while those which received lands instead of money found those lands so depreciated in value that they were deprived of the incomes which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners intended to assign. For his own part, he fully believed that the course which had been taken with regard to Truro and the other dioceses was beneficial to the Church at large, and that these funds which were devoted to cathedral purposes in the diocese of Truro ought to receive some consideration from that House. Under the circumstances, he would support the Motion of his noble Friend (the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe). Their Lordships could do no harm in allowing the Bill to go to a second reading, and, ultimately, to a Select Committee.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

MORTMAIN AND CHARITABLE USES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate the law relating to mortmain, and to the disposition of land for charitable uses—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1ª. (No. 16.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 17*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered — First Reading*—Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) * [129]; Colonial Marriages * [130].

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—WORKHOUSES.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.) (for Mr. Macartney) (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government have under consideration the amalgamation of workhouses in Ireland, either generally or in particular localities; and, whether it is proposed to deal with the matter in the course of the Session?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government have under consideration the amalgamation of Unions in Ireland. They are not, however, able at present to state when they will be in a position to deal with the matter.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—DRAINAGE WORKS.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.) (for Mr. Macartney) (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works are carrying out works for the drainage of the Rivers Barrow, Bann, and Shannon; whether various schemes for the drainage of these rivers were put before the Royal Commissioners by Irish engineers; whether the works now being carried out are a modification of these schemes; whether any engineer has been appointed to carry out these works; and, if so, whether by or without competition; whether he or his principal assistants have any connection with, or previous knowledge of, Ireland; and, if not, whether they have any special qualifications; and, whether the Government will provide that in any future public works, to be carried out through the Commission or otherwise, a fair proportion of the work be given to Irish Engineers?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Measures, based generally on the recommendation of the Royal Commissioners, are being taken by Government in regard to the Barrow, Bann, and Shannon. Various schemes for dealing with the Barrow were submitted to the Royal Commission by engineers and others; and a certain amount of evidence of a similar character was given in regard to the Bann. The recommendations, however, of the Commission were independent of such schemes, and rested on their own responsibility, after hearing evidence and considering the various schemes before them. Two members of the Commission were themselves engineers of large experience. A hydraulic engineer has been appointed to develop in detail the recommendations of the Royal Commission. This gentleman is by descent an Irishman. He was selected without competition, as having special experience of hydraulic work. All his engineering assistants are Irishmen. The Government are desirous to employ Irishmen on Irish business wherever practicable.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION—INSTITUTION OF SCHOOLS.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, having regard to the Resolutions passed by the London School Board, the Birmingham School Board, and other School Boards, Her Majesty's Government will consider the advisability, in the Technical Instruction Bill for England, of placing the power of setting up Technical Schools in the hands of School or other Educational Boards, instead of in the hands of Local Authorities for other purposes?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, the Question of the hon. Member raised a subject of importance, which, with others of like importance, had been under the consideration of the Government in framing the Bill which was to be submitted to the House.

BURMAH (UPPER)—FORCES EMPLOYED —NUMBER AND COSTS.

MR. SLAGG (Burnley) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will supply to the House details of the number of troops which have been employed in the operations connected with the pacification of Upper Burmah to the end of 1887; also the total cost of those operations, so far as it can be ascertained, up to that time?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The number of troops employed in Upper Burmah has been continually fluctuating. The greatest was in February, 1887:—British, 6,781; Native, 21,078; total, 27,859. At the end of 1887 it was:—British, 3,791; Native, 14,275; total, 18,066. The extra Army charges in Upper Burmah were:—1885-6, Rs. x 605,000; 1886-7, Rs. x 1,160,000; 1887-8 (estimated), Rs. x 1,350,000; total to March 31, 1888, Rs. x 3,115,000.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ARREST OF MR. GILHOOLY, M.P.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) (for Mr. J. O'CONNOR) (Tipperary, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen the following report in *The Cork Daily Herald* of the 13th instant, regarding the "committal" of Mr. James Gilhooly, M.P., by Mr. Gardiner, R.M.:—

> "The informations having been signed,
>
> "Mr. Gardiner said he would adjourn the hearing of the cases until the end of March:
>
> "Mr. Gilhooly asked if he would be admitted to bail; he was particularly anxious to take part in the Debate on the Amendment of the Address:
>
> "Mr. Gardiner—From the peculiar circumstances of this case we cannot allow you out on bail:
>
> "Mr. Gilhooly said he was perfectly satisfied:
>
> "Mr. Gardiner—I myself have twice attended at Petty Sessions to which you were summoned, and you failed to appear, creating great inconvenience to all concerned;"

and, whether it was with his knowledge and sanction that Mr. Gilhooly was kept in the close custody of nine armed policemen for the entire journey from Dublin to Cork for a space of six hours, and not permitted to leave the carriage for any necessary purpose whatever? The hon. Gentleman added that the Question had been somewhat abbreviated, and was not in the same form as when handed in. In the Question as it stood, Mr. Gilhooly was represented as saying that he was perfectly satisfied. It should be that, so far as he was personally concerned——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. FLYNN: That, so far as he was personally concerned, he was satisfied.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman will ask the Question on the Paper.

MR. FLYNN: Very well.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I have not seen the report referred to. The Resident Magistrate states that he refused to admit the hon. Member for West Cork to bail as he had treated the Court with contempt in failing to appear when summoned, and for no other reason. The Court of Queen's Bench, while granting bail in the case, held that the Resident Magistrate had exercised a proper discretion in refusing it when the case was before him. The escort consisted of a Head Constable and four men, two of whom only were fully armed. The hon. Member twice only asked permission to leave the train. On the first occasion it was at once granted; but on the second occasion he was prevented from going to the refreshment bar with his friends. The Head Constable, however, offered to send for any refreshment he might require.

IRELAND—PLANTING OF TREES— "STATUTORY TERMORS."

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstances that, under the present condition of the law in Ireland, "statutory termors," or tenants from year to year, are not empowered to register timber trees, which, if planted by them, become forthwith the property of the landlord inheritor, who likewise is himself unable to plant such trees upon lands in the occupation of the tenant, whereby virtually no timber trees can, under present conditions, be planted over the surface of some 500,000 holdings; whether he is aware that under section 20 of "The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883," the Board of Works is empowered to advance money for the planting of trees in Ireland; and, whether, in view of the foregoing, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to initiate legislation this Session upon the subject?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate the importance of facilitating and encouraging the plantation of timber trees throughout Ireland, and of extending the operation of the provision contained in the Tramways Act, 1883, as referred to in the Question. I have consulted with the Chief Secretary on the subject; and I am in a position to state that a Bill will be introduced dealing with this matter in the present Session.

LIQUOR ORDINANCES (CROWN COLONIES).

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he will accept, as an unopposed Return, the one of which Notice has been given relating to Liquor Ordinances in Crown Colonies, or among the Native Races inhabiting British Dependencies, or subject to the control or influence of the British Government?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): The Return referred to by the hon. Member may be taken as unopposed. I have caused a Circular to be sent to all the Crown Colonies to obtain the desired information; and I have also sent a Circular to the Colonies under responsible Government for any further information in addition to that given in the Parliamentary Papers, which have been already presented.

VACCINATION LAWS — FINES, &c.— BRADFORD WEST RIDING COURT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether during this month in the Bradford West Riding Court there have been some dozen persons, resident in Cleckheaton, Scholes, Wyke, and Hunsworth, fined for breach of the Vaccination Laws, and whether these defendants severally pleaded the conscientious objection that vaccination was injurious to the health of their infant children; whether Charles Hayward, of Ashworth, was, on the 31st January, 1888, fined for the 27th time for refusing to have his two children vaccinated; and, whether the total fines and costs imposed on Charles Hayward, who is in a humble condition of life, amount to £44 18*s.*?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed by the Clerk to the Justices that during the present month 21 persons resident within the North Bierley Union, which includes Cleckheaton, Hunsworth, and Wyke, were proceeded against for neglecting to cause their children to be vaccinated. None of the persons appeared either personally or by solicitor, and no one attended on their behalf. No statement was made before the Justices as to the conscientious objection of the parents to vaccination, except that the vaccination officer stated that an Anti-Vaccination Society had been formed, and that he believed that some of the parents that were summoned were members of the Society. The Local Government Board have received no complaint of the proceedings in any of these cases. As regards the case of Charles Hayward, I am informed that he has been fined for the non-vaccination of two of his children 25 times, and that the penalties imposed amount to £22 10*s.*, and the costs to £22 9*s.* As regards these repeated proceedings, the Guardians have informed the Board's Inspector that they consider that there is no hardship in the case, as Hayward's fines are paid by the Anti-Vaccination Society for Kent. Hayward, I believe, is employed at the works of the South Eastern Railway Company.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked, whether it was not the fact that Hayward had been fined twice, and even thrice, within the limits of the same borough; and whether such prosecutions were not inconsistent with a General Order of the Local Government Board?

MR. RITCHIE said, it was a matter entirely within the discretion of the Boards of Guardians to exercise their jurisdiction in such matters in the way they thought best.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL—THE RESTORATION.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is in a position to give any approximate date for the termination of the work in connection with the alterations and restoration of Westminster Hall?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I am informed by Mr. Pearson that he expects that the works in connection with Westminster Hall will be completed by the end of this year.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked, whether there was any hope, in view of the Grand Committees being revived, of their being accommodated in Westminster Hall?

MR. PLUNKET said, he was afraid there was no hope of those Committees being housed there this year. They would require to provide for the warmth of the Members.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SENTENCE ON THE MAYOR OF CORK.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has been informed of the fact that the Chief Magistrate of Cork, the Mayor of that City, was sentenced on Tuesday, 14th instant, by two Resident Magistrates, under the Crimes Act, to a fortnight's imprisonment, for an alleged assault upon a police constable; whether the assault was of a purely technical character, and occurred while the Mayor was engaged in trying to preserve the peace of the City, and no violence of any kind whatever was used by the Mayor; whether he has seen a report of the evidence of the High Sheriff of the City and of the borough engineer, who stated that the Mayor acted in the interests of peace and the preservation of order; whether he is aware that the said constable (Sergeant Knox) was for a time an inmate of a lunatic asylum; and, furthermore, that the Resident Magistrates refused to state a case for a superior Court, or to increase the sentence for purpose of an appeal, or to express an opinion that the Mayor should be treated as a first-class misdemeanant; and, whether, under these circumstances, and considering the position of the prisoner, he will cause immediate inquiry to be made into the action of the Resident Magistrates, and, pending such inquiry, order his release?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The case against the Mayor of Cork was not an assault of a purely technical character; but one of gross interference with a police sergeant in the discharge of his duty in the public street, and in presence of a large crowd. I have not seen a report of evidence that the Mayor acted in the matter as alleged. Upwards of six years ago the sergeant was admitted as a patient when suffering from a paroxysm of grief through domestic affliction; but the Resident Medical Superintendent subsequently certified that he had not been able to discover the slightest trace of insanity. The Court refused to state a case, as they considered the application frivolous and that no question of law was involved. The Court considered the ends of justice were satisfied by the sentence imposed, and therefore refused to increase it. They likewise declined to make any order as to whether the Mayor should be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. The Government see no reason to interfere.

MR. FLYNN asked why the Mayor was not tried under the ordinary Petty Sessions Act before the ordinary Courts, or why civil proceedings were not taken against him? Why was he tried before two Resident Magistrates under the Crimes Act?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The hon. Gentleman had better give notice of that Question.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) asked, if it was a fact that the constable had previously been committed to a lunatic asylum on the evidence of two medical men, who stated that he had endeavoured to take his life, and was prevented by his men, and that he was discovered at night in a field trying to feed the cow of the Clerk of the Peace with bulls-eyes?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LABOUR STATISTICS.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Return moved for and promised last Session, with respect to prosecutions under 1 *Anne*, Stat. 2, c. 22, ss. 1 and 2, and certain other Acts of Parliament relating to labour, will be issued to Members?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): This Return is nearly complete, and will, I hope, be very shortly in the hands of Members.

STATUTE LAW REVISION COMMITTEE.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he has received any intimation from the Statute Law Revision Committee to the effect that, by the omission of certain unnecessary and oft-repeated words in numerous ancient Statutes, the first volume of the new and revised edition of the Statutes may be considerably reduced in bulk, without in any way altering the effect and force of those Statutes; and, whether the Government will consent to introduce a short Bill, at an early date, to give effect to the suggestions of the Statute Law Committee in this respect?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I am glad to say that the suggestion referred to by the hon. Gentleman is being carried out, and I trust about 60 pages will be saved in the bulk of the first volume. I think the change may be effected without any Parliamentary authority; but, if necessary, a Bill will be introduced.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS — ITALY — SPEECH OF ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM HEWETT AT GENOA.

Mr. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the report published in *The Times* of yesterday (15th February), that Admiral Hewett, in a speech of welcome to an Italian dignitary, who came on board the English flagship at Genoa, had said that—

> "The bonds which unite us may hereafter receive a practical application by the union of the Italian and English Fleets;"

and, if these words were used, whether Admiral Hewett was authorized to intimate in this manner the prospect of an active alliance between this country and Italy?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): Perhaps as the Question relates to an officer connected with my Department I may be allowed to answer it. The paragraph in *The Times* of yesterday to which the hon. Gentleman alludes is as follows:—

> "An exchange of compliments between Admiral Sir William Hewett and a Genoa dignitary, Signor Pavesi, has been exaggerated by *The Caffaro* of Genoa into a political demonstration."

It not unfrequently happens, as all know from personal knowledge, that when the officers of one nation entertain those of another, the wish is expressed that the respective forces to which they belong may not be opposed to one another in actual warfare; and the words which the hon. Gentleman quotes, even if they were used by Admiral Hewett (which I doubt), seem to me to be only expressive of this kindly and most proper sentiment.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE CONVICT BOWLES.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What is the crime for which the convict Bowles, recently sentenced to death for an offence which, if committed, was murder, is now undergoing penal servitude for life?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The convict Bowles was found guilty of murder by the jury. The learned Judge who tried the case reported to me that, in the present state of our information, this verdict could not be said to have been wrong; but that the case was not one in which the irrevocable sentence of death should be carried into execution, and that it might wisely be commuted into penal servitude for life, for if further inquiries should make the prisoner's innocence manifest, he could be released, while if they led to a clearer conviction of his guilt, he would be under restraint and punishment. I entirely concurred in this opinion of the learned Judge; and I am still making inquiries into those parts of the case on which the evidence laid before the jury was incomplete.

MR. HANBURY gave Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply, he would call attention to the present system of reviewing the verdicts of juries and the sentences of Judges in capital cases, and move a Resolution that such cases should be formally dealt with by a regularly constituted Court of Appeal.

RAILWAYS (ACQUISITION BY THE STATE).

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government are prepared to take into consideration the desirability of appointing a Select Committee, or Royal Commission, to inquire into all matters relating to the Railway Companies in the United Kingdom, having a special regard to the interests of the entire community, and so as to determine the advisability of purchase of railways by the State, in accordance with the provisions of the General Railway Act of 1844?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member is probably aware that the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill has already been introduced in the other House; and the Government are not, therefore, prepared to take into consideration the advisability of appointing a Select Committee, or a Royal Commission, to inquire into all matters relating to railways, as such a course would have the effect of postponing legislation on a subject in which the agricultural, the mercantile, and all other classes of the community are deeply interested. The question as to the desirability of the purchase of railways by the State, in accordance with the provisions of the General Railway Act of 1844, is not one with which the Government is prepared to deal.

MR. WATT gave Notice that on an early day he would call attention to the present position of affairs with regard to the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom; and move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Government should appoint a Committee or Royal Commission to take into consideration the question of acquiring the Railways of the United Kingdom, in accordance with the provisions contained in the General Railway Act of 1844."

INSPECTION OF QUARRIES—LEGISLATION.

In reply to Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire),

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he had received no information as to a serious accident reported in the evening papers at a slate quarry in North Wales. He must adhere to his answer, already given, that the Government could not see their way to legislate this Session for the better regulation or inspection of quarries.

MR. T. E. ELLIS said, owners and quarrymen were agreed, and the subject would not be a contentious one.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SEVENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th February].—[See page 64.]

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out paragraphs ten and eleven, in order to insert the words — "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session, which was of an ameliorative character, has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much to alienate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, AND LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE.—RESOLUTION.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Sir, the right hon. Gentleman who concluded the debate last night (Mr. John Morley) on behalf of the Opposition, taunted me with not having risen immediately after the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien); but I confess, though I listened attentively to what the right hon. Gentleman said, I failed to gather the exact ground on which he founded that objection. The right hon. Gentleman must have been perfectly well aware, if he had consulted the ordinary sources of information, that it had been decided that it would be for the convenience of the House that I should speak upon the last day of the debate; that being the person chiefly implicated in the government of Ireland, it was therefore desirable that I should speak at a time when I could take something like a general survey of the course of the debate; and, further, he must have known that had I risen after the hon. Member at half-past 7, I should have been obliged to confine my remarks to a reply to the speech of the hon. Gentleman, whereas that speech, eloquent and forcible as it was, is, in my opinion, only one of three or four delivered in this debate which requires from me some notice and reply. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think there was still another reason why I should have jumped upon my legs at once, and that was because a violent personal attack had been made upon myself, which I was bound to answer on the spot. I do not think the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork was violent. Everything in these matters turns upon the standard you go by. I admit that, judged by ordinary Parliamentary standards, there was considerable vehemence in the attack of the hon. Member, but as compared with the weekly attacks which I receive from *United Ireland*, his criticisms were pale and colourless. The necessity of conforming himself to Parliamentary usages took out of his speech all those flowers of rhetoric with which we are familiar in his newspaper, and the result was that his attack upon me and the Government bore to the attacks to which we are accustomed somewhat the same relation—to quote the poet—

> "As moonlight unto sunlight,
> Or as water unto wine."

I will give the House an example. Perhaps the severest observation made upon me in the speech of the hon. Gentleman yesterday was when he said that I was guilty of a spite against my political opponents, which he would describe as feminine if he had not thought it a poor compliment to the amiable sex referred to. But that, after all, is but a feeble replica of other observations of a similar kind which I saw in the hon. Gentleman's newspaper. Such criticisms have lost their effect. My jaded palate is no longer tickled by anything so lacking in flavour. For what is the diet to which I have been accustomed? I have been told that I "lust for slaughter with a eunuchized imagination." I have been further told that I have a "strange pleasure in mere purposeless human suffering," and that to my "languid life it imparts a delicious excitement." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne appeared to me to attach very great importance to the assault made upon the Government by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork. In my opinion the value and importance of an attack depends not upon its violence, but upon the quarter from which it comes. Are we to consider that the attacks from the hon. Member for North-East Cork are of a kind which require the instant and respectful attention suggested by the right hon. Gentleman? The hon. Gentleman has often attacked me in his speeches, and he did so yesterday, as one who administered a brutal Act in a brutal manner. I do not quote his words; but that was their meaning. Well, I am consoled by finding that his newspaper said a few years ago of other statesmen—

> "Mr. Trevelyan and Earl Spencer are the active administrators of a bloody and remorseless Crimes Act."

The hon. Gentleman has, in various ways and on various occasions, expressed views by no means favourable to my personal appearance; but I am consoled by finding that on the 19th of April, 1884, he said, speaking of the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan), that—

> "If nature has denied to our Chief Secretary the resources of the skunk and the cuttle fish, art has enabled him to supply the failure."

Again, I am consoled when I find that while his whole speech turned upon this argument, that I was using the Crimes Act to attack my political foes, the same hon. Gentleman said on the 19th of July, 1884, that—

> "For the sake of vengeance on a political foe a superfine Liberal Executive, filled with a

> fine frenzy against the crimes of desperate and starving peasants, threw the broad shield of England at the last moment over the foulest brood of monsters that even English rule in Ireland had ever produced."

Whatever unsavoury parallel the hon. Member may find, I shall never feel that more than justice has been done me when I see that he compared the right hon. Baronet to a hangman, and drew a comparison between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian and Judas Iscariot, and that for weeks together his newspaper insinuated, and more than insinuated, that the right hon. Baronet opposite and Lord Spencer were engaged in a conspiracy to shield men guilty of horrible and unnameable offences.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.): That, Sir, I most undoubtedly never did. I stated—and I stick to the statement to this hour—that, in my belief, the consequences of their action, as, I believe, misguided action, were to have shielded those persons; but I never insinuated that they did so with wilful intention. [" Oh, oh!" *and Home Rule Cheers.*]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has wholly misled the House as to the effect of the articles I have referred to, and if any hon. Gentleman doubts that let him refer to one of the issues of *United Ireland* in July, 1885. [*Loud cries of* " Quote!" *from the Home Rule Members.*] Now, Mr. Speaker, I say that, at all events in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, blame from such a source as attacks of hon. Gentlemen opposite, should be the highest praise which an Irish Secretary can receive. Well, Sir, I shall have to return to the other parts of the hon. Gentleman's speech at the later stage of my remarks. I will now, however, proceed to say a few words upon the opening speech made upon this Amendment by the hon. Member who leads the Irish Party (Mr. Parnell). I do not propose to dwell upon the very singular observations made by the hon. Member with regard to the course which his Friends intend to take in future in the matter of Obstruction. He said that they were going to change their tactics, and the reason which he gave — if I understood him right — was that a democratic Reform Bill had been passed in 1885. Why a democratic Reform Bill of 1885 should only begin to operate upon the Irish Members in 1888 does not clearly appear to my mind; but I am most unwilling to look a gift horse in the mouth, and if the hon. Member will be as good as his word—and, no doubt, he will be so—and will induce his Friends to follow his advice, I, at all events, will be the last person to insinuate that the action of the hon. Member is due to his sense of what is judicious as a matter of Party tactics rather than to any argument founded upon the so-called democratic Bill passed three years ago. But there is another matter to which the hon. Member referred to which it is absolutely necessary for some Member of the Government to allude. It is rather an old story now; it is that famous interview between Lord Carnarvon and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) himself. There was, about two centuries ago, a very famous plot known as the Popish Plot. One peculiarity of that plot was that, whenever it suited political exigencies, there was always some new revelation at the service of those who were working it for their own political objects. There is a great resemblance, I think, between that episode and the history of this interview. New facts are always appearing, and it is most unfortunate that the time which the hon. Member chose to take us into his confidence should be the very time when the chief victim of his revelation was at the other side of the world. Nevertheless, Sir, we have sufficient material before us, even in the absence of Lord Carnarvon, to show the absolute futility of the contention advanced by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. I would refer the House to the speech made in 1886 by Lord Salisbury. Lord Salisbury said—

> "Lord Carnarvon treated me absolutely without reserve, and I know—he informed me—what passed at that interview with Mr. Parnell, and his statement which was made two or three days afterwards absolutely agreed with what he stated the other day in the House of Lords. He wished for information on a great variety of topics and statements of opinion. He received them. He asked questions about them; but the statement that he gave any ground for believing that the Conservative Government would favour an Irish Legislature is absolutely without foundation."

Then I refer to the speech of Lord Carnarvon himself in the House of Lords. He said—

> "Mr. Parnell is reported to have stated that a Minister of the Crown of the late Conservative Government had conveyed to him the intention of that Government to offer a Statutory Parliament with power to protect Irish industries. . . . I therefore beg to deny, as plainly and as broadly as I can, the statement to which I have just referred as having been made by Mr. Parnell. . . ."

Lord Carnarvon went on to say—

> "First of all, that, as I say, I was acting of myself, by myself; that all the responsibility was mine, and that all communications were from me alone—that is, from my lips alone. Secondly, that that conversation was with reference to information only, and that it must be understood that there was no agreement or understanding, however shadowy, between us. And, thirdly, that I was there as the Queen's servant, and I would neither hear nor say one word that was inconsistent with the Union of the two countries."—(3 *Hansard*, [306] 1256-8.)

I hope, Sir, that that will satisfy the House as to the true character of this so-called agreement between the hon. Member and Lord Carnarvon. There is a new point which the hon. Member has raised, I believe for the first time, at least I have never heard and I do not believe that anybody in this House has heard that Lord Carnarvon is said to have promised (Mr. Parnell) to release the Crossmaglen prisoners. We are told—

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I said that he informed an hon. Friend of mine as to his intention of releasing them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was not Lord Carnarvon's habit—and I know this upon absolute authority—to settle business outside the proper official routine. The question of the Crossmaglen prisoners came before him, I believe, more than once. I have had the official file consulted, and on that file there is not the smallest trace or beginning of a trace that it was ever Lord Carnarvon's intention to release those prisoners. I am the more confirmed in that view when I consider that if it was possible for any Lord Lieutenant to carry out the wishes of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, those wishes would surely have been carried out by Lord Aberdeen, who succeeded Lord Carnarvon, but who took no steps in the matter and did not release them. Then the hon. Member went on to criticize the account I gave of a most painful and abominable case of Boycotting dealt with in the course of this month before two Resident Magistrates—the case of Mrs. Connell—and he led the House to understand that all the information I had given was absolutely inaccurate. Now, on that occasion I did what I seldom do, for I quoted from newspapers and not from official sources. I thought I was justified in so doing because the report of the case showed that the Magistrates considered it a serious case of Boycotting. I have since inquired, and I find that the facts that I gave to the House were absolutely accurate. There was a poor, decrepit old person of 80.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): Nothing of the kind.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have only to say, in answer to the hon. Gentleman, that my statement is supported by information from official sources. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that this woman had lived on the charity of the shopkeepers whom she prosecuted; that I believe also to be wholly untrue. He went on to say also that she had never offered money for the provisions she wanted, and that were refused her. She did offer money. He went on to say that she never bought bread previously at the shopkeepers——

MR. J. E. REDMOND: May I ask the right hon Gentleman where he is quoting from? [*Cries of* "Order," the Chief Secretary declining to give way.] I was present —— [*Renewed cries of* "Order!" *amid which the hon. Member resumed his seat.*]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hon. Members will not think me discourteous in not giving way, for they will themselves feel that it will be more convenient that I should give way only in favour of a Member who thinks I am misrepresenting him; to do otherwise would not conduce to the regular order of debate. The hon. Member for North-East Cork then went on to say that the woman had not bought bread previously at any of those places where she was refused; that statement is absolutely inaccurate. He also stated that she was a disreputable old woman, and was drunk in Court. She was neither disreputable nor was she drunk. She came there perfectly sober—[*Home Rule cries of* "Oh!"]—so that the hon. Gentleman, not content with encouraging a system of Boycotting and intimidation, actually makes use of a fictitious story to destroy the character of its victim. I will now turn to the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division——

MR. J. E. REDMOND: Mr. Speaker —[*Ministerial cries of* "Order!"]—the right hon. Gentleman has referred to a statement of mine. I wish to ask you whether I am entitled to interpose for a moment for this reason, that the statement made by my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork was made upon my authority, and——

MR. PARNELL: And I mentioned the name of my hon. Friend.

MR. J. E. REDMOND: With reference to the contradiction of the right hon. Gentleman, I was present at the trial, and the woman was undoubtedly——

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member rises to a point of Order, doubtless the right hon. Gentleman will give way.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR having given way,

MR. J. E. REDMOND continued: I speak as a person who was present and took part in the proceedings. The woman did not offer money at any of the shops in question, and the statement made by the Chief Secretary is not taken from any evidence given at the trial. The woman undoubtedly was the worse for liquor when she came to give her evidence, because she had to be called down from the table by the Crown Prosecutor who called her. [*Parnellite cheers.*]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It appears to me that the hon. Gentleman has taken advantage of my giving way to make a short speech upon this subject. Every word I have said to the House I have upon official authority. If there is any doubt as to the facts, the question can be raised at the new trial, for the decision of the magistrates has been appealed against. And now, Sir, after that rather unfortunate interruption, I turn to the speech of the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow. I recollect that when we were debating the earlier stages of the Queen's Speech the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle expressed great impatience at my having gone back to the administration of the Crimes Act of 1882, which he said was an old story. I perfectly understand his dislike to any reference to the Act of 1882 on behalf of his Friends, if not of himself; but his Friends do not seem to share that view, for his right hon. Colleague the Member for the Bridgeton Division filled his whole speech with references to the Act of 1882. His mind always reverts to the halcyon days when he and Lord Spencer were in Ireland. He cannot keep either his mind or his tongue from it, and I do not blame him in this case, because he said, what I think is very true, that the administration of the Act of 1882 is a very good standard by which to compare the administration of the Act of 1887. The Act of 1882 may have been a mistake; granted. The Act of 1887 may also have been a mistake; granted. But even if we assume this, you will hardly deny that the Act of 1882 was administered by high-minded statesmen, who had no other object in view than the advantage of Ireland, who were not animated by any desire to persecute their opponents, who had no desire to inflict any suffering which was not necessary; but who, in trying to put down crime, were doing what they believed to be the best thing for the country. But if you admit that, cannot I claim that this Government, in administering an Act, which differs from the Act of 1882 only in being milder—are animated by motives not less noble, and not less widely removed from the motives invariably attributed to us by members below and above the gangway? Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the famous controversy as to the alleged creation of new crimes by the Act. Lord Granville, on the first day of the Session, disinterred that ancient argument and subjected it to a *post-mortem* examination, and the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to follow his example. I will not now argue whether our Act created a new offence or not; it is sufficient for me, being no lawyer, that I have the authority of Lord Selborne for saying that it does not create new offences. But whether our Act creates new offences or not, one thing is quite certain—that the Act of 1882 did create new offences. And what I want to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to is this: that whereas a very small proportion of our prosecutions were for offences which were created, as is alleged, by our Act, an enormous number of prosecutions conducted by the right hon. Gentleman himself were conducted for offences which undoubtedly were created by the Act under which he worked. I notice that there were 1,114 persons proceeded against by Lord Spencer in the half-year from 13th July to December of the year in which the Crimes Act of 1882 was passed. There were two offences at least created by that Act—one was for being found at night under suspicious circumstances, and the other was for a stranger found anywhere under suspicious circumstances. I do not desire too narrowly to criticize the actions of a Government engaged in a very severe struggle with crime and disorder; but I confess I do think that to prosecute men—after all, subjects of Her Majesty—for nothing else than being found at night under suspicious circumstances is really a strong order; and for the Liberal party, clamorous as they are in their profession of love for the liberty of the subject, I think it is a very strong order indeed. Now, what was the proportion of those new offences proceeded against by Lord Spencer in the time I have mentioned? Out of a total of 1,114 cases proceeded against, no less than 505 were under the two sections which created these new offences.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): What were the results of the prosecutions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it will be well if, when the hon. Gentleman interrupts me, he will interrupt me with something relevant to the argument. I was comparing the action of the two Governments, not the action of two sets of tribunals. And these are the people, forsooth! who come down to the House and lecture us because, in an incomparably smaller number of cases, we have proceeded against persons whose offence they allege was created by the Act of last year. The right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division was very much exercised at the manner in which we had suppressed public meetings. It is an ancient subject of attack, and every term of abuse has been heaped upon me for interfering with the inalienable rights of Englishmen or Irishmen to hold public meetings. This question was brought before the House by the hon. Member for the City of Cork in the debate on February 8, 1884, and he protested against the action of the then Government, and the defence of the action of the Government fell to the right hon. Gentleman (then Mr. Trevelyan), and this is what he said—

> "Nor did the system extinguish 'the right of exercise of free speech,' because five meetings of the League, at the very least, had been held for every one which was prohibited."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 380.)

I observe that for every one prohibited by this Government, no less than 17 or 18 were held; so that we, at least, have been three times as careful to preserve the inalienable right of free speech to Irishmen as were the freedom-loving Government which preceded us. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to give us a lecture upon the danger that attended the prosecution of Members of Parliament and others for their speeches, lest the Government should be betrayed into prosecuting as criminal that which was disagreeable to them politically. Yes, Sir, but that was not always his view. I have another quotation here—

> "The conclusion to which the Government have arrived is that, if such speeches continue to be made, there is no hope for peace and order in Ireland, and that it is impossible to keep crime in check by any system of punishment as long as these speeches, which experience tells us lead to crime, are freely and generally uttered. The Government are advised that Mr. Redmond's language came under the 7th section of the Act, and a prosecution will forthwith be instituted."

If the right hon. Gentleman thinks now, as then, that these speeches lead to crime, but that his virtue and that of Lord Spencer was sufficient to prevent them attacking men merely because they were political opponents, why does he refuse to credit us with an equal amount of virtue? Why does he say that he, in attacking precisely the same evil in precisely the same manner, might be tempted to pursue them as criminals because they are political opponents? And that leads me direct to the very singular defence of himself given by the hon. Member for North-East Cork yesterday. He admitted that he broke the law; I may say he even gloried in the fact. He said—

> "I was face to face with a great crisis. I saved certain tenants from eviction, and the way I saved them was by telling them to resist so that it frightened the Government, and they did not dare to go on with the eviction proceedings before the new Act came into operation."

Now, I absolutely deny—I categorically

deny—that the action of the Government was influenced in the slightest degree by the fear which he attributes to them. There is not the slightest shadow of a ground for it, and I should be glad to know why, at that moment, the Government were supposed to be terrified. He tells us there was that by-election at Northwich. Why, we are constantly having by-elections. Yet am I not always being told that I am remorselessly bent on destroying Irish tenants, and turning out Irish families to perish on the roadside? If that be so, why should we be terrified on this particular occasion and on no other? But that is not all. The hon. Gentleman gave us to understand that his preaching resistance on this occasion was an isolated act, justified by the fact that the Land Act had passed but had not come into operation. But his preaching of resistance to eviction is not an isolated act. It is a policy the Irish Members have pursued for years, which they have never disavowed in Ireland or in this House. I was the witness of a remarkable scene in the House yesterday. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) accused hon. Members from Ireland of promoting violence at evictions. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was so concerned at what he regarded as a misrepresentation of hon. Members' views that he made an interruption, in the hope, apparently, that hon. Members below the Gangway would get up and disavow the doctrine. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness waited; the right hon. Gentleman waited; the House waited; but the hon. Member for North-East Cork never got up; he never disavowed that policy; nor do I believe that any Member on those Benches will declare that he will on every occasion, except under the peculiar and isolated conjunction described by the hon. Member himself, do all he can to stop any kind of resistance to legal process on the ground of eviction. If that is true, may I ask what becomes of the excuses made for the hon. Gentleman by himself? Take the Act for which we prosecuted him. It was no isolated act; it is in pursuance of a settled policy.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I did, and do most distinctly say that my advice was given under the special circumstances of that particular case.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; but that is not the point.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I have not further than this specified instance counselled active resistance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, the hon. Member has given the House an assurance in carefully framed words; but though I accept his declaration, I cannot accept it on behalf of his friends. He stated that he was the worst of the Parliamentary offenders under this Act. Now the hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne), speaking at Wexford on the 15th of October, referring to a tenant of Lord Waterford, named Shanahan, points out that "some of these trees growing round about me with a few iron gates judiciously placed"——

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rise to a point of Order. I beg to ask whether it is competent to quote language with respect to my hon. Friend Mr. Pyne, who has been sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and whose case is now pending on appeal. Is the right hon. Gentleman to be allowed to make his envenomed comments upon the case?

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a case in any sense for the Chair to intervene. It is entirely within the discretion of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think there is something in the observation, and I have not the slightest wish to press it. But I think that what I have said will not prejudice the case. I believe it never was denied that Mr. Pyne made the speech for which he was prosecuted; that the tenant Shanahan, who obeyed the speech by resisting, is now in prison, and that he is now suffering in consequence.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not believe it. Has he been convicted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; he has. I understand that Mr. Shanahan is in prison for obeying the speech to which I refer. I think that disposes completely of the assertion of the hon. Gentleman that he is the worst offender under the Act, and that nobody has counselled illegal resistance to the powers of the law, except to bridge over the hiatus between the passing of the Land Bill and its being carried into effect. The right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan) said it was a sickening thing that Members of Parliament should be put in prison. It is a still more sickening thing that Members of Parliament should do that which deserves prison. It is a still more sickening thing that those who, of all others, should promote to the best of their powers the observance of the law, should be the leaders of those who returned them to Parliament in breaking the laws passed by Parliament; and, in my opinion, if it is a sickening thing that Members of Parliament should be guilty of an offence for which they were put in prison, it would be most sickening if, while their victims are treated according to the ordinary prison rules, they themselves should be marked off, forsooth, by superior privileges from the common throng of those whom they seduced from the path of legality. That brings me to that part of the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien), in which he dealt with his own treatment and a certain letter which I wrote while he was undergoing imprisonment. His whole speech was marked with considerable vehemence; but the point at which he was most vehement was when denouncing me for the monstrous and unqualified act of writing that letter. Now, what was going on at the time I wrote that letter? The hon. Gentleman was acting in prison in a manner which I thought then, and still think, was extremely undignified. I have always been of opinion—and I am still of the opinion—that the theatrical display about the prison clothes was extremely foolish. ["No, no!"] It is my personal view; I grant it is a matter of taste, on which we may differ. What was happening was this—certain friends of the hon. Gentleman were spreading every kind of falsehood as to his treatment. They were spreading statements as to which there was not one single word of truth; and they were doing it in order to stir the passions of the British democracy. I wrote the letter, in which I stated the pure facts of the case. ["Oh!"] The hon. Gentleman says that I accused him of sheltering himself under the plea of ill-health.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: Insinuated, not accused.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Insinuated, not accused. If he means by that that I insinuated or stated that he was not in a weak state of health when he was so, he has only to get the letter, and he will find that I there asserted, on the authority of the doctor, that he was suffering from a weak heart, weak lungs, and an extremely excitable disposition.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: The point of my complaint is that the right hon. Gentleman, in his letter, most distinctly intimated, without actually stating, that I had sheltered myself under the plea of ill-health, and pleaded ill-health as an excuse for not being forced to wear the prison clothes.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What I stated was—[An hon. Member: Read the letter.] The hon. Member did not read the letter yesterday. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I do not understand why I am to be dictated to. I allowed the hon. Member to make his speech without interruptions.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: I corrected you.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not complain of the interruptions of the hon. Member. I refer to the interruptions of others. What I stated was, that it was because the hon. Gentleman had this weak heart he was excused. If he had not had this weak heart he would have been compelled to wear the prison clothes like others. I am perfectly unable to understand why he has attached so much interest to the question of wearing the prison clothes, considering all the others not in delicate health have been obliged to indue these garments. On analysis, what is all this foolish talk about torture? The hon. Gentleman describes himself and his friends as having been tortured in prison because they were subjected to precisely the same prison rules as any other person suffering their sentences. Is that torture, or is it not? If it is torture, alter the prison rules. If it is not torture, do not grumble. I am utterly unable to understand the distinction which it is attempted to draw. Hon. Gentlemen talk as if everybody who was sent to prison had been guilty of a disgraceful offence. I am not going to argue what constitutes disgrace. Is the pointsman who falls asleep and, by momentary carelessness, uses the wrong signals, and by his mistake produces an accident, guilty of a more or less disgraceful offence than the man who incites the unfortunate tenantry of Ireland to pour boiling water upon the police? Is there any intelligent Gentleman listening to me who is prepared to say that he would compel the pointsman to put on prison clothes, to submit to the ordinary prison diet, to do without books, ink, and paper, and who would not treat in the same way a man who is guilty, in my opinion, of a ten thousand times darker offence? So much has been said about this prison discipline that I think I must weary the House by reading part of a Report of an English Prison Inspector whom I requested to go over to Ireland for the purpose of seeing that no hardship should be inflicted upon any prisoner under my care.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Some question has arisen as to the terms of the right hon. Gentleman's letter. If he will allow me I will quote two sentences from it. One of them is this—

> "The fact is that he is dealt with exactly as any other criminal would be dealt with who, like him, could succeed in sheltering himself under a medical opinion."

The other sentence is this—

> "The only principle involved would seem to be one upon which there need not be any difference of opinion between us. It is this—When a convicted prisoner who is able to plead a weak heart and delicate lungs refuses to attire himself in the prescribed dress, force will not be applied to him."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has quoted perfectly accurately, and it fully bears out the statement I have just made. When the hon. Member interrupted me—I do not object to his interruption at all—I was about to read to the House part of a Report made by Captain Stopford, one of the Commissioners of English Prisons. This is an official document, and if any hon. Gentleman wishes to see it he has only to ask me. In that Report, he, Captain Stopford, said—

> "That the Irish rules for local prisons were in effect almost the same as those in England; but where any difference does occur, such diversity is properly due to local causes and peculiarities which do not exist elsewhere. The clothing and bedding closely corresponded in quality and quantity to the English ones in use; while in regard to diet there was in Irish prisons a large addition of new milk, which formed an important part of all the classes and was not to be found in the English dietary. In the Tullamore prison the governor was labouring under considerable difficulty owing to the daily publication in newspapers by persons having access to the prisoners of sensational paragraphs relating to the endeavours of the officials to carry out the rules."

[*Cheers.*] I do not know why hon. Gentlemen should congratulate themselves or the House that anything has been done to increase the difficulties of an Irish official. Well, Sir, to return to the treatment of the hon. Member, I have been freely abused for entertaining a desire to put an end to his existence. But I can assure the House that no one watched the health of the hon. Gentleman with greater interest or anxiety than I did. During the whole course of his imprisonment it was a subject of daily solicitude. I have the satisfaction of knowing that when he was restored to his admirers he was 2lb. heavier than he was at the time he went in.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: It is not a matter of much importance, but as a matter of fact I was weighed upon the morning I went in, and on the morning I went out I was 5lb. lighter than when I went in.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be very glad to lay on the Table of the House a curve, a graphical representation of the rise and fall of the hon. Member's weight. If the House will allow me, I will now turn to the most important part of this discussion, which turns upon the results in Ireland of the working of the Crimes Act and the condition of Ireland at the present moment as compared with what it was before. In particular, I observe with regard to statistics that hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to go through three stages. The first stage is before they have seen the statistics. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) told us that it was on statistics that successive Irish Governments had based their views of the progress and condition of Irish crime. At this stage they believe and hope. The second stage comes when the figures are produced. They still believe, but tremble and entertain some doubt. Then comes the third stage —the stage in which they are at present —when, on the whole, they find it most convenient to disbelieve the figures altogether. Then they set their wits to work to discover some other method by which the result has been brought about than the Coercion Act. The Coercion Act can cause no good. If good there has been, it must be due to something else. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid

Lothian has expressed his great belief in statistics. I recommend him this particular statistical exercise. Let him take the statistics of crime and draw a curve rising when crime rises and falling when crime falls, and let him put above that the dates of the various Coercion Acts. Let him make another curve showing the number of evictions, rising and falling as the number of evictions rises or falls. He will find that the cause of the diminution of crime in Ireland has not been the diminution of evictions, but always the introduction of a Coercion Bill. So it has been since 1872; so I doubt not it was before 1872; so in those happy days when Coercion Bills were not passed by the British Government but by the Home Rule Parliament sitting at Dublin. The rival theory is that the diminution in crime in Ireland—where they are reluctantly forced to admit that it has occurred—is due not to the Crimes Act, but to the Land Act. I should like to know at what exact period of time these Gentlemen discovered that the Tory Government had produced a great remedial measure. I perfectly recollect the manner in which the Bill was received in the House. I remember that the stock theme of the right. hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was that this Government only existed in order to collect impossible rents for the landlords. Unless my memory deceives me, by far the most interesting contribution to the Autumn campaign was the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that the omission from the Land Act of one particular provision with which he was in love constituted a desperate provocation to the people of Ireland.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): No, no!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I took down the words.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I said it was part of a series of proceedings which amounted to provocation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I read the speech to-day myself, and I think if the right hon. Gentleman will refer back to it, he will find—no doubt it is wrong—that the interpretation I put upon it was not only the natural one, but the one which everybody up to this moment has put upon it. Now, we discover that this Bill, which by its omissions was one of a series of desperate provocations, is a great remedial measure which has reduced by a large and material amount agrarian crime in Ireland and is having almost miraculous effects upon Boycotting and intimidation. I think if hon. Gentlemen see all these virtues in the Bill they ought not to have been so reticent in the country when they were denouncing the wicked people who were administering the government of Ireland; they might have put in—as a kind of make-weight—some few complimentary epithets about the great remedial measure of which we were accidentally the authors. Then they adduced another reason for the diminution of crime. There is the union-of-hearts theory. But, Sir, would not the union of interests describe the union in question far better than the union of hearts? Hon. Gentlemen, I think, greatly underrate the intelligence of the Irish peasantry. They assume that the Irish peasantry have forgotten—as no doubt hon. Gentlemen have tried to forget—every event preceding the Home Rule Bill of 1886. But the Irish people recollect well enough the circumstances under which this union came about. They know that one of the Parties to that union had been courting another bride immediately before. It was only because that match had been broken off, and when hon. Gentlemen could not succeed in winning the favour of English constituencies they turned to the Irish as a *pis aller*. They know that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby was up till the last moment employing his ponderous rhetoric in forbidding the banns. The truth is that the Irish people are making good use of the English Radicals, who, in their turn, are making good use of the Irish; but so soon as that union of interest ceases we shall then have applied to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on that side of the House all the epithets which are now bestowed upon us, and a few years ago were bestowed upon them. Have hon. Gentlemen who attribute these pacific effects to the visits of Englishmen to Ireland considered carefully the kind of speeches that those Englishmen delivered when they got to Ireland? I will read a few short extracts. Here is from a speech quoted in *The Freeman's Journal* by Mr. Heald—who came over from England—an English Radical—

> "Carry out the Plan of Campaign to the letter, Boycott the land-grabbers, starve them out of the land."

[*Cheers.*] Yes; you cheer that. That may be very good doctrine; but it is not doctrine tending to put down crime. And my precise point is that the visit of these gentlemen did not tend to put down crime, and that the diminution of crime must be attributed to other causes. Then I find the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) is quoted in *The Freeman's Journal* as saying—

> "In these circumstances he would not be the one to condemn the men or women who kept a firm grip upon their homes."

We all know what keeping a "firm grip" on their homes means. It is a technical expression for pouring boiling water on bailiffs and policemen. Then I find that the chairman of a deputation from the Kettering and Wellingborough Liberal Federation, a Mr. J. L. White, at a place in County Cork, on the 14th December, said, as quoted in *The Nationalist*—

> "He wanted their English friends to take back to Northamptonshire this reflection. There exists a large party of Irishmen, the majority of our own race, the world over, who not only desire separation from England, but long to stab England in the back at the first favourable opportunity (and a voice in the crowd called out, 'More power, White; that's the truth')."

An hon. MEMBER: Who is Mr. White?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that he is generally known to fame; but he was the chairman at the reception of this deputation to which I have referred. Then the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall (Mr. Conybeare), at Westport, County Mayo, is introduced as the man who represents the English democracy, and having been introduced in that character he explained to the meeting—

> "That he always advocated the Plan of Campaign, and hoped again, if necessary, it would be adopted."

He also said—

> "He represented the miners of Cornwall, and he compared himself to Burleigh and Hampden, who did not hesitate to cut off the King's head. Let your battle cry be, 'Remember Michelstown.'"

The same hon. Member said at Castlereagh—

> "You are justified as Christians not to pay rent, whether it be fair rent or not."

That is the Christianity of the hon. Gentleman who regards himself as representing the English democracy. Then I find a gentleman from Glasgow—I must come to my own countrymen—of the name of Ferguson. [An hon. MEMBER: He's an Irishman.] Well, he hails from Glasgow. I am glad to find he is an Irishman. "We will settle this question of the rent," said this gentleman at a place in Armagh, "when we have a National Parliament." I commend that observation to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who thinks it should be settled before they have a National Parliament. This gentleman went on to say—

> "No man can set bounds to the aspirations of a nation. If a National Parliament and a Federal Union could not accomplish the prosperity of Ireland, then it would be Ireland's duty to further that struggle for absolute separation."

Then I find at Boyle, County Roscommon, the hon. Member for the Camborne Division, who spoke—not this time as the representative of the English democracy, but in the name of the people of England—after thanking the meeting for the magnificent reception given him, characterized the defence of their homes by the tenants, and resistance to the police, as acts which every just, brave, and honourable man would do.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What papers are you quoting from?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Some are from the official reporters, one from *The Freeman's Journal*, and some from *The Nationalist*. I think it will be admitted that, whatever other effect the speeches I have read might produce on the Irish people—whether they did or did not conduce to the union of hearts of which we hear so much—at all events they did not conduce to putting down agrarian crime in that unhappy country. I believe that it is a principle of dynamical science that where two bodies are drawn together by mutual attraction, the smaller body moves the faster of the two. This, however, does not appear to be the rule in political science. The body which has moved the faster in the present case is the larger Party which sits above the Gangway opposite. The Party below the Gangway opposite have long held views in regard to Irish outrages which I hoped were confined to Gentlemen of that nationality. They have not, so far as I know, withdrawn or retracted any of them; but they have converted their allies above the Gangway. They have not altered their morality; it is hon. and right hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway who have altered theirs. The speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork was throughout a triumphant pæan on successful lawlessness; but it was, nevertheless, loudly cheered above the Gangway. Every alleged triumph of the Plan of Campaign — which is little better than highway robbery — which is itself a crime and also the fruitful parent of many crimes, was cheered by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway to the echo. The hon. Member for North-East Cork advocated Boycotting — what he terms "legitimate" Boycotting; but he gave us no definition of what he means by legitimate Boycotting. I apprehend that he regards any Boycotting as legitimate which has as its result the strengthening of the National League and forwarding the National cause. Are hon. and right hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway opposite prepared to advocate Boycotting? Are they prepared, not merely to sit silent when Boycotting is being defended, but to get up and desire—as the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall desired—to see the system extended? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in his speech last week, asked me to give him, if possible, information with regard to the number of Boycotted or derelict farms, on the ground that such information afforded a valuable indication as to the state of the country; the right hon. Gentleman meaning that, if the number of derelict farms were reduced, we might infer that the state of the country was improving. Is it not sickening—to use the word of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan)—to find right hon. Gentlemen of his eminent position getting up and implying that a diminution in the number of derelict farms would show an improvement in the country, while their allies below the Gangway are sparing no effort to increase, as far as they can, the number of these derelict farms, and to make the life of any man who shall have the audacity to come into the open market and hire land absolutely intolerable — if, indeed, they even allow him to exist at all. I confess it gives me great pain to see this gradual degradation, as I think it, of the morality of the Liberal Party. I am quite aware that people in the position of the right hon. Gentleman do not advocate crime—I believe they hate it; but I appeal to any man whether the condemnation of crime we hear from the responsible Members of the Party above the Gangway opposite ever rises above a whisper, and whether they do not reserve the loudest thunder of their eloquence for the denunciations of Judges, magistrates, or police? Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne asked me what answer I had to give to the observations made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork upon the subject of the Plan of Campaign; and by the tone in which he asked that question, and by the manner in which it was received by his Friends behind him, I really almost began to believe that he hoped that the Plan of Campaign was succeeding, as was represented by the hon. Member for North-East Cork, and that he would rejoice if this Plan, which has been condemned by the highest judicial authorities that have had to deal with it, as utterly and grossly illegal—that he would rejoice if that conspiracy had extended its fell sway successfully to every corner of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman need not entertain any hope of that, for I do not believe the Plan of Campaign is destined to be a very formidable factor in the future of Ireland. It is perfectly true that in one or two cases mentioned by the hon. Member for North-East Cork this scheme of spoliation has met with a success which it certainly did not deserve; but I greatly doubt whether the tenantry of Ireland have any reason whatever to congratulate themselves—putting morality altogether aside—upon the inspiration which suggested to its authors this method of robbing the landlords. At this moment I am sure that curses, not loud, but deep, are going up against hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway from evicted tenants in Ireland. The hon. Member for North-East Cork stated that the Plan had been successful on all except three estates—namely, the Clanricarde, the Massereene, and the Brooke; but I do not see any sign of success on the

O'Grady or Ponsonby estates. [An hon. MEMBER: Wait.] Quite so. We are now told to wait by those who last night boldly asserted that the Plan of Campaign had been already successful. On the Luggacurran and the Ponsonby estates the unhappy tenants are suffering acutely from having taken the advice which was given them by hon. Gentlemen opposite to adopt the Plan of Campaign. It is rather a singular characteristic of this Plan of Campaign that in the case of Luggacurran one effect of the working of the Plan had been to induce the tenantry of the neighbouring estates to pay their rents more promptly than ever they did before; they rushed in with a haste which is not usual with Irish tenants for fear lest the Plan of Campaign would be forced down their throats. Then, Sir, the hon. Gentleman went on to discuss the position of the National League, and he said—

> "How hopeless is your position when you try to suppress this League, when really it consists of the whole population of Ireland."

Well, I do not think it does consist of the whole population of Ireland. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to read a speech which appeared in *The People* newspaper on the 11th of February of this year, only a few days ago. It is a speech made by the Rev. Peter Doyle at a meeting of the Oulart (County Wexford) district Council of the League. He said—

> "They would pardon him if he expressed himself a little disappointed at the state of the organization in a large portion of the district. In some localities the National League had collapsed completely, in others it was in a languishing condition, and the branches, if they could be said to exist, did not come up in numbers and efficiency to what should be expected."

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): Is that a suppressed district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No. Hon. Members opposite are very singular. They expect me to deal with two branches of the subject together. That may be possible for an Irishman, but for an unfortunate Scotchman I regret to say it is not. Here is another very interesting notice which appeared in *The Western News*, a Nationalist newspaper published in the county of Galway, on January 28th, 1888, of a meeting held in Ballinasloe on the 22nd of January, 1888. The treasurer stated—

> "That the amount to the credit of the branch was not sufficient to cover its liabilities."

Then another gentleman got up and said—

> "Their principal business was to devise the best means of getting funds. Some people objected to sending out deputations"—

unhappy, misguided people—

> "personally he was in favour of sending out deputations to the several districts. There were people in the town of Ballinasloe who had not joined the League, and who had not given it the support of either their presence or their money. These people should be waited upon by members of the committee. They should be asked to join the branch, and the names of those who would join and who would refuse could be hung up in the hall. They would show up those men who refused. They would show up those men who were an injury to the National cause. There was no alternative, and any punishment that would be inflicted on them they would deserve it."

Now, Sir, the gentleman who made that speech was, I believe, one of the persons who presented an address to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) when he went to Loughrea.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): May I ask the gentleman's name?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Byrne. I believe he is in prison now.

An hon. MEMBER: He is not in prison now.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I rather think he has been convicted and sent to prison, but I am not positive. Now, Sir, the quotations I have given are very happy illustrations of that universal and increasing power attributed to the National League all over the country by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. Now, I come to the hon. Member's assertion that in suppressed districts the League is even more flourishing. The hon. Gentleman is under a misapprehension. The information I have received leaves absolutely no doubt upon the subject. Beyond question, the National League in Clare and Kerry is reduced to impotence. I am perfectly aware that the hon. Gentleman quoted the case of a meeting, which he said took place, from the columns of *United Ireland* of the 28th of January, 1888. But the hon. Gentleman is, I presume, not sufficiently conversant with the work of the Press in Ireland lately for him to know that reports of bogus meetings of the National League are one of the commonest incidents. Let me give an illustration. *The Cork Examiner* of the 10th of January, 1888, published what purports to be a report of proceedings of the usual weekly meeting of the Mitchelstown (Davitt) branch of the League. It says:—"There was a large and representative attendance," and gives the names of a number of persons who were present. It also reports a speech made by the chairman and resolutions passed. The local police report that no such meeting could possibly have taken place, as they kept the persons mentioned in the newspaper report in view all day, and it was impossible they could have held any meeting. On the 28th of January, 1888, *United Ireland* published at length the proceedings at meetings of five branches of the League in County Kerry. The local police carefully watched the movements of the persons named in these reports as being the officers of these branches on the day on which it was stated that the meetings were held, and they positively assert in every case that no such meetings were held at all. In these circumstances, the House will be able to form its own estimate of the assertions made by the hon. Member for North-East Cork in his speech yesterday evening. I am perfectly aware that hon. Gentlemen will get up and say that the League is stronger than ever. Yes; but they have always done that. I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen recollect the speech made by the hon. Member who moved the Amendment the other day. In that speech the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) drew a parallel between myself and the late Mr. Forster—I need not say altogether to my disadvantage. I observe that all Chief Secretaries go through well-marked phases. When they are in Office history is ransacked to find parallels to their enormous infamy, and the English language is ransacked for epithets in which to describe it. But if they are dead they immediately become saints, and their names appear in the Calendar; if they are merely out of Office they are qualifying for canonization. I already see an aureole growing round the head of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). I see him gradually becoming the idol of the Irish Party. I see him looked back to as a man who really understood the Irish problem, and who, if, happily, he had only remained in Office a little longer, would have settled the Irish Question. In this parallel between Mr. Forster and myself, the particular point was—according to the hon. Member for Cork—that Mr. Forster had absolutely crushed the Land League, and I had totally failed even to injure the National League. That is the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, looking back calmly and impartially on the course of history, and with no other bias than that which affects every Irishman, when he is comparing the present holder of the Office of Chief Secretary with his Predecessor. But, although that is now the opinion of the hon. Member for Cork, it was not the opinion of his Party at the time. Allow me to quote from *United Ireland* the views of the Irish Party upon the crushing of the Land League by Mr. Forster. On the 7th of January, 1882—nearly three months after the date of the Proclamation—*United Ireland*, in a leading article, said—

> "But Gladstone and Forster destroyed the last chance of the Land Act being a success. They struck a blow in their blind and furious jealousy against the Land League; but the Land League is admitted by Tories and Whigs to be more powerful than ever. . . . If the unbroken organization of the Land League were not in existence . . . . the outlook would be terrible for the nation."

Well, is not that statement, which we now know on the authority of the hon. Member for Cork to be an untrue statement, exactly parallel to the position taken up with regard to the present Government and the National League? Hon. Gentlemen attempted to cast doubt on the figures by which I have proved beyond controversy that the condition of Ireland is improved, but they only attempted to cast doubt upon them when they found that the figures conclusively proved a conclusion to which they have political reasons for objecting. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow attempted to draw a distinction between the figures with regard to agrarian crime and the figures with regard to Boycotting, and said that the Boycotting figures could be cooked, and probably were cooked.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The right hon. Gentleman is confusing my remarks with those of the hon. Member for Cork.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. H. Gladstone) said so, among others. But if one set of figures can be cooked, the other set of figures upon which the hon. Gentleman relied can be cooked with equal facility. They are collected by the same person and put forward upon the same authority, and if you choose to accept the figures for agrarian crime, not less are you bound to accept the figures with regard to Boycotting put forward by the same person. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] But if you doubt the accuracy of the figures when you find the figures tell against you, there is an argument which, I think, on reflection, will commend itself to hon. Gentlemen. There is a large portion of the population in Ireland—a loyal minority—having no interest in Party controversies and Party politics. They have no interest in Party politics and Party controversies, except in so far as the result of those conflicts and controversies may be to put them into a position more or less of freedom and security. They have no interest in saying that the Tory Government is doing its duty if the oppression under which they groan is increasing, if they find life more intolerable day by day, and if illegal associations are day by day becoming more powerful from one end of the Island to the other. If, therefore, you find every man in Ireland who has anything to lose—every man who by training or by temperament is not either the ally or the resigned victim of force arrayed against the authority of the law—if you find that all these men concur in saying that an improvement has come over the state of the people, surely you may believe that the objects which we have had in view are in process of being accomplished. I appeal to every man who has any acquaintance with or knowledge of the class to which I refer if they differ from the testimony which I give. Whatever their politics, whatever their creed, from whatever part of the country they come, they are unanimous in saying that the authority of law is more respected; that freedom exists in larger measure; and that the forces antagonistic to law and antagonistic to freedom are in process of decay. Some hon. Friends of mine on this side of the House have been good enough to attribute this state of things to the action of the heads of the Irish Executive. But there are other classes in Ireland to whom, in my opinion, more credit is due for this happy result—the Judges, the magistrates, and the police, who under the greatest difficulties, and subject to a storm of obloquy, have stood between society and ruin. They have been assailed in language of the virulence of which no Member of this House who does not hail from Ireland has the slightest idea. They have remained absolutely faithful to the trust imposed upon them by the law; they have fearlessly performed their duties in the face of difficulties of which few who live in the midst of law-loving communities can form a conception; and, Sir, they have their reward. They have their reward in the respect, in the admiration of every true friend of liberty and of law and order, from whatever part of the country he may hail.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I have to call your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the circumstance that an hon. Member has made use of the words "Tory skunks." I wish to ask you, Sir, whether such language is regular?

MR. SPEAKER: Such language is highly improper and un-Parliamentary, and if I knew the name of the Member who used it I would bring it before the House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Following the right hon. Gentleman in the debate, I shall only notice those portions of his speech which appear to me to go to the heart of the question; and those portions of his speech which do really go to the heart of the question constitute, in my opinion, a very small proportion of the speech. Criminatory and recriminatory matter, however amusing it may be to a portion of the House—and such matter is always amusing—really assists us very little in getting to the centre and the root of the great question that is before us. I do think that in this particular case there is a great difficulty, owing to the enormous range, to the multitude and diversity and weight of the points involved, in confining this debate within—I will not say reasonably narrow limits—but within the narrow limits to which we all desire to confine it. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) last night, at a time when no Member of the Government appeared to be in a condition to follow the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), gallantly stepped into the breach, and performed that office on behalf of the Government which has been so often performed by those who, sometimes called Dissentient Liberals, have found means of defence for Her Majesty's Government, which they and their adherents behind them have not been able to discover. My hon. and learned Friend, complaining of the length of the debate, said it was high time it should draw to a conclusion. Now, I can perfectly understand the reasons why my hon. Friends should even desire that there might be no debate at all upon this question. But when he said that it had extended to an unreasonable length, I point to the speech of the Attorney General last night—to the length of which I am as far as possible from complaining—but which was evidently in sharp contradiction with the view of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness. Why, Sir, it has not been possible to include in this debate a number of questions which deserve, and may yet have to receive, detailed criticism. For example, the law of public meeting has hardly been touched in this debate; and yet it is gravely involved in the proceedings of the Recess. The relations between landlord and tenant have hardly been touched, and to that notwithstanding a similar observation will apply. The treatment given to prisoners of a particular class has not been made a subject of discussion. I will make none of these matters a subject of discussion; but, at the same time, I think none can doubt that all of them, and many more besides, are fit for the attention and consideration of the House. I must proceed, therefore, Sir, by the method of selection; and I am bound to say that, so far as I am personally concerned, if it had not been for the pointed reference made to me, and for the perfectly fair and just challenges delivered against certain portions of my conduct or speeches in the Recess, I should gladly have remained outside the contest. I am of opinion that such speeches as have been made by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in moving the Amendment, and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork on the memorable occasion of the opening of last night's debate, are more important, and go more to the heart of the matter and more to the heart of the country, than anything that can be said or urged by those who, whatever else may be said of them, cannot deny that they stand in a position of Leaders of a Party, and are liable to an imputation of Party interests, which is taken by Gentlemen like the Irish Secretary to be their sole actuating motives; whereas, on the other hand, these Gentlemen are in a position to say that they have shown their independence of Party. They have dealt a death-blow to Liberal Administrations, and the Members of those Liberal Administrations never have complained, and would not have been justified in complaining. They are the advocates and organs of a nation. As the organs of a nation they are in a position to speak with an effect to which we cannot make any just pretension when they address themselves to the heart and understanding of another nation, to whose judgment they are appealing. But, Sir, there was a part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, which he introduced with an apology, into which I think it right briefly to follow him. He referred to the communications which had passed between Lord Salisbury and the hon. Member for the City of Cork.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Lord Carnarvon.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Quite so; Lord Carnarvon and the hon. Member for the City of Cork; and I am not going to question for a moment the denials he conveyed. But what were those denials? I attended as well as I could to his statement, and the denials appear to be three. In the first place, he denied that any engagement or agreement had been made. Sir, I am not aware of its having been asserted that any engagement or agreement had been made. He denied, secondly, that it ever had been stated to be the intention of the Conservative Government to grant a measure of Home Rule. I am not aware, Sir, that it ever was stated that a Conservative Government was about to grant a measure of

Home Rule. Thirdly, he denied, on the part of Lord Carnarvon—and I accept the denial with all my heart—that Lord Carnarvon had ever used any words inconsistent with the maintenance of the Union. But, Sir, I maintain that these three denials leave entirely untouched the material parts of the case. What are these material parts? If the right hon. Gentleman wishes to dispose of them I can only say that they are not disposed of by what he has said to-night, and that he must set about a new series of statements and a new set of denials in order to get rid of them. It was stated by the hon. Member for the City of Cork that he found himself in substantial—I may say in entire—agreement with Lord Carnarvon on the subject of Home Rule. That has not been denied. It was stated that Lord Carnarvon spoke for himself; that I do not question, in so far as a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland can speak for himself. He was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and, being Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on the part of a Conservative Government which now holds that to preach Home Rule in any shape is to preach the separation of Ireland from the Empire, he was in association and agreement with the hon. Member for the City of Cork on the policy of Home Rule. Is that all, Sir? When the right hon. Gentleman has just had an opportunity of making his statement—and what I say is in perfect conformity with that statement—he did not deny in the speech he has just made—and certainly he had space enough in it for denial—that Lord Carnarvon and the hon. Member for the City of Cork were in substantial agreement on the policy of Home Rule.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the right hon. Gentleman challenges me, I must say that the extract I read from what Lord Carnarvon said in the House of Lords clearly implied that Lord Carnarvon did not express his opinion about a Home Rule policy to the hon. Member for the City of Cork.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: What I say is this—the hon. Member for the City of Cork declared that he had an interview with Lord Carnarvon, and that he found himself in agreement with Lord Carnarvon on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman has not denied that.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I infer from Lord Carnarvon's statement a distinct denial. Of course, we cannot communicate with him.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I ask for the words of Lord Carnarvon's statement which contained that denial.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am very sorry; but they have been taken out of the House. I could not foresee this occurrence.

An hon. MEMBER: Send for them.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: It is a very dangerous practice to make statements of that kind and importance without the material on which they are founded. I affirm, and I am in the recollection of the House, that whatever inference or interpretation the right hon. Gentleman may place on the declaration of Lord Carnarvon, there was not a word in the passage he read which contained, or which approached to containing, a denial of the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that he and Lord Carnarvon were in substantial agreement on the policy of Home Rule. In addition to that, I ask the right hon. Gentleman what he thinks of another statement of Lord Carnarvon, made in the House of Lords, and within the memory of all of us, in which, speaking of the measures of extended government that ought to be granted to Ireland, he said that they ought to meet all the just demands of that country for local self-government, and that those measures ought to be adapted in some degree to give reasonable satisfaction to National aspirations. Does the right hon. Gentleman say that he is in favour of giving reasonable satisfaction to National aspirations? On the contrary, that is the very phrase and idea that on no consideration will they recognize or admit; and it is the phrase and idea which formed the basis of the views of Lord Carnarvon, and here the right hon. Gentleman cannot contradict me. Having got so far—and I intend to go further—the Lord Lieutenant, being Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and being a Member of the Cabinet—or whether he had been a Member of the Cabinet or not—was absolutely bound to make known his views to Lord Salisbury, if not to the Cabinet at large. He did make known his views to Lord Salisbury in the fulfilment of a primary duty, and Lord Salisbury continued to repose his confidence in the Lord Lieutenant; for months afterwards Lord Carnarvon continued to be Lord Lieutenant; and when he retired, principally on account of ill-health, he did so amid the express regrets of his Colleagues. Now, Sir, we are called Separatists. [*Ministerial cheers.*] We are denounced as such. [*Renewed Ministerial cheers.*] I am grateful for having my assertions supported by hon. Gentlemen opposite in that semi-articulate manner that they find so congenial; we are called Separatists because we wish to give effect to National aspirations in Ireland, within the limits of the Constitution, and with supreme regard to the unity of the Empire. Lord Salisbury, as Head of a Conservative Government, was content to stand before the country, having in Ireland a Lord Lieutenant who was prepared to give satisfaction, reasonable satisfaction—as we are—to National aspirations, and was content to go to the Guildhall at the same time and to say that everything in the way of local self-government ought to be conceded to Ireland which was consistent with the unity of the Empire. It appears, then, that a Tory Lord Lieutenant may dally as he pleases with the Sirens of Home Rule; and that when a General Election is pending, a Tory Prime Minister may regard the entertainment of a Home Rule policy as no objection whatever to placing unbounded confidence in a Tory Lord Lieutenant. But when the Election is over! When the Lord Lieutenant is gone, and when Liberals declare that they desire to meet the national aspirations of Ireland with a reasonable and safe satisfaction—then, forsooth! they are to be denounced as Separatists. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman said other things to which I must refer; but I have first to say a word upon the entertaining speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), who was pleased to exhibit, to the great amusement of the House, even of those who were his victims, our delinquencies and inconsistencies to an admiring House. After all these assaults upon us, the hon. and gallant Gentleman gravely concluded with an enunciation in favour of law and order, and a declaration that his countrymen were not very much disposed to adopt those doctrines. I do not agree with him about his countrymen; but I confess that if I were engaged in an endeavour to show that Irishmen were not sufficiently given to recognizing the principles of law and order, undoubtedly the prominent instance to which I should refer would be the hon. and gallant Member himself. The hon. and gallant Gentleman comes here, forsooth! to instruct and educate us on the subject of law and order, while he reserves to himself the right of declaring, and more than once declaring—not, I think, in this House, so far as I remember——

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: Oh, yes, I have.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Very good; so much the better; all right. Declaring that if Parliament passed a certain Act to which he objects—namely, an Act for granting to Ireland a carefully guarded—[" Oh! "]—well, I will leave out the "carefully guarded"—portion of the independence she once possessed, he would be the man to resist it, and to recommend resistance to it, in others. [Colonel SAUNDERSON assented.] Yet when he is dealing with Gentlemen below the Gangway he has the consummate art—and I must say the consummate courage—to pose as an apostle of law and order. The hon. and gallant Gentleman alluded to a speech of mine in which I referred to the lamentable murder of Constable Whelehan in County Clare. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was not ashamed to say—not in this House, but where he could not be answered—that I had made adverse comments on the conduct of Constable Whelehan, a man who lost his life in the service of his country.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said it in this House, and I say it again.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: When?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said it on Friday last.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Then I withdraw the observation. I have no intention of charging upon the right hon. Gentleman anything which is not true in fact, and I am very glad he has contradicted me. I did not recollect the statement, or I did not hear it; but it was totally and absolutely untrue. Either he had not read what I said, or if he has read it—and the same applies to the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh—they have absolutely misrepresented the purport of the speech they professed to quote. For I have never named Whelehan except to deplore his death, and to express a hope that his murderers would be punished. In my reference to that speech, there is not a word to show that Whelehan was the man who was the unhappy organ of the police in ministering pecuniary payment to the infamous informer; nor is there one word in all that reference of blame to Her Majesty's Government. On the contrary, there is an express declaration that I laid no blame upon Her Majesty's Government with reference to the case of Whelehan. Why, then, Sir, did I refer to it? I referred to it on this account. The hon. and gallant Gentleman, in the careless way in which he refers to these things, said that I must have been cognizant of the fact that a price was paid for obtaining information. I said at Nottingham that I made no reference at all to the rather difficult question of the payment of price for obtaining information. What I did refer to was the payment of price, not for obtaining information, but for concocting and concerting crime. After the gradual revelations that are made to us of the mode in which Ireland is administered according to the traditions of that country—it is perfectly possible that such things may have been done before, though I never heard of them—but when I did learn, in a particular instance, of that foul and loathsome practice of paying money for such a purpose to a man who was to attend, so far as we are yet informed, a meeting of the criminals for the purpose of putting the finishing hand to the arrangement and the execution of it, then I did think it was time to protest on the part of the Liberal Party, if not of the whole country, against a practice which, in my opinion, is in itself odious to the last degree, which would not for a moment be tolerated in England, and in reference to which I thought it wise and right to point out that it was dangerous as well as odious; for in a similar case, where the population of England had become cognizant of a similar practice, they had themselves resorted to the commission of crime for the purpose of marking the detestation with which they regarded it. I pass from the hon. and gallant Gentleman to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and I think he will agree that I am bound to refer to the speech which he made in the general debate on the Address with respect to the practice of Members on this side of the House in making statements outside the House which they are not prepared to repeat in it, and especially to his adverse and rather angry comments on the pacific tone of the speech which I had just delivered. The right hon. Gentleman overflows with pugnacious matter. He is young and inexperienced in debate, bold as I confess him to be, and able as I confess him to be; but when he has been 56 years in the service of his country it is possible that his stock of contentious eagerness may be a little abated. Now, Sir, the reason—and I had many reasons—but if I must deal with any reason why I was particularly anxious to avoid the needless introduction of contentious or polemical and accusatory matter in speaking in the opening debate on the Address, I believed, in the first place, that an Irish debate was impending; and, in the second place, the great object which I had in view was to assist in promoting the purposes of Her Majesty's Government, and I will also say to promote, as I think, the honour, the dignity, and the efficiency of the House by giving what I may in simple language call a good start to the Business of the Session, and to detach it, so far as I was able, from everything like controversy and Party conflict. But if the right hon. Gentleman laments the non-combative character of that discussion, I think he will derive probably ample satisfaction for the future. There is no fear, I believe, that Irish debates will be wanting in animation, possibly even in a little animosity, so long as he continues to hold the Office of Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman, even on that occasion, found in my pacific speech matter deserving of his indignant rebuke. I had lamented—if I must repeat my lamentation—that the nicest and most difficult parts of law are removed under the operation of the Coercion Act of last year from Judge and from juries to men whom I termed of an inferior stamp. That was the observation I ventured to make, and the right hon. Gentleman was rather wrathful over it. I fully admit that he is a perfect master of *tu quoque.* He said—"Whoever they are, they are the men whom you and Lord Spencer appointed." Now, Sir, in the first place, it is quite inaccurate; and, in the second place, if it were accurate, it would be totally irrelevant. It is perfectly inaccurate. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman was that the whole body, as I understood him——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I said that 60 out of 73 were appointed mostly by Lord Spencer, or else were the appointments of previous Governments revived by him.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Oh; revived by him! And so the right hon. Gentleman thinks that what he calls reviving—that is to say, not dismissing—is the same thing. Now, if there were 60 out of 73, all I can say is this—that, in the first place, the gentlemen to whose conduct I have seen taken the greatest objection as Resident Magistrates are five—Mr. Eaton, Captain Seagrave, Mr. Cecil Roche, Mr. Meldon, and Mr. Carew. Undoubtedly these are the gentlemen whom I had specially in view when I spoke of men of inferior stamp. Not one of these men was appointed by Lord Spencer. But, supposing they had been appointed by Lord Spencer, the retort of the right hon. Gentleman was absolutely and even ludicrously irrelevant. What I was speaking of was this—not the discharge by Resident Magistrates of their ordinary judicial duties; but their discharge of extraordinary duties which the right hon. Gentleman and the Government had insisted in putting upon them. That is a totally different matter. Suppose, for example, I have a set of men in the Army who are very good corporals and sergeants, and I affirm that they are very good corporals and sergeants, and suppose I had appointed them all, but by some freak of the right hon. Gentleman those corporals and sergeants are appointed to do the duty of generals and colonels, and then I take the objection that those duties of generals and colonels are handed over to men of an inferior stamp. That was the point of the objection which the right hon. Gentleman did not see; and, in my opinion, it is a just, and true, and solid, and perfectly unanswerable objection. The right hon. Gentleman was especially indignant with me because at a given date in the Recess, or before the termination of the Session, I had telegraphed to some correspondent the words, "Remember Mitchelstown," and that I had in a speech at Nottingham developed my meaning in using that phrase and gave whatever force I could to the meaning of my words. The right hon. Gentleman thought fit to point at me the reproach that I was not disposed to maintain here what I have said elsewhere. Now, Sir, I have referred—a task which has always been to me the most irksome I know—to my own statement at Nottingham with regard to Mitchelstown; and I have to say, here and now, that I not only adhere to it, but I strengthen it. And if I use words here about it, and as few as possible, undoubtedly they will, if anything, be not weaker but stronger than the words I formerly used. I never in my life uttered words—or sent words by letter or telegram—which I more rejoiced to have used, and am better content to have used, than the words "Remember Mitchelstown." It was not done inconsiderately. It was done considerately, for the sake of Ireland and the country, and for the sake of lamenting the enormous mischief, the probable suffering and bloodshed, and the consequent resistance to the law that might arise in Ireland in consequence of what had occurred at Mitchelstown, and of its adoption and appropriation by the right hon. Gentleman. Now, Sir, what was it? It was this. A legal meeting of 4,000 people was assembled. The police, under the plea of following the usual practice of having an official reporter at the meeting, instead of prior communication with those who held it, instead of going to the platform at a point where it was open and accessible, the police formed a wedge of 20 men and endeavoured by force to drive the wedge into the middle of the meeting. I am here to say that a public meeting is an orderly assembly, and to observe order is part of the law of the land, and the driving of that wedge into the middle of that meeting was an illegality on the part of the police, and that the police who drove, or attempted to drive, that wedge into the crowd were themselves guilty of illegality, and ought to have been given into custody. On this deplorable occasion the agents of the law were the breakers of the law; and these breakers of the law, in the first instance, acting under subordinate authority, were adopted and sanctioned by the right hon. Gentleman and by the full authority of Her Majesty's Government. That was the first act of the police. What was the econd? The second was this. Their vedge was not strong enough. They vere beaten back; pressed back out of he crowd—it seems to me with perfect egality and propriety—whereupon they rought up a large force of police and harged the crowd, because the crowd ad not concurred and and co-operated n the former illegality. Well, Sir, this vas a fresh illegality committed by the olice—that charge upon the crowd. hen the violence began. Then began he use of batons; the use of sticks and udgels; then began the sufferings of en in the crowd, the sufferings of inlividual members of the police, as to vhich the right hon. Gentleman is so loquent, and which I regret as much as e does. But the police in this, their econd illegality, were beaten back by he crowd and again defeated. The crowd id not pursue them. According to all nformations before us the crowd was ecalled, and again took their places in he square. The merest scattering and prinkling, for the most part of boys, robably—we know not who, but we now to what extent—went into the treet where the police barracks are to e found, and these boys or others suceeded in breaking three windows in the olice barracks—[*Cries of* "Panes!"]—nd those three windows were exalted nd uplifted by the right hon. Gentleman nto a general attack on the barracks, ompelling the police in self-defence to re upon the people. In one sense the olice did not fire upon the people—that to say, there was no mass of the people ere to fire upon. I stated at Nottingam, and it is the result of all the inquiry have made, that there did not appear have been more than 20 people in the reet where the police barracks are; and was there, under these circumstances, at the police actually fired into the indows of the opposite houses—the ouses of peaceable people—where there ere women and children, and they fired eliberately; and as to the two old men d the boy whom they destroyed, I do t hesitate here to denounce it as cruel, anton, and disgraceful bloodshed; beuse, in the language of Lord Sidmouth n another occasion, so far as I know, ere is no example in wantonness and uselessness since the memorable occaon in Manchester, popularly known as e Massacre of Peterloo. I have now iven the right hon. Gentleman my views about Mitchelstown. It was time I should say "Remember Mitchelstown," particularly when, owing to a particular class of language, Mitchelstown might have become what is called a "prerogative instance." Mitchelstown was commended by the right hon. Gentleman, held up to the police of Ireland as a pattern they were to follow; that they had acted only in self-defence; and the extent of self-defence and the meaning of self-defence is exhibited at Mitchelstown. I believe it was reasonable to fear the meaning which the police would put on that self-defence, and that they would legally or illegally act up to it whenever they got an opportunity of coming into collision with the people. I tell the right hon. Gentleman frankly that I am of opinion that he has become by clear implication a breaker of the law; breaking the law by authoritative assent and approval; and, not only so, he did that under circumstances where that authoritative approval conveyed to the mind of the police would naturally, justly, excusably, almost necessarily, have pointed out to them that that was to be the model and the rule of their conduct in every example of the kind. It was in the interests of law and order that I denounced the conduct of the police. I think it will be a long time before he can discover an instance on this Bench, or from any of our Friends, in which law and order and the security of the lives of the people were treated with such recklessness as was then shown by the right hon. Gentleman and by his Colleagues. I may be wrong. I know that all Gentlemen on that side are infallible; but I have not that happy privilege. I have done my best to inform myself; and in conformity with, I believe, uncontradicted and consentient statements, I contend that the inferences I have drawn from these facts are just inferences, and that it was not only natural but necessary to adopt precautions on the part, I will say, of England, against the fatal imitations which Mitchelstown might have produced, and to take securities for law and order in Ireland—first of all, as I pointed out to the people of England, that these things ought to be watched; and, secondly, by making known to the Government, and to their agents, and their organs beyond the Channel, that if such occurrences did happen, they would not pass uncensured. Therefore, Sir, I believe I never spoke more useful—I will go further, and say I believe I never spoke more fruitful words than when I telegraphed—"Remember Mitchelstown." Now, I come to the statistics of the right hon. Gentleman. I will make hardly any reference to Boycotting. At least, I will refer to it only in the briefest terms. The right hon. Gentleman has been stingy in his statistics; but he has given us statistics of Boycotting. I do not recollect that Boycotting was ever made a portion of Government statistics before. I cannot recollect it. I can remember police protection.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: We have laid statistics of Boycotting on the Table before.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes; but I am speaking of the ancient and traditional practice which this Conservative Government is always so indisposed to follow. I repeat I am not aware that Boycotting was ever before made the subject of a Return. He said if these statistics were falsified other statistics could be falsified. That is not the point at issue. The point is this. Statistics of crime deal with facts and with matter of record. Statistics of Boycotting, as far as I can understand, deal with matters of opinion. How, I should like to know, in the multitudinous Returns can they distinguish between totally and partially Boycotting? I should like to have an account of that process. What is the test? There must be, and will be, cases of harsh and unreasonable persecution under the name of Boycotting. It is never to be forgotten, though it is very common to forget it, that when you have a state of things such as prevails in Ireland—old and sore relations of friction between class and class, the sense of still remaining suffering or grievance, and consequent instability of social order—the criminal elements that will always subsist in every community (though I thank God to say that I believe they subsist in Ireland more narrowly than almost anywhere else) will find their way into social questions; and, undoubtedly, you will have bad, and very bad, cases exhibited in matters such as these. Therefore, the exhibition of particular instances is a very unsafe and insufficient test. They ought to be quoted with great accuracy. The right hon. Gentleman has been defending to-night his chosen instruments of the present year. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; but he was met immediately with point blank contradictions on matters of fact; and at present I shall enter no further into that question, which evidently must be made the subject of further examination. But the right hon. Gentleman gave us last year a case of Boycotting which was touching to the last degree—the case of the Galway midwife. Does the right hon. Gentleman say that the instance he selected last year—the instance of the Galway midwife—is worthy of credence?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Absolutely correct in every particular.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: All I can say is, that here, likewise, the right hon. Gentleman has been met with this point blank, this flat contradiction; but what, Sir, are we to say to Boycotting statistics as a basis for legislation, or for a criterion of the rising felicity of the country, when the right hon. Gentleman, out of the thousands of cases he has had before him, can only select for us two, upon which he is at once met by having his facts challenged and his conclusions falsified? My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne well remarked on a former occasion that there is a chapter of statistics which, if the right hon. Gentleman had chosen to enter upon, it would have been far more to the purpose than those which he has laid before us—that is, the statistics of evicted or derelict lands. There could have been no difficulty whatever for the right hon. Gentleman to call for Returns of the acreage of the farms which in different counties all over Ireland, or in selected counties, had been derelict a year, or two years, or three years ago, in the time of Lord Spencer, and down to the present date, and to show how, under the recovered liberty of the Irish people of which he boasts, the acreage of these derelict farms had been greatly diminished. The right hon. Gentleman has not only avoided, but shirked that question, and I say he has shirked it, because he substituted for any attempt at a rational answer to my right hon. Friend a jeremiad upon the state of feeling which he thought might be produced in Ireland when he found my right hon. Friend using language which, in his opinion, was capable of being interpreted into sympathy with the operation of the Land League, and with lawlessness. A more unjust charge never was made. But, just or unjust, it had nothing to do with the question. The right hon. Gentleman founds himself, and the Queen has been instructed to found herself in her Speech, and the organs of the Government have based themselves, in their articles, upon the assertion that liberty, as they phrase it, is returning to the people of Ireland. If that liberty were returning, it would be exhibited in a proportionate diminution of derelict farms. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] Then, why have you not shown it? We can very seldom get even the smallest information from the Government unless we apply the moral torture, which the proceedings of this House allow, to draw it from them. Now, there is one part of the statistics we have read with increased satisfaction—that is, the diminution of crime—limited as that diminution is. I thought that the right hon. Gentleman, in constructing his artificial Return, gave his statistics in a very artificial manner for a special purpose. It is the first time I have known the month of January do such good service. And when I looked into the Return I found out the cause. The Return of offences reported to the Constabulary are reported under three major heads, if I may so call them. There are offences against the person, offences against property, and offences against the public peace. With regard to the offences against the person and against property, I find that if I take the five months only of last year, after the passing of the Coercion Act, and compare them with the corresponding five months of the year before, there is no diminution whatever. But in the month of January there was, in offences against the person, a sudden, a most well-timed and fortunate and rapid decline, for they fell from 10 to three. The right hon. Gentleman drew January into his service by means of that declension of seven, and he was able to draw a diminution of 6 per cent of offences against personal property. I am extremely glad of it, and wish there had been a great deal more. The offences which have sensibly and really diminished are those against the public peace, and I rejoice that they have diminished. The right hon. Gentleman says the cause of the diminution is the Coercion Act; but I think I have shown that, whereas the diminution of crime proper as directed against personal property is an exceedingly small diminution, the diminution of offences against the public peace is much larger. I make it out to be that they fell in these six months from 324 to 238, or a diminution of 25 per cent. These are exactly the offences that would diminish under the operation of a conciliatory Land Act. Yet the right hon. Gentleman has the boldness to say that we on this side of the House never gave any credit to the Land Act. Why, Sir, the Land Act, imperfect, and grossly imperfect as it was—culpably imperfect as it was in the matter of arrears, contained a great and important provision, which the hon. Member for the City of Cork in vain had proposed in September of the year before, but which, if it had then been granted, you probably never might have heard of the Plan of Campaign. It was denounced to the House of Commons by the Government of that day as being a provision totally incompatible with that morality, forsooth, on which right hon. Gentlemen opposite prided themselves. [*Opposition Laughter.*] I speak of that provision which, under a great responsibility, Her Majesty's Government, though far too late, introduced as a most valuable gift. It was quite evident that, so far as offences against the public peace were concerned, the reopening of the judicial rents and the concessions made to leaseholders could not but operate in the most powerful manner in favour of that diminution. I have here a declaration of a County Court Judge, Mr. Ferguson, who last month used these words—

> "I am glad to say that on the present occasion I am sufficiently informed on the subject, and have good reason to believe that respect for the law and the disposition to obey the law, without which no social freedom, safety, or happiness can exist, is steadily increasing in this extensive riding. I believe circumstances are now in operation calculated to extend them and render them permanent. I refer to the settlement of the Land Laws of the country now so generally taking place, and for which valuers and others are extensively employed."

I hope, now that the right hon. Gentleman is in a good humour for granting statistics, that he is preparing statistics of the working of the Act, showing us who have been evicted, that we may have the means of exercising our judgment on the circumstances under which this diminution of crime has taken place. There are two other questions which go to the heart of the whole matter—namely, how the law has been administered, and how the administration of the law has succeeded. Has the administration of the law been of a character to reconcile, or has it been to estrange; has it been calculated to teach respect for the Government, or to bring the Government into hatred and contempt? Has it been of a character to render that law national, or has it been of a character to render it more anti-national? Now, I am not going into the details of the cases of prison treatment; but I shall examine the cases of two Members of Parliament in reference to matters other than prison treatment. I am not answering for these facts personally; but I have received them from quarters that ought to be thoroughly well informed. Mr. Sheehy, a Member of this House, was arrested and remanded without bail. It was a thing that might have been taken into consideration that his wife was ill at the time with scarlatina or scarlet fever. He was offered bail by the Government, represented by the Resident Magistrate, on the condition that he should promise not to open his lips in public. By Government, that, I presume, means the Executive Government; and I want to know what title the Resident Magistrate has to make such a condition as that? Most dangerous is this introduction of a new discretion for Resident Magistrates—a discretion to impose novel restrictions. If Mr. Sheehy had been allowed bail, and if he were to commit an offence while under that bail, he could be taken up for that offence. I want to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some other Member of the Government, a distinct account of the new doctrine that these conditions may be imposed, which are written, as I believe, in no law, nor in any custom, but which have been set in action in Ireland, but which in England we know are not heard of, and would not be heard of or tolerated for a moment. Mr. Sheehy, I must say very properly, entirely declined to accede to that condition, and he was tried and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. He appealed, as he was entitled to do, and bail was accepted for his appearance at Quarter Sessions, so that he would have been able to obey the almost sacred domestic form of tie which was at the time incumbent upon him. But as he was going out of the door of the Court he was arrested again on another charge, and brought away immediately to a distant part of the country, his wife being in the very crisis of her illness, and her life seriously threatened. On this second charge he was sentenced, not to three months, which would have enabled him to appeal, but to one month's imprisonment, depriving him of the power of appeal.

Mr. CHANCE: Which had been promised by the right hon. Gentleman to the House.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is perfectly aware of that promise. He is perfectly aware that in the debate of last year he was charged by my right hon. Friend near me (Sir William Harcourt) with breach of faith in regard to that promise, and to that charge of breach of faith he has remained, I must say, very patiently silent. I have nothing to add on that subject now; but I wish to point out that at the moment when this gentleman, whose wife was in danger, was naturally anxious to repair to his home, a new charge was brought against him, a sentence of a month was passed, his right of appeal was taken away, and he was prevented, not only from preparing his defence in the first case, but also from repairing to his home, where not only difficulty and pain, but actual danger threatened him. Is that the sort of administration of the Act of last year which the Government are prepared to defend? Is it thus that Ireland is to be reconciled? Is it thus that the Irish nation is to be converted? Is it in this House of Commons—the most ancient and the noblest of all the temples of freedom—that such operations as these are to be either passed over in silence, or defended by those engaged in them—the responsible Executive? I cannot understand the extraordinary severity of treatment in certain particulars which, if I am rightly informed, has been meted out to this gentleman; but I wish to keep for the present to what relates most distinctly to the question of the administration of the law, as separate from the question of prison discipline, and in that point of view I will mention the case of Alderman Hooper. He was proceeded against and sentenced for publishing reports of National League branches that had been suppressed; although, as I understand, there have been plenty of these reports published within the cognizance of the Government, with respect to which those who published them have not been sentenced and have not been proceeded against. Alderman Hooper was sentenced to the term of one month, which would not allow him a right of appeal; but he was, I believe, simultaneously charged with publishing another report. Another sentence of one month was pronounced against him, and these sentences, though cumulative as regarded him, were not cumulative in respect of the right of appeal. Therefore, while the right hon. Gentleman professes to give an appeal in the case of all sentences above a month, by this clever device it was contrived to inflict upon Mr. Hooper, a Member of this House, imprisonment for two months, and at the same time to deprive him of his right of appeal. And there again, Sir, I say I am sorry to utter strong words; and, as I may be tempted to do so out of this House, I will speak them in the House. I have no hesitation in describing this administration of the Act, not only as a clear evasion of the spirit of the law, but as an incredible meanness. In this method of administering this Crimes Act, that spirit is displayed which, if the Irish people had in them but a hundredth part of the courage and heart and pluck and perseverance that they have shown for seven centuries, could only tend to alienate and estrange them from those who attempt so to govern them. The words that I have thus used I am going to use again. I am, therefore, very desirous to invite the concurrence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the propriety of my application of it, or to know whether he thinks that nobleness would be a better description —[Mr. GOSCHEN: Hear, hear!]—of the circumstances which I am about to describe. Without knowing what I am going to say, the right hon. Gentleman accepts my challenge; and, therefore, I am justified in exhibiting a specimen of the nobleness with which this administration of Ireland is conceived and executed. I have before me a list of six people prosecuted, not for publishing the reports of suppressed branches, but for selling them—two men named Macnamara in Ennis, a man named Moroney in Tralee, Brosnan and Breen in Killarney, and another. Four of the defendants were sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour, and two were discharged upon a promise not to offend again. Here we see once more this method of interfering with private freedom by arbitrary restriction governed by no law, justified by no usage, devised by the spirit of Irish administration, and with respect to which I want to know how far this importation into the law and jurisprudence of the country is to be carried under the auspices of Her Majesty's Government? Well now, Sir, I want to know from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he is to speak to-night, does he see nobleness in the prosecution of these men? Does he think it rational to prosecute these men? Does he think it right to require of the vendor of a newspaper that he should have read its contents; that he should have formed a judgment of its contents; that he should have made up his mind as to whether the proceedings described in the newspapers were legal or illegal? Is that a responsibility which he thinks ought to be imposed upon the vendor of a newspaper under pain of being condemned to one or two months' imprisonment? That is the administration of the Crimes Act to which I must advisedly apply, until I am better instructed, the term meanness. The remaining point relating to the administration of the law upon which I shall comment is of a different character. It has reference to exclusive dealing. It will be remembered that in our charges against the Bill last year we did not say that the measure justified proceedings for exclusive dealing. I do not believe we did say that it did, and I do not believe that the Act does justify proceedings of that kind. But this I am bound to say—that the Act with its interpretation appears to be deliberately applied in a variety of instances for the punishment of simple exclusive dealing. The right hon. Gentleman opposite ought to know—if he does not—that when I spoke of the dismissal of curates by rectors, of the men with wives and children being deprived of their daily bread. I was not, as the right hon. Gentleman charges me, comparing such cases with cases of conspiracy, but was comparing them with cases of exclusive dealing, which, while they are practised freely both in Ireland by the opponents of Nationalism and by the Party of the right hon. Gentleman in England, unpunishable by law, are in Ireland punished by the magistrates who, I believe, have stretched and strained the deplorable Act of last Session to make it include such cases. I now come to eight cases of exclusive dealing, and I cite them simply to afford the Government the opportunity of verifying them. Now, Sir, I wish to mention eight cases—[here the right hon. Gentleman read the names]. I have now before me eight cases of exclusive dealing, two of which were dismissed, but in all the Government proceeded. In one of these cases, a man was punished with a month's hard labour for refusing to shoe a horse for a Boycotted person; another was punished for refusing to sell groceries to another Boycotted person; a third, for refusing to shoe a horse; and a fourth, for refusing to deal with Emergency men; and so on. Those are all cases of exclusive dealing; there is no case of conspiracy if the reports sent me are correct; if they are wrong I hope the Government will correct them by accurate accounts, which I shall be happy to receive. In all these cases there was only a futile and colourable attempt made to set up a charge of conspiracy; it has been a matter of the purest and most arbitrary inference. In fact, these men have been punished for doing in Ireland that which would be perfectly lawful in England, and that which I believe to be perfectly lawful even in Ireland under any fair interpretation of the Coercion Act of the right hon. Gentleman. So much for the interpretation of the Act; and now as to the design of the Act. The Government say that the Act has succeeded in a measure. Has it succeeded or has it failed? I do not think Gentlemen will object to the proposition I enunciate that the real objects of the Act were to put down the National League, and to put down the Plan of Campaign. I assume that those were its objects; and now I come again to the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, which I will venture to say was a memorable speech. To him, as I have never had the privilege of private personal communication with him, I will say it publicly in this House that, although, as he says, imprisonment under the conditions described is a hard and severe thing, which drives the iron into the soul of a man, and leaves him such that he hardly can be again what he was before, yet I trust that the hon. Gentleman has derived some consolation and some encouragement to persevere, at least in lawful and patriotic efforts for setting right the wrongs of his country, from the enthusiastic reception that he encountered in this House and out of it; and I will add for the credit of hon. Gentlemen opposite, from the respectful silence, and to some extent, I think, the sympathetic silence, with which they also accorded him a kindly reception. The speech of the hon. Member was, in my opinion, of an importance that has not in the smallest degree been appreciated by the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman has argued the case in his old manner; and whereas the hon. Gentleman charged him with having said that he (the hon. Gentleman) pleaded ill-health against the prison dress, what appears is that the right hon. Gentleman says that the hon. Member had sheltered himself by ill-health against the demand to wear prison dress. But for that statement of the right hon. Gentleman, as amended and admitted, there is not a shadow of foundation. That you cannot contradict, though there are plenty of myrmidons, perhaps even some minions, that will contradict it, and show that by word or act the hon Member for North-East Cork entered this ignominious plea. Why, Sir, has the right hon. Gentleman overlooked and passed by in silence another personal statement of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, which I tell the right hon. Gentleman he has no right to pass by, with respect to which I will now put it to him and to the House that after he has had an opportunity of making Lord Salisbury's defence and has utterly failed to tender any defence at all——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He did not require any.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Interruption is used as a means of reply; but that is just the point I am going to argue, and we will see how the matter stands. The statement of the hon. Member for North-East Cork was to the effect that in one of his speeches, Lord Salisbury, after some jocose references which exhibited the taste of the Prime Minister, a taste a great deal too common in speeches proceeding from that quarter, held up to British indignation the illegality of the conduct of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, and he stated that that conduct had led to disturbances and attacks upon persons, which, if I remember right, even placed life in danger, and which constituted gross outrages that were of a most serious character. In reply, the hon. Member for North-East Cork stated that his intervention at Mitchelstown produced no act of violence whatever; on the contrary, it averted violence. The right hon. Gentleman has not been able to contradict that statement, and, not being able to controvert it, he has passed it by. He has neither the courage to prosecute nor the generosity to withdraw. Lord Salisbury has made an allegation which his nephew in this House cannot say a word in support of, and which was of a gross and a grievous character; and his nephew now says that that allegation of Lord Salisbury, injurious as it is, remaining without a shadow of defence to prop it, needs no apology. I hold that until and unless Lord Salisbury can show that he was justified in the broad and most important statement that he made, a personal apology from him is due to the hon. Member for North-East Cork. These are personal matters; yes, but very important matters. It is no slight matter that charges of this kind should be made by the Prime Minister of the country against a man who is put in prison; and then, forsooth! we are to have a shifting and a shrinking from any attempt to deal with them. But with regard to putting him in prison, what was the apology of the right hon. Gentleman? When the hon. Member for North-East Cork—admitting the abstract plea of the naked illegality of the act he did—pointed to the attendant circumstances and consequences of that act, the right hon. Gentleman, instead of admitting the value and virtue of those pleas, generalized his charge, and said it was the habitual practice of Irish Members to do these things. Why, then, did they select for prosecution this instance, in which the hon. Member for North-East Cork is able to state, without contradiction, that his intervention, whatever judgment may be given on the naked question of its illegality, not only saved the tenants from distress, but saved the public peace from disorder and outrage? I wish to call the attention of the House to what I think the most important part of the statement I have presumed to make. When I heard the Address read from the Chair, I said that the heart of it was a challenging paragraph; and when I heard the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, I said to myself—"Never did I hear so challenging a speech." The assertions of the hon. Member for North East-Cork opened up the whole question, and gave Her Majesty's Government the opportunity, by contradiction, of grappling with these assertions and establishing their case, and of showing that their designs against the National League and the Plan of Campaign were at least in process of accomplishment. Here I may say one word about the Plan of Campaign. The Plan of Campaign is an interference with the law; it is, no doubt, a substitute, without authority, for the law. Far be it from me to deny that, necessarily, such a Plan in the abstract is an evil. It is something more; it is a sign of deeper evils; it is a sign that the law itself is not doing its work, and that the condition of legality does not exist; it is a warning to set about restoring them. This is not the only case where extra-legal combination and anti-legal combination have been brought into existence for the purpose of mitigating social disorder. You will recollect the Swing riots—sheer offences against the law in England. But those offences had the most important and powerful effects in bringing about wide, sweeping, essential reforms of the law, which without them probably never would have been got. We know what lynch law is in America—completely extra-legal—completely in the abstract anti-legal, a sign of imperfect organization—not of inveterate mischief, but of imperfect and insufficient growth of the social organism. And a much worse and more remarkable case, though one little known, perhaps, to most of the hon. Members in this House, but well known to those who know the history of Italy, is the Italian Camorra—the underground government in Italy. I do not think it passed through the country, but in the Southern part of Italy it passed through the whole of society. It existed side by side with the Government; it overrode the Government, and fulfilled that condition which the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) regards as so satisfactory, and even desirable—a completely secret society. These are all of them in their nature evils; but such is the condition of man and the imperfection of his institutions, that sometimes things which are evils in themselves are the cure or mitigation of greater evils. With respect to the Plan of Campaign, what is to be shown—I am not assuming any conclusion—about it is that without the Plan of Campaign Ireland would have been happier and more tranquil than it is at the present moment. Now, Sir, the hon. Member for North-East Cork—with a gallantry that did him honour, and a sincerity of conviction which quickened his whole speech, able and eloquent as it was, into an intense vitality—grappled with the whole of this question and delivered these six propositions, which, so far as the Plan of Campaign is concerned, gave to the Government the amplest opportunity of scrutiny and contradiction. First, he says that in every single instance at least its terms have been granted. He says that there are only three cases in which absolutely no settlement has been arrived at. He says that when the settlement has come it has come in some cases on the terms of the Plan of Campaign, and in some cases on still better terms for the tenant. He says, secondly, that every evicted tenant has been reinstated. He says, thirdly, that every shilling of costs has been borne by the landlords.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: To make it quite clear, let me explain that these three propositions refer only to cases which have been actually settled up to the present time.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): How many cases do you say have been settled?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I cannot tell.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I can tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he wishes to know. About 40 cases have been settled.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member said, fourthly—and no arguments or facts were brought against this statement, that a single Campaign estate is sufficient to keep the peace of a whole county—an allegation that where the Plan of Campaign is worked the peace of the county is best preserved. The Government had it in their power to contradict that statement if the facts would enable them to do so, but they did not offer a word of contradiction. In the fifth place, the hon. Gentleman said that throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, not an outrage can be traced to the Plan of Campaign. The Government have not offered the smallest contradiction, except, indeed, that very small contradiction offered by the hon. and learned Attorney General, who said that in a particular instance, where he could not say what the cause of a certain crime was, he inferred that it was due to the Plan of Campaign. That is the sort of contradiction, and the only contradiction offered on the part of the Government. In the sixth place, the hon. Gentleman said—and this has not been contradicted at all—that whereas we now appear to know that there are 40 cases that have been settled under the Plan of Campaign, there is no case in which the demands made under that Plan have been censured as rapacious or unreasonable by a single Land Commission. I am not arguing at this moment upon the propriety of the Plan; I am arguing upon its success—I am arguing with the Government who introduced a Bill to put it down. I have shown that in respect to these allegations directly made there is hardly the smallest shred of contradiction or qualification made against any one of them, and that these allegations—taken as they stand, and without a contradiction—show at this moment that, notwithstanding the boasts of the Administration, the Plan of Campaign stands in Ireland at the hour we speak entire, successful, and triumphant. With regard to the National League, the right hon. Gentleman, I think, succeeded in showing with great effort, by elaborate quotations from a given newspaper, that there was one suppressed branch of the National League out of the whole 1,800 branches, and out of the 300 that had been suppressed, which, in respect of pecuniary matters—

and I venture to suggest that it is a very considerable test of the whole—was in a sickly condition. I am not discussing the character of the League. I said last year that it was the duty of the Government to watch it closely and jealously, but to watch it legally. I am not discussing its character; I am speaking of its success. But how does that matter stand? The hon. Member for Cork asserts that the branches have increased, that they are now over 1,800 in number, and that the suppressed branches are flourishing and are freely reported. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General said—"Oh, no; we are driving them into secrecy." If you were, you would be doing one of the greatest mischiefs. But the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General totally forgot another part of his speech, in which he said that in the week ending the 7th of January, 1888, there were in four newspapers alone 60 reports of meetings of suppressed branches. He brought up an article from one newspaper stimulating the people to subscribe, and another article stimulating the people to attend. He does not seem to be aware of what is the known and habitual mode of existence of religious and benevolent societies. They all of them subsist upon difficulties and debt, and by continual and moving representations of their deficits. By means of these deficits and representations they draw forth these constantly-increasing subscriptions which make these remarkable British institutions the hope of this country. No doubt the branches in many cases are preaching the necessity of increased subscriptions, and, in some cases, they feel that necessity; but my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) showed last night that for the first fortnight of February, 1885, the Irish subscriptions were £242, and that they had increased regularly from February, 1885, through the intervening years, until February, 1888, they had grown to the comparatively respectable amount of £520. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary referred to the weight of the hon. Member for North-East Cork. I think if he weighs the National League now, since it has been under his proscription for a certain time, it will appear, according to the facts before us, that it will weigh considerably heavier than before. There is this one other important point—that the right hon. Gentleman made no attempt—in the course of his properly protracted speech—to connect the National League or the Plan of Campaign with the commission of crime and outrage. The hon. and learned Attorney General did make the attempt; and what was the narrow basis of his attempt? It was one on which a tight-rope dancer might, perhaps, find the means of standing, but on which no man with only the ordinary powers of locomotion could hardly avoid a tumble and a fall. The hon. and learned Gentleman got hold of two cases of crime—one for the Plan of Campaign and the other for the National League. One was the refusal of a dispensary order! The hon. and learned Gentleman, equipped with this magnificent and marvellous apparatus, gravely laid the foundation on which his charge against those institutions rests. He evolved it out of his own inner consciousness, and because he could not see the cause of an outrage, he said he had a right to put it down to those institutions; and that there might be no jealousy between them, he gave one to the National League and the other to the Plan of Campaign. Let me tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman what course was open to him and the Government if they intended deliberately and seriously to show a connection between crime and outrage on the one side, and those considerable powers which they are labouring to put forth on the other side. There are two courses which they might pursue. If they think there is ground for their assertion, the hon. and learned Gentlemen ought to have searched the evidence given in all the numerous prosecutions which the Government has instituted, and shown us upon the testimony of witnesses and the declarations of judicial authority that there is a connection between crime and the National League and the Plan of Campaign. Not the smallest attempt have they made to do anything of the kind; and I must suppose, until I am better informed, that the reason is they could find no such evidence in existence. I give no credit to the National League—I give no credit to the Plan of Campaign for the absence of such evidence; because to encourage crime on the part of either of those institutions, or even to tolerate crime so far as they are concerned, would be suicidal. That is the course which the Government might have pursued. I once pursued it myself in arguing the case of that unhappy Bill of 1881 — unhappy as to the nature of its provisions, adopted for meeting what, nevertheless, at the time was a most threatening evil. I argued that the Land League was a league as it operated then importing danger to the country, and I showed, or, at any rate, elaborately tried to show, by following the formation of the branches of the League through various parts of Ireland, and comparing the formation of those branches with the figures of crime in the same neighbourhoods; and I endeavoured to show that wherever you traced the steps of the Land League there you traced the increase of crime. Why did not the hon. and learned Attorney General take that course? Why did he not say, I find here a county where the National League is especially strong, and I find there that crime abounds; I find another county where the National League is weak, and there I find that crime is small in amount; I find another county, and I apply a similar process in regard to the Plan of Campaign. The hon. and learned Gentleman, acting as he always does, with the greatest acuteness and ability on the part of the Government, carefully eschewed those methods of proceeding, because he knew very well that any attempt of the sort made by them would only result in utter failure. I think that the evidence before us, as far as it goes, and it goes pretty far, shows that as regards those great objects which the Government have in view, the putting down of the National League and the putting down of the Plan of Campaign, their efforts have resulted in total failure. Whether it be through the Land Act—by its beneficial but imperfect provisions—or whether it be that the dawning rays of hope are the beginning of a knitting of the hearts of the one nation to the other, there is a diminution of crime, such as it is, still gradually taking place—and we wish it were greater, and we congratulate the Government and the country upon it, and we trust that, under the influence of beneficent and benevolent agencies, crime may continue to decrease. Such is the retrospect. Well, if that is the retrospect, what is the prospect before us—what is to come? Will the Government ever continue to deal with signs and never look at the substance—will it for ever deal with external symptoms, and never search out the source and seat of the malady; to tear from a diseased and luxuriant vegetation here a twig and there a leaf, but never to ask themselves whether the proper course is not to bring it out by the roots? There are many things said by the Government in debate, but there is one thing that they and their supporters most rarely say—I think, indeed, as far as my own recollection and experience are concerned, I might go further and assert that they never say. We never, I think, hear them express a confidence that they will be able to establish a permanent resistance to the policy of Home Rule. I am glad not to be met with an adverse challenge, although, no doubt, the kindness of hon. Gentlemen opposite in listening to me while speaking at, I fear, intolerable length, dictates their silence. What I would say to them is this. If this be a question of time at all, then it is most important to consider what is the right time. I do not disguise from myself any more than the hon. Member for North-East Cork does the strength of the combination that is opposed to us. They are very strong indeed. They have nearly the whole of the wealth of the country; they have nearly the whole of the high stations of the country; they have most of the elements of social strength that abound among them; they have with these all the influence which belongs to wealth, rank, and station in this country, which is vast in its amount, and which I must say is systematically and boldly, but which is, in most instances, deservedly possessed in connection with them. They are very strong, and by their strength they may secure delay. But, Sir, delay on a subject of this kind—a controversy between nations—is no obvious or unmixed good. It has its dangers and its inconveniencies. You are happily free at this moment from the slightest shadow of foreign complications. You have at this moment the Constitutional assent of Ireland, pledged to you in the most solemn form, for the efficacy of the policy which I am considering. But the day may come when your condition may not be so happy. I do not expect, any more than I desire, these foreign complications. Still, it is not wise wholly to shut them out of view. What we have to fear is rather this—that if resistance to the national voice of Ireland be pushed too far, those who now guide the mind of that Nation may gradually lose their power and be supplanted by ruder and more dangerous agencies and spirits, and that these very institutions—the National League and the Plan of Campaign—which would vanish into thin air in a rational settlement of the Irish Question, may drive such deep root into the soil, may acquire such a mastery, not only over the understanding but over the passions of the people—for passion in all these cases will always be let loose, and cupidity to urge unjust claims will always march in the rear of just and fair disposition to urge just claims—these institutions may grow to a dangerous power which have been themselves in the first instance the offspring of bad government, that they may acquire a strength that will enable them hereafter to offer the most serious hindrances to government which is good. I hope that there will be deeper reflection upon these matters. In the present administration of Ireland it is quite plain that you are endeavouring to do—and the language of Lord Salisbury himself in his speeches shows too clearly the intention—you are endeavouring, in substance, to do what has long been attempted, but under circumstances wholly different. For 700 years, with Ireland practically unrepresented, with Ireland prostrate, with the forces of this great and powerful Island absolutely united—for these 700 years you have tried and failed to do that which you are now trying to do with Ireland fully represented in your Parliament—with Ireland herself as a people raised to a position which is erect and strong, and with the mind of England so divided that if you look to the elections of the last 12 months the majority of the people have voted in favour of the concession of her desire for Home Rule. How long is this to continue? I would venture to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite, under such circumstances as these, and with the experience which you have, is your persistence in this system of administration—I will not say just, because I know that you contest—but is it wise, is it politic, is it hopeful, is it Conservative? Or will you now at length bethink yourselves to change, and consent to administer and finally to legislate for Ireland as you legislate for England and Scotland, in conformity with the Constitutionally expressed wishes and the profound and permanent convictions of the people, and will you thus at last consent to present to the world the blessed spectacle of a truly, and not a nominally, united Empire?

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) said, that however much they might differ from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), still they could not help on that—the Conservative—side of the House, if not on the other, admiring his great oratorical powers. He (Lord Henry Bruce) rather thought, however, after seeing the mote in the eye of his brother, the right hon. Gentleman was regardless of the beam in his own. Nothing that the right hon. Gentleman could see could divert the attention of the British people from the fact that he and his Party had practically had control of Irish affairs for the last 20 years, and that they had completely failed to put them in order. He agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman had stated—that the question was a most dangerous and difficult one to handle. Even now the right hon. Gentleman had no scheme which he could submit to them, and which he could assure them would be certain to make the Irish people satisfied. If the right hon. Gentleman could produce such a scheme, the case might be entirely different; but, as he could not, it was too much for him to ask the people of Great Britain to follow his lead blindly. They had been overdosed, as regarded this question of Ireland, by the right hon. Gentleman; and not only by the right hon. Gentleman, who acted upon the principle, "The King wills it," but by his son, the little Crown Prince. They would remember the words of Mr. Froude—that the Irish difficulty had arisen, in a very great degree, from our good nature, and that a more peremptory and less scrupulous people would have ended it long ago. They should not lose sight of that view, although it was their wish, in every sense of the word, to rule Ireland in a Constitutional manner. While they did that, however, it was necessary to protect those who were under the despotism of the National League—under what was called the unwritten law. They had heard a good deal lately about the policy of the union of hearts; and this was the sort of thing they heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, speaking at Dover, on Boxing Day. The right hon. Gentleman had said—

> "Orangemen have been for three generations the greatest plague in Ireland, and the source of its greatest mischief."

Was that the sort of language calculated to bring about the union of hearts? Not so; and he (Lord Henry Bruce) thought he might say, with Shakespeare—"The lady doth protest too much, methinks." No one would contend that the Orangemen had not faults; but it must be borne in mind that they were the thriving section of the community. The House should not forget that in Belfast the population had increased, during the past 50 years, from 70,000 to 240,000. They had been informed in this House that the movement going on at the present moment in Ireland was a Constitutional one; but what was the keystone of the policy of hon. Members from Ireland and the Gladstonian Party? Why, it was this. Speaking at the Chicago Convention, in 1886, these words were used by the hon. Member for North Wexford (Mr. J. E. Redmond)—

> "I assert here to-day that the government of Ireland by England is an impossibility, and I believe it to be our duty to make it so."

It was evident from this that national independence was what was held out; and it was asked that this and similar language should be satisfactorily "explained away" before the people of Great Britain assented to any proposal for the extension of local self-government in Ireland. He remembered that a great admirer of Garibaldi's, when the General came over to England, advised him to get married. The only objection to that course was that General Garibaldi was already married. "Oh, no matter about that," said the gentleman, "we will get Mr. Gladstone to explain it away." No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian would be able to explain away the words of the hon. Member for North Wexford which he had quoted. But these words did not stand alone. They had the following account of the return home of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) in the newspapers of the day:—

> "Mr. William O'Brien left New York for Queenstown yesterday in the steamer *Adriatic.* He takes with him 25,000 dols. for the Parnell Fund."

The Daily News correspondent says that at the close of the farewell banquet to Mr. O'Brien on Tuesday night Mr. O'Brien found the 69th Militia Regiment, known as the Irish Regiment, waiting outside the hotel, with a band of music, to escort him to the steamer. A large crowd of people had gathered in the square, and he stepped upon the balcony of the hotel and made a brief speech, saying—

> "'Men of New York, I am setting out to-night to the old land, and I am more than glad before I go to have this opportunity of thanking the working men of New York for such a glorious demonstration. I know you have it in your hearts that it is for Ireland. I know of no higher honour than to be surrounded by the Irish hearts and the Irish bayonets of the gallant 69th Regiment. Only one greater pleasure could be given to me, and that would be to be with them on the Irish hillside with their bayonets flashing and the green flag floating over them, and their gallant Colonel to lead them.' This speech excited uproarious cheering. Mr. O'Brien was escorted to his carriage at the head of the regiment, and passed down Broadway to the White Star Pier, where he went on board amid renewed cheering."

They had the evidence of the spirit of the Irish Leaders and their reverence for the Constitution and the law of the country in the proceedings of the Enniscorthy Guardians, because on December the 11th, 1886, the hon. Member for North Wexford had said—

> "Home Rule was defeated at the last Election of Great Britain, and I say advisedly that if, in the face of that defeat, the Tories had been able to rule Ireland with the ordinary law, the result would have been in England and Scotland to throw back our cause for a generation. We have been able to force the Government to give up the ordinary law."

This was a most barefaced admission. For hon. Gentlemen now turn round and upbraid the Government for what they, out of their own mouths, admit they compelled them to do. How had the Home Rule Members been able to defeat the ordinary law? Why, simply by the Plan of Campaign and the system of Boycotting. The shameful and horrible results of the system of

Boycotting practised in Ireland was shown by the proceedings of the Woodford branch of the National League and in the case of "Blunt *v.* Byrne." District Inspector Murphy had said—"There are 23 families, comprising 92 persons, Boycotted in my district." The Lord Chief Baron had asked—"What do you mean exactly by being Boycotted?" and the witness went on to recount several outrages. He said, for instance, that on the 7th of October, 1887, the hair was cut off the mane and tail of a mare, the property of a Boycotted man named Regan, and the following questions were asked in the course of the case:—

> "Mr. Atkinson: Mr. Murphy, were you Boycotted yourself?—Yes; very closely indeed.
>
> "When did it cease?—In April, 1887.
>
> "Were you severely Boycotted?—I could not be more severely Boycotted.
>
> "To what extent were you Boycotted?—To the extent of near depriving me of everything they could deprive me of.
>
> "Were you able to obtain food for your family and your children?—Not always. I will give one instance. I saw my child crying one day for bread, and could not get it.
>
> "For how long could you not get it?—For a couple of hours; it could not be obtained until night.
>
> "Did you try to get it?—I did not, but my servant did, and she was refused.
>
> "How did you get it at last?—When night came on the bread was got through a poor simpleton who would not be suspected. I could get very little meat, and had the greatest difficulty in procuring milk; one of my own men had to bring milk in to me from his station several miles off in the despatch case. Sooner than see my child fasting, I had to put my horse myself into the trap numbers of times and drive several miles to Boycotted persons to get milk from them. I could have fought it out myself, but my wife and child could not."

The revolting system demonstrated in that report was what hon. Gentlemen opposite described in the mild language of "exclusive dealing." All this was exactly what the Government meant to stamp out—it was the work of the National League. That League had been declared by the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) to be the apostolic successor of the Land League, of which he had said that crime dogged its footsteps. In view of the crime which, there could be no reasonable doubt, would not have been perpetrated but for the League, he believed that the country would stand by the Government in putting down the League. This disturbed district had been the scene of the most horrible murders. County Inspector O'Brien had said—

> "He knew Woodford, Loughrea, and the surrounding district, in which, within 13 months, he had seen the bodies of eight murdered men."

The vast majority of these murders was due to the League, and he would ask how long was this car of the National League Juggernaut to devastate the land? Boycotting, or "exclusive dealing," as hon. Members opposite were fond of calling it, was not only practised against ordinary citizens, but actually against the priests; for in the case of Canon Walsh, P.P., of Rothmore, Boycotting was practised until the rev. gentleman became a member of the National League, measures being taken to prevent him from getting his fees. Hon. Members opposite complained that public discussion had been stopped in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had said at Dover—

> "You find, gentlemen, that the Press is prosecuted and restrained, and you find that public discussion is stopped."

But it was evident that very little reliance was to be placed on those words, for any one who took the trouble to read *United Ireland* for the 31st of December, 1887—the paper edited by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien)—would find these words—

> "Mr. Balfour has finished tearing the cassock off Father Matthew Ryan and making him wear the prison garb. We knew he would, the lily-livered coward."

It was plain that public discussion had not been stopped when *United Ireland* every week contained the most scurrilous abuse of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian asked at Dover, "Are you satisfied with what is going on in Ireland?" Well, he (Lord Henry Bruce) did not think hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were very well satisfied when the right hon. Gentleman was once in power. In a manifesto signed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), during the Election of 1885, the following words were used—

> "The Liberal Party practised a system of Coercion more brutal than any previous Administration, Liberal or Tory; 1,250 were imprisoned without trial; ladies were convicted under an obsolete Act against the degraded of their sex."

He asked if this was true? Hon. Gentlemen did not reply; they knew better than to open their mouths. There were such things as political memories, and if the words he had quoted were not true it was infamous for anyone to have written them. These words were not spoken in a speech, but they appeared in a manifesto signed by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool. In addition it was said—"The Tories for five years gave us some little freedom." What was that freedom? and how was it requited? The Plan of Campaign? Hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway were greatly in the habit of saying they were the people of Ireland. He (Lord Henry Bruce) denied that they represented the people of Ireland. He denied that they were the people of Ireland in any shape or form, and upon that point he could give them a far better authority than himself. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said at the close of 1881—"Our opponents are not the people of Ireland. We are endeavouring to relieve the people of Ireland from a tyrannical yoke." What the right hon. Gentleman and his Party tried to do in 1881 the present Government were trying to do in 1888. What did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) once say? He said—"If you want to get at the truth you must never forget that there are two Irelands." It could never be expected that a National League Parliament would be allowed to be propped up by British bayonets. There could be no question that in the end the Loyalists of Ireland must be triumphant. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) had asked how long would England tolerate the present state of things? It was not a question only of how long England would tolerate it, but how long Ireland would tolerate it. It was for hon. Gentlemen opposite to decide. The present state of affairs might continue as long as this Parliament lasted, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian and his friends might eventually get into power; but it must be remembered that before they could complete their Home Rule policy it would be absolutely necessary for them to subjugate the Loyalists of Ireland.

Lord Henry Bruce

MR. BURT (Morpeth) said, that seeing, as he did, so many Members anxious to take part in the debate, and bearing in mind the great speeches they had listened to last night and to-night, and especially having the marvellous speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) still ringing in our ears, it was not without hesitation that he intervened in the debate. But there were one or two points which, with the permission of the House, he desired to bring forward. He had listened with a good deal of attention to the speeches which had been delivered, and he regretted that some of those speeches, though marked with great ability—take that, for instance, of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) and that of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell)—were characterized by offensive insinuations, by attacks and personalities which, though they might enliven their proceedings, did not tend to raise the tone of the debates, conduce to good feeling, or help the Government of Ireland. The noble Lord the Member for the Chippenham Division of Wiltshire (Lord Henry Bruce) had to some extent spoken in the same spirit, but he must compliment the noble Lord on having made a new accusation against the Irish Members, a feat which he had thought would be very difficult, if not impossible. The noble Lord accused these Members of being dumb. Now the Amendment before the House referred to the Act of last year, and that Act was, in his opinion, a very harsh and a very unjust one. It had been said by Members of the Government that the Act did not create any new crime, but to his mind that statement amounted almost to a quibble. It was true that actions that were quite legal last Session were now illegal, and it was true that the Government—the Party opposite—who prided themselves on equality, had made criminal in Ireland what was not criminal on this side of the Channel. The complaint, however, that he had to make against the Government was with respect to the administration of the law. The present system was a very bad one; it was admittedly bad. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in an earlier part of the

Session, pointed out that some portions of the administration of the Criminal Law, and those the most delicate and difficult portions, which required the most careful handling, were taken out of the hands of Judges and juries and placed in the hands of men of an inferior stamp—in the hands of men who owed their appointments, who owed their retention in office and their promotion to the Executive Government. How did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) meet that accusation? The right hon. Gentleman was a master of dialectics, and he said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, or his Government, were responsible for the appointment of the great majority of the men in question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had to-night denied the accuracy of that statement, and had pointed out that if it was true it was irrelevant, because it was the system that was being criticized. There was no attack being made on the Government, but on the system which enabled the Executive to have complete control over those whose duty it was to administer the law. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster), speaking last night, said it was the duty of the Executive to enforce the law. He (Mr. Burt) entirely agreed with that proposition, but it might be other people's duty to defy the law if that law was unjust, and of course they must take the consequences of that defiance of the law. A great deal had been said about Boycotting. He did not mean to discuss the merits of the system. He himself had never advocated Boycotting, directly or indirectly. When he had had to deal with large bodies of men he had advised them to obey the law even when he knew the law to be unjust. But he was addressing men who could by reasonable agitation have bad laws amended. If he had been addressing constituents whose recognized and duly appointed Representatives were overridden and overwhelmed by superior numbers, he would not say that his advice would have been the same. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had said that Boycotting corresponded with picketing as practised by Trades Unions. He (Mr. Burt) would not then discuss the question of picketing, but he did think that the history of Trades Unions ought to have taught some lessons to Members of both political Parties. Trade Unions until 1825 were illegal. The laws were afterwards considerably modified. But even then they were still inequitable, for a breach of contract on the part of the workman was a criminal offence, while on the part of the employer it was only a civil offence. In 1875 that law was altered. [*Cheers.*] Yes, hon. Gentlemen cheered that. He had never denied the merits of the Conservative Government at that time in altering the law, but it must be remembered they had the help of the Liberal Party in making the modifications. If he mistook not, the Conservatives found in the pigeon holes of the Government, Bills dealing with Trades Unions ready prepared by their Predecessors. But he did not wish to deal with the question merely as a Party one. What he wanted to point out to the House was that the Trades Union laws were considerably modified, and that under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875 picketing was allowed. The offences were strictly defined; the administration of the law was very much altered, and magistrates and others who administered justice could fine instead of imprisoning. The accused could demand trial by jury, and there was in every case the right of appeal—a right which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary promised last year to embody in the existing Criminal Law Amendment Act relating to Ireland; but which promise he had not fulfilled. What he wanted to emphasize was, that so long as Trades Unions were illegal, so long as there was any inequality between employer and labourer, there was lawlessness, there was illegality, and there was violence on the part of the working people. But precisely as Parliament legalized the trades' societies and put employer and workmen on equal terms, the workmen became in the same degree not only law-abiding, but, what was much better, law-respecting. Now, during the discussions relating to Trades Unions in 1875, some very important sentiments were uttered. The noble Lord—Lord Cross—who was now Secretary of State for India, but who then was Secretary of State for the Home Department, carried the Bill through the House not only with great ability, but also with very great fairness. He well remembered one remark of the noble Lord, and it was to be found in *Hansard*, June 10, 1875. Lord Cross said—

> "If no crime has been committed, do not send a man to prison. Keep up the broad distinction in the minds of the public that gaols are for criminals, and maintain also the belief that if a man becomes criminal he shall go to gaol, but that you will not fill your prisons with persons who have not committed a crime."

If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had been in his place, he (Mr. Burt) should have commended that declaration to his notice. He did not, however, complain of the sentiments uttered by the right hon. Gentleman, but he complained of his non-fulfilment of the promises he had made. He found that the right hon. Gentleman had said something very similar, though, perhaps, it was a little more artistically put. Last year the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I desire that the inhabitants of the two countries should be treated precisely and exactly alike. What we want is that every man who does not belong to the criminal classes shall have the same right in England and in Ireland of having his property protected and his liberty preserved, and we regard that equality as the necessary foundation of every other good this House may give to Ireland." April 18th, 1887.

How had the right hon. Gentleman carried out that doctrine? They heard a great deal in these debates about privileges. He (Mr. Burt) did not believe in privileges. He did not believe in protection, nor in monopolies. He wanted fair play. He did not think that Members of Parliament, if they committed a criminal offence, should be less severely treated than other people; indeed, he thought they ought to be a little more severely treated; but he denied the criminality of a great number of the people who had been sent to gaol in Ireland. Now, how had the right hon. Gentleman carried out the doctrine of equality with regard, for instance, to newspapers? He (Mr. Burt) listened very attentively to the right hon. Gentleman's speech to-night. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the case of *The Cork Examiner*, and he (Mr. Burt) was rather anxious to hear why in that case he sent to gaol the foreman printer—a man who admittedly had no control whatever over what appeared in the newspaper; while in the case of *The Nation* and *United Ireland* he sent the editors to gaol? Why was this distinction made? Why, too, had a distinction been made between English and Irish Members of Parliament? The right hon. Gentleman had quoted statements which had been made by certain English Members while visiting Ireland during the Recess? Some of those statements appeared to him (Mr. Burt) very extravagant, if not illegal. Personally, he would not like to have been responsible for them; they were, however, uttered openly, and the question he asked was why had not the right hon. Gentleman up to the present time put an English Member in prison? He spoke very disinterestedly upon this point, because he was not himself a candidate for an Irish prison. Why did he send Mr. Blunt to gaol? and why did he not send to prison the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre)? These were some of the points which showed that there had not been all the equality and fairness that had been promised, and on which the Government plumed themselves. Some of the cases of boys sent to prison for hooting and for cheering and so on seemed to him to be a discredit, if not to the Government, certainly to the administrators of the law in Ireland. He entirely disapproved of the personal attacks that had been made upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and upon other Irish Secretaries. It seemed to him, if he was in a position to give an impartial opinion, that of late years at any rate, whatever might have been the case in the past, Governments had selected their best men for the Office of Chief Secretary; and if one thing more than another tended to convince him of the rottenness of the existing system, it was the fact that with the best of men the system had completely broken down. He could not help thinking that the Government were under certain delusions. They were, for instance, under the colossal delusion that they were dealing with a handful of conspirators, while as a matter of fact they were face to face with a brave and united nation. Another delusion was of a more personal kind—perhaps it was an amiable one. They thought themselves statesmen, while in point of fact they were only tobogganists. He would hesitate to use that expression if he had not high authority for it. The Prime Minister himself said that they were on a toboggan. He (Mr. Burt) did not blame them for sliding; they must slide until they got to the bottom or were capsized. He condemned them for having deliberately and with their eyes open gone on to the slide. Now the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), in the calm, clear, and statesmanlike speech with which he opened this debate, made one remark which he (Mr. Burt) was glad to hear, and it was that henceforth the majority of the Irish people were trusting to the English Parliament and to the English people for the redress of their grievances. In the eloquent, powerful, impressive, and he would add the magnanimous speech which was delivered to-night by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), the hon. Gentleman said he did not blame the masses of the English people for the policy which had been pursued in Ireland. No; they were not responsible for it; they were not responsible for the past, because they were without political power; but they would be responsible for the future. They would be responsible if the future was not made, as he believed it would be, very different to the past. The union of hearts had been sneered at by the noble Lord the Member for the Chippenham Division of Wiltshire, who had just spoken, but it was nevertheless a reality. The old feeling of antagonism and hostility was fast dying out, and was giving place to trust, to confidence, and to good-will, and it was to this confidence, to this trust, to this good-will, and to the determination of the Liberal Party in this House and in the country to carry out logically and fearlessly the principles of representative Government to their complete issue; it was to these and not to fleets and to armies that they must look for the bringing about of a lasting and more perfect union between the two countries.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) said, he never rose to address the House with a more deep sense of the difficulty before him than he did on the present occasion. After the speech which was delivered earlier in the evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), it was a difficult task for any man to speak, and it was especially a difficult task for an Irishman to do so. They had little that they could offer to the right hon. Gentleman in return for all he had sacrificed and all he had risked and all he had done for them; but this much, at any rate, they had it in their power to do, and that was to be grateful to him for what he had done and for what he had said. He (Mr. Redmond) might be allowed to say—and he was sure he spoke the sentiments of the vast majority of the Irish people when he said it—that the right hon. Gentleman's speech to-night would enshrine him in the grateful memory of the Irish race so long as history remained. Another difficulty he felt in speaking to-night on that debate was this, that the case which the Irish Members had presented in condemnation of the Government's action had been so overwhelming and so unshaken that he really did not know in what direction he had better turn in an effort to strengthen that case. The object for which the Crimes Act, as it was called, was passed, was, he thought, perfectly well understood in this House. Its primary object avowedly was to suppress the National League. Did anyone doubt that statement? Would anyone contradict it after the speech they had had a few minutes ago from the noble Lord (Lord Henry Bruce) who, speaking as a Member of the Conservative Party, gave expression to such sentiments that he (Mr. Redmond) claimed that he ought to vote in favour of the Amendment—he ought to vote in favour of an Amendment which accused the Government of administering the new law in a partial and ineffective manner. The noble Lord had said in his speech that not until the administration of the Act was carried to its logical conclusion—namely, the total suppression of the National League—it should not be said to have fulfilled its purpose. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) last Session just summarized the objects of the Crimes Act. He said—

> "It is a stand-up fight between the Parliament of England and the National League—either you must give up Ireland to the National League, or you must put the National League down. I desire to see the National

League suppressed, and I believe I shall see it suppressed."

Had the hon. and gallant Gentleman seen the National League suppressed? His hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) asserted that the National League to-day was more powerful and more wide-spread than it was before the passing of the Crimes Act; and how had that statement been contradicted? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant undertook that night to answer that assertion; and how did he do it? He first of all selected a speech made by a clergyman in the county of Wexford with reference to a district in which the League was not suppressed, but he made no reference whatever to a district in that county where the League was suppressed; and he (Mr. Redmond) ventured to say to the right hon. Gentleman, on behalf of the rev. gentleman whom he quoted, that in order to make the League more successful in the district where he boasted that it was not very powerful, all that was needed was that that district should be included in the suppressing order, because admittedly, in the only other portion of the county of Wexford where the National League had been suppressed by order of the Lord Lieutenant, the League was more wide-spread and wide-spreading than it was some months ago. As a matter of fact, the National League as an organization had not been touched. It was to-day the centre of political life in Ireland. Its central office in Dublin still directed the political life of the whole of the country, and no attempt had been made to interfere with the League as an organization, or with its central power. There were, at the date of the passage of the Act, 1,800 branches of the National League; and that number, since the Act came into operation, had been considerably increased. The House would have taken note of the figures which were quoted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) last night showing clearly that the revenue derived from the Irish branches of the National League had gone on steadily increasing fortnight by fortnight during the whole time that the Proclamation of the League had been in force. Now, another object of the passage of the Act was to suppress the Plan of Campaign; but he (Mr. Redmond) did not think he could usefully say one single word further on that subject. The fact was uncontroverted that in 40 odd cases the Plan of Campaign had succeeded, that in no case had it failed, and that in only three cases was the struggle going on at the present moment. The fact was not contended that during the operation of the Crimes Act—during the last six months—the Plan of Campaign had proceeded with its working, and the only thing the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was able to say was this—that he believed on two or three estates the people were still engaged with the struggle with their landlords, and curses not light but deep were going up against the men who induced the tenantry to join the Plan. He (Mr. Redmond) could speak in a special manner with regard to one of these estates, as it was situated in his own constituency, and the tenants were constituents of his. He should refer to the estate to which he alluded before he sat down, and with the permission of the House he would endeavour to show that the tenants were to-day, owing to the intervention of the League, happy and comfortable—as happy and as comfortable as they were before they were convicted—and if there were any curses to be heard in the district, they were curses not directed against the Irish Members, but against the Administration, which in that particular district of Ireland was stained, as he would presently show, with the blood of an innocent man. But he took it that the principal object of the passage of the Coercion Act was to put down crime and outrage; and without now going into the question as to whether there was, at the date of the passage of the Act, sufficient crime and outrage to warrant its passage, he would like to direct the attention of the House to the figures of outrage which had been presented in the Returns laid upon the Table within the last few days. These Returns showed a considerable diminution in the total number of outrages in the year 1887 as compared with the year 1886. But comparing the year 1886 in detail with the year 1887, they found that very little difference indeed had taken place in the amount of any one single class of serious offences. Let him read the figures. Comparing 1886, there were seven murders and three manslaughters; in 1887 there were six murders and two manslaughters. In 1886 there were 16 cases of firing at the person. In 1887, though the Act was in force during six months of it, there were 19 such cases. In 1886 there were 20 cases of aggravated assault; in 1887 there were 27. The number of assaults on bailiffs and process-servers was exactly the same in both years. In 1886 there were nine riots; in 1887 there were 10. In 1886 there were 103 incendiary fires; in 1887 there were 127. In 1886 there were two cases only of demand and robbery of arms; in 1887 there were nine such cases. In 1886 there were 92 cases of intimidation otherwise than by threatening letters; in 1887 there were 93 cases of intimidation. In 1886 there were 10 offences classified as resistance to legal process; in 1887 there were 14 such cases. How then did it come about that the total number of offences for 1887 was smaller by 900 than the total for 1886? The explanation was perfectly simple. It was that there had been a very large diminution in some of the less serious offences. For example, the number of threatening letters had diminished by about one-half; and that was about the extent to which agrarian crime had been diminished during 1887. Exactly the same result would be arrived at by a comparison of the last half of 1887, when the Coercion Act was in force, and the first half when it was not in force. In the first half there were nine cases of firing at the person; in the second half there were 10 cases. In the first half there were 53 incendiary fires; in the second half there were 67. In the first half there were 25 cases of killing and cutting, or maiming cattle; in the second half there were 29. In the first half there were 17 cases of firing into dwelling-houses; in the second half there were 19. And so on. Generally speaking, the total for the six months during which the Coercion Act was in force, all the most serious kinds of offences—that was to say, murder, attempted murder, firing at the person, manslaughter, firing into dwelling-houses, incendiary fires, cattle maiming, attacking houses, demand or robbery of arms, &c.—in the quarter when the Act was in force, reached the number of 130; whilst during the six months ending on June last these offences were only 119. Those figures were taken from Returns laid on the Table of the House as part of the defence of the Government of their administration of this Act. Those were the only figures produced to the House with reference to crime on which the Government relied to show that their Act had been a success; and, before passing from figures, he wished to point out that in the county of Kerry, which, unfortunately, was the worst district probably in Ireland, from the point of view of these offences, during the quarter ending Christmas last, there were 26 offences and one murder, and in the quarter before there were only 23 offences and no murder at all. The diminution in the total, for which credit was claimed for the Coercion Act, was apparent only in the case of threatening letters and the nine trivial offences, and was not observable in the case of any single one of the really serious classes of crimes. Now, let him ask this serious question—Had the Act, as a matter of fact, been put into operation either for the dectection or the punishment of any serious crime or outrage whatever? What were the crimes and outrages classified in that Return? Murder, manslaughter, firing at the person, attempt to murder, cutting or maiming the person, cutting or maiming the cattle, incendiary fires, demand and robbery of arms, intimidation, firing into dwelling-houses, &c. What now are the offences for which men had been punished under the Act? Not a single man had been punished under this Act for any one of these serious offences. The list of convictions might be roughly classified as convictions for new offences created by the Act. First, convictions for Press offences, for exclusive dealing, and for assaults on bailiffs and policemen. Let him say two or three words with reference to these different classes of offences. He did not think that it was necessary for him to say a word to show that the statement made to-night by the Chief Secretary, and repeated so often by his supporters, that no new offences were created by the Act, was utterly untrue. Luckily they had the well-considered words of one of the most eminent Judges who ever sat on the Irish Bench on this matter. Chief Baron Palles, the other day, used these remarkable words—

"Under this Act a man may commit a crime which he could not possibly know was a crime when it was committed. Any one of us may go home this evening and commit crimes which, under these circumstances, we could not possibly know were crimes until we were prosecuted for them."

The Judge went on to say more on the subject, but he (Mr. Redmond) did not read the whole judgment. The judgment emphasized the fact that new crimes were created under the sections of the Act. He (Mr. Redmond) might point out how that came about. Some 600 odd persons had been prosecuted under the Act in Ireland. There had been some 400 convictions, and would it be believed that one-half of the total number of convictions obtained were convictions which came under the title of either "unlawful assembly" or "inciting to unlawful assembly?" Now, everyone knew that unlawful assembly was an offence at Common Law; but in Ireland an unlawful offence was by this Act defined to be a meeting of any association whatever, because there was no limit. Whatever the Lord Lieutenant chose by a scratch of his pen to declare to be dangerous was unlawful, and by another scratch of his pen he could suppress it. So that in the case of one-half of the total number of convictions men had been punished for absolutely new offences. He did not think he could give a better instance of what he meant than by citing, very shortly, what occurred in the case of Mr. Cox, one of the Representatives of County Clare. This Gentleman was charged with inciting people to take part in an unlawful assembly. The evidence against him rested only upon one subject, and the magistrate who convicted him felt constrained to say, in sentencing him to four months' imprisonment, that the offence for which he was sentencing him had no amount of moral guilt about it, that it would not have been an offence at all if committed anywhere else than in that prescribed district. Let him read to the House, very shortly, a passage from the speech for which Mr. Cox was sent to prison. This was what Mr. Cox was sent to prison for four months for saying—

"I would implore the young men of Clare—and I wish my voice could reach the ears and hearts of every young man in Clare to-night—and this Lisdoonvarne case may point a moral if it cannot adorn a sad tale for them. Let them shun outrages, and avoid the tempter to evil deeds as they would shun Satan himself, and if for no holier and higher motive, at least for the selfish motive of their own safety. There were foolish people in the country who thought revenge should be wreaked for every petty act of local tyranny. I do not think the common sense of the country will accept their opinions and views against the opinions and views of our great Leader, Mr. Parnell, or the greatest statesman of modern times, Mr. Gladstone. Wherever and whenever you meet with such men avoid them and shun them, for, believe me, their's is no good purpose. The louder they boast of their patriotism, and what they are prepared to do and dare, the more reason have you to shun them, for, believe me, nine out of every 10 of such men are in the pay of our enemies. We have now the great Liberal Party of England at our back, with their great Leader, Mr. Gladstone; we have the English democracy with us, as will be told to you in a few minutes by Mr. Conybeare. With such allies nothing can stop or stay our march to liberty save and except the commission of outrage, which must inevitably drive our allies from our side, and bring joy, hope, and satisfaction to the hearts of the miserable gang of Coercionists—the Cullinane-Balfour now in Office. Hearken, then, to the advice of the great Leader, who never yet gave a wrong counsel or advice; follow the counsel of the veteran Leader of the great Liberal Party, be guilty of no crime or outrage. Follow the open and Constitutional agitation which has already brought us almost to the goal of our long lost rights; adhere to the teachings and doctrines of the National League—but, I forgot, my friends, Balfour says the League is proclaimed in Clare. I ask you is it? [*Loud shouts of* 'No!'] I wish Balfour were here to listen to that thundering shout; he would know the value you place on his Proclamations."

That was the crime for which his (Mr. Redmond's) Colleague was now spending four months in gaol—for those words adhered to the "teachings and doctrines of the National League." For making that speech the magistrates came to the conclusion that Mr. Cox had been guilty of inciting men to take part at meetings of the National League, which meetings of the League in any particular district had been made unlawful assemblies by the action of the Lord Lieutenant. Notwithstanding that the whole of the hon. Member's speech, with the exception of that one passage, was a passionate appeal to the people to remain within the lines of law and the Constitution, Mr. Cox was sentenced to four months' imprisonment. Allusion had been made to the case of Mr. Sheehy, and the refusal of bail in that case. Well, what was done in the case of Mr. Cox? When he was convicted he was re-arrested on leaving the Court on another charge; and an application was made to admit him to bail; and the magistrate said—and here he (Mr. Redmond) was repeating words which he had heard with his own ears—

> "We have no doubt or question that Mr. Cox would, if he gave bail, appear to the charge; but because he evaded the summons of the Court we think and mark our sense of his conduct by refusing him bail."

Consequently, bail was refused, and, being arrested on the second charge, Mr. Cox was sent to prison. He (Mr. Redmond) would not allude at all to the case of those Press prosecutions which had been referred to in the course of the debate; but he desired, with the permission of the House, to say two or three words on the Boycotting prosecutions. Now, there was a peculiar interest attaching to every statement of facts connected with Ireland made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. If he remembered rightly, the Chief Secretary had only instanced three particular cases during his term of Office as illustrating the tyranny of the National League—one was the case of Mrs. Dillon, alluded to to-night; another was the case of Mr. Barrett, which had not been alluded to; and the third was the case of Mrs. Connell, which had been referred to. As to Mrs. Dillon, what happened? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) said that the accusation of the Chief Secretary on that head had been contradicted. He (Mr. Redmond) understood the Chief Secretary to-night still to adhere to the truth of his statement. But what really happened? This woman brought an action for libel and slander against the right hon. Gentleman. The woman on her oath swore that the statement made by the Chief Secretary was false. But what was the defence in the Court of Law set up by the right hon. Gentleman? It was not that his statement was true or justifiable, or anything of that kind. No; his real defence was this—he pleaded Parliamentary Privilege for his speech; and the case could not be proceeded with in the Law Courts. So much for the contradiction of the Chief Secretary on that point. What was the second case that the right hon. Gentleman alluded to? Why, it was the case of Mr. Barrett. Barrett had occasion also to bring an action for libel against the right hon. Gentleman; but the right hon. Gentleman, unfortunately for himself, was not in a position in reference to this statement to plead Parliamentary Privilege, because the speech was made out-of-doors. He had had to acknowledge that his statement was false, and he had paid a certain sum of money into Court by way of damage. And now with reference to the third case — that of Mrs. Connell. He (Mr. Redmond) might possibly have had the appearance of breaking the Rules of Order in interposing earlier in the evening on that matter; but he had only interposed because he was afraid he would not have an opportunity of referring to the case in the House. What he wished to say was that he was a party to all the transactions of the Court in this particular case. He heard the whole case, having been engaged in it. As a matter of fact, he had defended the men who were accused before the Court. What was the sting of the accusation against the defendants? It was this—that a certain decrepit old woman had been starving for three days for want of bread which was refused to her in the shops. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had denied the truth of the allegations in that case. He had said that she was not a decrepit old woman; he had said that she had not offered money for the bread, but had been in the habit of obtaining bread in charity from these people; he said the woman did not want the bread, but had been sent to get it by a Mrs. Maroney, a noted character, in order to get up the prosecution; and the hon. Gentleman had said finally that the woman was not starving, as it was proved that she had a pit of potatoes at her house. Now, the most important of these statements the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had not ventured to deny to-night. He did not deny, in the first place, that this woman did not want the bread, and that she was sent to get it by this other person in order to get up a prosecution against certain individuals. He did not deny, in the second place, that she was not starving, because she had a pit of potatoes at her own house. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny the statements, because each one of them was a matter of notoriety, and was admitted by the woman herself in cross-examination at the witness table. He (Mr. Redmond) was there to say positively that, so far as the evidence of the case went, the woman offered no money whatever when she asked for the goods. Of course, the matter of her age was merely a matter of opinion, and he was only stating his own belief when he said that she was nothing like the age asserted, and that she certainly was not, as described, "a decrepit old woman." One point more. His hon. Friend had stated that this woman, when she came on the witness table to give her evidence, was drunk. That was denied; but he (Mr. Redmond) asserted in the most positive manner that it was perfectly true. There were two cases the woman appeared to give evidence in. In the first place, she gave evidence in a case in which a conviction was obtained. On the occasion of the hearing of the second case she was more than drunk, and contradicted herself in her evidence to such an extent as to the action of those she was swearing against, that the case was dismissed, notwithstanding that there was other strong evidence. So that, on these points, he repeated the statement; and he thought in the third instance, the case of the Chief Secretary against the National League, like the other two which preceded it, was torn to pieces. With regard to this matter of Boycotting, he wished to mention another case. There had been several trials of this kind in the town in question, and, unfortunately, small riots had taken place there in the streets, from the fact that the country people collected there, took drink in the public-houses, and that a collision with the police was the result. The parish priest, immediately before the trial in connection with Mrs. Connell, made an appeal, for the peace of the town, to the publicans to close their shops and to sell no liquor on the day of the trial. They did so, and every shop in the town had the shutters up—no one was allowed to get a drop of drink. Would the House believe that every one of those publicans were arrested for conspiracy to refuse drink to the police, and that every one of them was sentenced to one month's imprisonment without the right of appeal? The defence urged for these men was that, if there had been a conspiracy, it had been incited by the parish priest, and entered into in order to preserve the peace of the town by preventing men getting excited with liquor. A Return had been laid before the House, showing a decrease in the number of persons Boycotted. The point he wished to make in reference to that Return was that, where Boycotting had decreased, it was not the result of the Act of Parliament, but owing to the success of the Plan of Campaign. Boycotting in the district of Tulla and Clare had been very rife, and it suddenly ceased immediately two men were convicted for exclusive dealing, and the Government might naturally claim that it was the result of the prosecution; but what was the fact? Boycotting had ceased because the Plan of Campaign at Bodyke had been successful, and the number of the persons Boycotted diminished in consequence. The Attorney General had said, with reference to the case of Thomas Brosnan, of Castleisland, who, in December last, had been shot at and wounded in the legs, that the poor man applied to Father Fitzgerald for a dispensary order, which he was entitled to, but that he did not get it, the only possible reason being that a relative of his had been a witness in a Government case in which two men had been hanged. His hon. Friend the Member for Kerry had taken pains to inquire into this matter by telegraph, and he (Mr. Redmond) held in his hand the reply of Father Fitzgerald, who said—

> "It is absolutely false that I refused a dispensary order to Thomas Brosnan, because he gave evidence in the case. I am not a member of the Dispensary Committee, and I have no knowledge that I have the right to give a dispensary order at all."

After this, the case of the Attorney General might be added to the others which had been adduced in that House, in order to vilify the National movement in Ireland, and which, on examination, had turned out to be as false as dicers' oaths. He had no wish to go into the question of the Coolgreany Estate, but this he must say. He had listened to the pictures drawn in that House of the murder which took place recently in the county of Kerry—a horrible murder which they abhorred, and of which a terrible representation had appeared in one of the illustrated papers; but he could not help thinking how little they had heard in that debate of the horrible murder perpetrated on the Coolgreany Estate by a number of men over whom, he distinctly charged it, that the Government were throwing their protecting shield. The murdered man was a constituent of his, and he (Mr. Redmond) was present when he was evicted from his house; he was an old man of 70 years; he lived on the top of one of the highest mountains in Ireland, and his words were—

> "My family have been living here since this mountain was called Crokan Kinsala, after them, and it's very hard that I should be turned out."

That was one case. In another, the tenant's house was burnt before his eyes. He and some of his Colleagues went there and used their influence to get the people to restrain their passions. They took the advice, and he was proud to say that the National League had built a new house for every one of the evicted families, and that neither the parents nor the children had been allowed to suffer want. On that estate 11 tenants had gone into the Land Court in 1882, and got small reductions of rent, which, on the appeal of the landlord, were put back upon them. Their rents were 33 per cent over the valuation; the neighbouring landlords had given a reduction of 30 per cent; these tenants asked for that reduction, the landlord refused it, and they were evicted. A body of Emergency men were permanently encamped in their midst, of whom the Judge who tried the case said that they were going about armed as no civilians were on that side of Texas. These men had gone to make an illegal distress; a number of tenants had assembled, and there was a show of resistance; but there were no firearms and no stones. The Emergency men fired on the unarmed crowd, and shot an old man. When some of them were arrested and brought before the local Justice, who was Chairman of the Emergency Association, they were released without bail. Indictments were subsequently sent up to the Grand Jury in one case of murder, in another of manslaughter; but the Grand Jury, composed of the employers of these men, threw out the bill, and the men were never tried. The House had heard nothing of all this in the course of the debate; but it was a murder quite as foul as the murder of Fitzgerald, and it was one which up to that day remained unavenged by the majesty of the law. The administration of the present Chief Secretary began in blood. His administration was to be credited with the death of Hanlon, with the death of the men at Mitchelstown; and in common justice to the Irish people, and the Government too, these things should be borne in mind. Having mentioned these facts, he would conclude by saying that to whatever provocation during the coming months the people might be subjected, every victim of oppression would feel the consoling words spoken that night by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian; and, if for no higher or nobler purpose, the Irish people would restrain their passions for the sake of making some return to the right hon. Gentleman and to those men who had risked so much and sacrificed so much for the cause of people who were poor and helpless, and had no power to repay them.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian complained of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland that in his speech he had not gone to the heart of the controversy in which we are engaged. I think that that will not be the judgment of those who listened to the speech of my right hon. Friend. For a few minutes I wish the House to be good enough to lend me their attention. I wish, at any rate, to carry the question to its very heart. I do not wish simply to occupy myself with details, but I wish to see upon what great issues the House is to pronounce to-night, both as regards the conduct of Her Majesty's Government and, I hope I may add, as regards the conduct of Her Majesty's Opposition. We shall not be content to try this question simply by the action of the Executive Government. No; we shall examine what has been the effect of the speeches which have been made from the Front Opposition Bench. We shall examine, and the country will judge, to what extent this is a new departure, and the country will watch with interest the hand that was stretched out by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to the editor of *United Ireland*. [*Prolonged Opposition cheers.*] Hon. Members will observe with what enthusiasm the Front Opposition Bench cheer the statement of this compliment paid by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to the editor of *United Ireland.* [" Hear, hear! "] I observe that the cheer has diminished in intensity in proportion as the memory of that speech recedes and the memory of those articles is more present. We have to deal with this new departure. This evening, perhaps for the first time, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has blessed the Plan of Campaign. [An hon. MEMBER: Oh, no; not at all.] He has not blessed it? Has he cursed it, or has he observed a discreet silence —stating the good it had done, but reserving himself carefully lest at any future time he should be charged with having spoken in its praise? I want the House and the country not only to note the declarations and the eloquent expressions of right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench; I want them also to notice the reticence and the evasions of those same right hon. Gentlemen with regard to the questions which have been put to them. There was my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who was asked whether he approved of disobedience to a law which has been enacted by this House, and who was careful to explain that that was not now the question before the House. No doubt it was not convenient for him to reply to a question of that kind, because right hon. Gentlemen opposite are in this position — they have at once to endeavour to retain the affections of the law-abiding people of this country, and to secure the esteem and the regard of the less law-abiding portion of the population on the other side of St. George's Channel. And, accordingly, the right hon. Gentleman said — " That is not the question before the House; the question before the House is the administration of this particular Act." Yes; but we are not content to leave the question there. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Hear, hear!] We are perfectly prepared, I may say in reply to the defiant cheer of the right hon. Member for Derby, to maintain our case with regard to the action of Her Majesty's Government; but there is not a single person in this Realm who does not know that that action has been rendered ten times more difficult than it would have been, that the great task in which we have been engaged has been heightened in its difficulty by the conduct of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. [*Opposition cheers.*] They accept the statement. The task of maintaining law and order in Ireland—[*Interruption from an Irish Member below the Gangway.*] Hon. Members below the Gangway, I hope, will show fair play in this debate. We have listened to some speeches which have touched us on this side. The hon. Member for North-East Cork spoke of the Irish people as being quick to resent injustice, and he taunted hon. Members on this side and the Unionist Party with playing on the passions of the Irish people by the use of exasperating language. Those words, again let me remind the House, fell from the lips of the editor of *United Ireland.* It is he who presumed to rebuke the Unionist Party on the score of exasperating language. But I can assure hon. Members below the Gangway, and it will be known by every British Member of this House, that if the English people are not so quick to resent injustice, yet that they do resent injustice no less than Irishmen; and the foul injustice which in a hundred quarters has been poured upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland touches as deeply those who adhere to the Unionist cause as any reproaches which have been directed against the Irish Members may touch those who sit upon the opposite Benches. I do not think it can be made a charge against the Unionist Party that they have been the first to indulge in exasperating language. Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said he would at once go to the heart of the question, and he somewhat rebuked the Chief Secretary for Ireland for not having gone sufficiently into the really important part of it. My right hon. Friend had to deal with an immense number of charges which had been brought against him; and I think the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was somewhat ungenerous, if I may use the phrase, in taunting the Chief Secretary for not having replied to every single one of the charges which have been brought against him during the last three or four months, especially as, if hon. Members opposite had had their way, they would have forced even an earlier speech from my right hon. Friend, and allowed him less opportunity than he has actually had of answering this multitude of charges. [An hon. MEMBER: No!] Yes; there was an immense cry for my right hon. Friend, in which the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) joined, as I noticed, with special enthusiasm, for my right hon. Friend to rise on the spot after the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork. I think the defence made by my right hon. Friend was perfectly adequate; and it did not lie in the mouths of the right hon. Gentlemen who were going to answer my right hon. Friend to maintain that, when the whole burden of this matter rests upon his shoulders, he should speak at such time as would give them the opportunity of addressing themselves to answer his arguments with the greatest possible convenience. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian brought a number of specific cases forward, and he challenged me to give an immediate reply to them all. While the right hon. Gentleman said we were to go to the heart of the question, nevertheless one of the first subjects with which he dealt, which seemed more important than the question of the relations of landlord and tenant, more important than the question of the treatment of political prisoners, was that well-worn argument about Lord Carnarvon which had been introduced by the hon. Member for Cork. It was impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to resist the temptations of this Party controversy, and thus for a considerable portion of his eloquent speech he diverted the House from the consideration of those most important issues to which, he said, he would at once refer. I cannot complain if he also defended himself against the charges which have been made during the Recess. Still, if this was natural on his part, it was natural on the part of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was part of the duty of the Chief Secretary to meet the charges brought against him. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, when he had settled down to his work, began to justify, and to endorse, and impress upon the memory of both sides what we shall certainly remember on this side, how the ex-Prime Minister of England rallied to the forces of disorder, when he used the famous words, "Remember Mitchelstown!" [*Cheers.*] I notice that cheer is far more below the Gangway than among his former supporters. ["No!"] Ah, there was only one voice cried "No!" [Several hon. MEMBERS: No!] It is still conspicuous in its solitary condition. We have the advantage on these Benches of being able to see from what quarters the cheers proceed, and we have noticed with interest, but certainly not with surprise, that the newer development of the doctrine of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian is received with frantic applause below a certain geographical line in this House, but above that line it is received in comparative silence. ["No!"] Yes; but there are not many independent denials. If hon. Members are anxious on that point, let me indicate another symptom to the House. Let me call their attention to the quarter from which the speeches have been made on that side during this debate. There has not been a single speech, with the exception of those of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and of the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench, delivered by any Member who belonged to the Party of the right hon. Gentleman before 1880. I have gone through the list, and it is those who are recent recruits and who belong to the new school from whom the attacks on the Government have come. Those who used to be the bulk of the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman have sat silent, without speech and cheers, and why? Because they could not endorse his new policy, which is a policy of alliance with the forces of disorder and lawlessness. And so I say it is only his more recent Followers who endorse "Remember Mitchelstown." The right hon. Gentleman and others in this debate—[*A laugh*]. I do not know why there is that merriment at the mention of Mitchelstown. [An Irish MEMBER: Go on!] Let the House remember this, that one of the most prominent charges in this debate against the Government relates to an event which occurred before the House broke up last year. The right hon. Gentleman went over all the circumstances, from his point of view, which compelled the police to fire. [*A laugh.*] That causes a laugh. Why? Because it was only a policeman who was half beaten to death. The policeman who was half beaten to death by "the boys" was not a matter for the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to refer to. Where does he get his facts from? [An Irish MEMBER: From the inquest!] Yes; the proceedings of which were quashed. So far as it goes, I will deal with the evidence at the inquest. What is the gravamen of the charge of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian? He first dealt with the police going in a wedge through the crowd. As a matter of fact they did not go in a wedge. They went in single file. ["No!"] Oh, I am perfectly prepared for that. There is no assertion on this side of the House which is not flatly contradicted, and those who contradict proceed on the ground, to which I demur, that there is nothing but mendacity upon the part of all the officers of the Government, while there is absolute veracity on their part. When anything is stated on this side to the House an hon. Member is sure to get up on that side and say, "That is absolutely untrue"—[Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!]—and then they cheer him as if that was conclusive. They make the gross insinuation that all the servants of the Executive Government in Ireland are capable of being suborned to perjury on every possible occasion. You make that insinuation continually, but you do not like the bald words in which I have put it. Let me protest at the same time against the words of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, which, I think, were unworthy of him as an old head of the Executive Government. He spoke of the minions and myrmidons of the Irish Secretary, I would ask him, Whom did he mean by the minions and myrmidons? Did he mean the police who used to protect the Chief Secretary who served under him? Perhaps the right hon. Member for Derby will kindly answer that question.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): The right hon. Gentleman carries on his speeches by question and answer. I should like to know, Sir, from you, as a matter of Order, whether we are bound in the middle of a speech to answer questions? [*Cries of* "Order!"] He wishes that we should answer him. [*Renewed cries of* "Order!"] I understand—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—I have been asked a question. [*More cries of* "Order!"] I have only to say that I believe the persons alluded to are those sitting on the Ministerial Bench.

MR. GOSCHEN: Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Member for Derby anticipates his position by possibly some 20 minutes or half-an-hour. I put to him in the ordinary Parliamentary form a question, which I submitted to him in the same manner in which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has submitted many questions to us. I asked him—and I hope when he speaks he will give us the solution of the problem — who the minions and myrmidons were to whom the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian alluded? The right hon. Gentleman is now probably informing the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian of the very poor joke which he just made, which was that the minions and myrmidons were those who are sitting on this Bench. No, Sir; it is no laughing matter at all; but one of serious import, and it is for that reason that I asked the question, whether the right hon. Gentleman meant the House to infer that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had minions and myrmidons at his command who would supply him with facts *ad libitum*. That was the point at which I had arrived when the right hon. Gentleman interrupted me. I am glad to proceed now in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman. He seemed to forget, when he stated the case of Mitchelstown in his own fashion, that there was a policeman named Fahy who is now suffering from an affection of the spine, from which he will never recover, and that that policeman was being beaten—beaten to death, as his Friends say—by those whom he has called "boys" in his speech to-night. Allusion has been made to the inquest; and it is the inquest from which it is said that the right hon. Gentleman has gathered his facts. He gathered the substance of the case from the evidence of Irwin, whose veracity was accepted entirely by the Nationalist Representatives, and who yet stated that it was absolutely necessary that shots should be fired in order to save the lives of the police. The last three shots were fired with that object, and yet the right hon. Gentleman has omitted that fact. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me if I speak with some warmth with regard to this matter. He has spoken with some warmth, and it is from no personal disrespect to him that I speak with warmth. I say that it is unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman to represent the case to the country as he has done, omitting this most material fact. Although the Inspector, upon whose word even the enemies of the police rely, said it was necessary that these shots should be fired, the right hon. Gentleman nevertheless gets up in this House and puts before the country, amid the enthusiastic cheers of his Friends, that these shots were fired unnecessarily and wantonly, and lays the responsibility upon the heads of the Irish police. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] Do you or do you not reject the evidence of Irwin? [*Cries of* "Certainly!" "No!"] The House will judge. His evidence was paraded by the Nationalist Press as that of a policeman who had spoken the truth. But when the evidence which this man gives becomes unsuitable, then hon. Members throw over even the witness in whom they before professed to believe. We may gather now their justice and their fairness with regard to other matters. I say that the presentment of the case by the right hon. Gentleman was unfair to the police. I do not care that it was unfair to the Government. It was unfair to the police, and in the present state of things in Ireland, and looking to public opinion with regard to the officers of the law, I ask whether it was a justifiable act on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that he should suppress the most important elements in the case. Well, the right hon. Gentleman says that he used fruitful words with regard to "Remember Mitchelstown." I do not know in what respect he intended these words to be remembered. I think that those who hear me—[*Interruption; a telegram being produced by* Mr. A. MORLEY *announcing the result of the Southwark Election in favour of the Liberal Candidate.*] I presume we have to congratulate hon. Members opposite on the result of the contest to-day. Perhaps it may to some extent console them for the diminution of 1,000 votes, which their Party has suffered elsewhere. It is not usual, I think, in this House to witness a demonstration of this kind in the middle of a speech, but I admit that the whole traditions of the House have so entirely changed that one must be prepared for this sort of thing. [*Loud Opposition cheers.*] It strikes me that this House, I say it in all good humour, has the appearance of a public meeting at election time. [*Cries of* "Go on!" *and* "Order!"] I was dealing with the attack which was made by the right hon. Gentleman in connection with the words "Remember Mitchelstown," and I was speaking of the fruitful character that he was attributing to his remarks. I want to know whether those words were fruitful as regards the suppression of crime and disorder, or as regards the encouragement of disorder. Upon that point the right hon. Gentleman left us in some doubt. The next case which the right hon. Gentleman asked me to deal with was the case of Mr. Sheehy, the Member for Galway. He asked whether it was within the law, or within the ordinary practice, for a magistrate to exercise any discretion as regards accepting bail. [Mr. Gladstone dissented.] Then that was not the point; but the right hon. Gentleman attacked the Government and the administration of the law because Mr. Sheehy was not admitted to bail—[An hon. MEMBER: Because conditions were imposed]—because a condition was imposed, and because it was said, to use the right hon. Gentleman's phrase, that he must not open his lips. With regard to this, let me first make one remark. The right hon. Gentleman attacked the administration of the law, and he took two cases of persons who had been sent to gaol. Those cases were both the cases of Members of Parliament. Many other people have been sent to gaol; possibly many have been sent to prison under hard circumstances. Many have been sent to gaol who have wives and children dependent upon them, but the right hon. Gentleman's pity was reserved, and his illustrations were reserved, for Members of this House. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and cheers.*] Hon. Members opposite may protest as much as they please; but we will not admit on this side of the House that Members are to claim privileges as regards criminal process or arrest which are not shared by other subjects of Her Majesty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle made some strange remarks upon this subject last night. He was speaking of the majesty of this House, and he said it was against its majesty that Members of Parliament should be liable to criminal process. He argued that, having already a certain exemption from civil process, Members of this House should also have certain privileges in the case of criminal process. I presume that he meant that it was to be remitted to the Committee of Privileges to consider what scale of punishment should be established for the commission of crimes by Members of this House. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] That was the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. He does not shake his head. He admits, therefore, that he suggested that exemptions as regards criminal process should be extended to Members of this House.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am sorry to be obliged to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. What I said was that I thought that if this kind of administration was to go on, the House would have to consider whether it would not be obliged to fix a scale of so-called criminal processes which should, during the Session of Parliament, exempt Members from arrest.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Let the House realize thoroughly the proposal—a scale to exempt law-breakers from the consequences of their actions if they become law-makers. The majesty of this House indeed! The right hon. Gentleman thinks it is against the dignity of this House that detectives should be placed at its doors. To my mind it seems that it is more against the dignity of the House that it should be necessary to take that precaution because there are law-breakers inside it. The right hon. Gentleman is jealous of the honour of the House, yet he contemplates with equanimity the prospect that Members of Parliament should continue to set the example to the public of breaking the laws which they themselves have made, and then, sheltering themselves under Parliamentary privilege, should claim exemption for their actions. That is the suggestion of my right hon. Friend. In a precisely similar spirit the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian seems to feel especial sympathy for Members of Parliament who are arrested, and chose all his illustrations from the class for whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle claims exemption from arrest.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I mentioned two Members of Parliament and 14 others.

Mr. GOSCHEN: With regard to the point which I am now discussing, the right hon. Gentleman only quoted the case of Members of Parliament. I admit he dealt afterwards, under a perfectly separate head, with those who were imprisoned for selling newspapers; but this particular indictment was founded upon the cases of Members of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman spoke as if he was unaware of the discretion which is continually exercised by magistrates of refusing or not refusing bail. [An hon. Member: That is not the point.] It is the point. The point is this, and the hon. Member will see I did not miss it—but we did not criticize the right hon. Gentleman in that way while he was speaking—the right hon. Gentleman said a condition was imposed, and the lips of the accused Member were to be closed. But why had he been arrested? He had committed the offence of using language inciting to crime; and the condition which was imposed by the magistrate was not simply that he was to close his lips, but that he was to promise that during the time he was on bail he would not repeat the offence. That is the whole gravamen of the charge. It is not as if his lips were to be padlocked, that was not the case at all; the point was he was not to repeat the particular offence. Lawyers on the other side will say whether it is not a common demand to make on the part of magistrates that men shall not repeat the offence with which they are charged during the time they are out on bail. Hon. Members know that some scandals have happened from the absence of such precautions. They know that men who have been admitted to bail when charged with a particular offence have gone on pursuing the same conduct for which it was intended to put them on their trial. The Executive Government cannot be expected to play in this matter. What we have to do is to administer an Act so as to secure the object of that Act, and it would be a futile proceeding if persons charged and admitted to bail were to be allowed to go on repeating during the period of their bail the offence with which they were charged. I am doing my best to follow the right hon. Gentleman through his various charges, and I am dealing with them *seriatim*. It is difficult at a moment's notice to have to deal with such an indictment. The next point was that which the right hon. Gentleman spoke as "incredible meanness." What did he mean by incredible meanness? It consisted, if I understood the right hon. Gentleman rightly, in passing short sentences which deprived the accused of the right of appeal, and in giving two separate months' imprisonment instead of a single sentence for two months, which would have carried that right. This was one of the most eloquent passages of his speech. He asked—"How, with such incredible meanness, can you expect ever to be forgiven by the Irish people?" There is a curious fact which Members below the Gangway have forgotten—an act of "incredible meanness" of that kind, if "incredible meanness" it be—namely that precisely the same thing happened under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman when one of his neighbours on that Bench was Chief Secretary. Here is the case. On the 1st of January, 1883, Mr. John M'Philpin, proprietor of *The Tuam News*, was prosecuted under the 7th section of the Crimes Act of 1882 before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction at Tuam, and the offence charged was the publication of intimidating notices in *The Tuam News*. This is a Press prosecution not dissimilar from that of Alderman Hooper. What happened in this case? Mr. M'Philpin was convicted and was sentenced on three distinct charges to imprisonment for one month, 14 days, and 14 days, two months in all. His solicitor applied to have the sentence increased so as to give a right of appeal, but the Court refused his application, and Mr. M'Philpin was removed in custody. Oh! incredible meanness! Can the Government which pursued such a course of "incredible meanness," or which sanctioned the conduct of the magistrate in performing such an act as this, be pardoned now by hon. Members who sit below the Gangway? Let me congratulate hon. Members who sit below the Gangway on the indulgence of their memories, because the right hon. Gentleman says that no actions of this kind ought ever to be forgiven, and the fact that we have performed such acts, ought, he considers, to rouse any public spirit that may still remain in Ireland to what apparently would be further resistance to the laws. I trust the right hon. Gentleman feels that this charge of "incredible meanness" against Her Majesty's Government has had the effect which he intended. The right hon. Gentleman and others have complained of what they call our continual resort to *tu quoque*. But *tu quoque* means not only a desire to recriminate; we have a deeper and a more valuable meaning, one we are free to press home—namely, to show the hollowness of the accusations against the present Government. If we allude to these transactions in the past, it is not in order to pour opprobrium upon right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I can assure hon. Members opposite there is, at least on my part, no desire to give any pain by these reminiscences, though painful, I am afraid, they must sometimes be; but the object is to show that there is obvious hollowness and insincerity in the charges made, that they are made at the spur of political necessity and with a particular political object, and that they are not believed in even by those who make them, because it is clear that the Government presided over by my right hon. Friend, and of which the right hon. Member for Derby was a Member, would never have been guilty of any act of "incredible meanness." I refer to this matter in order to show that the charges against the Government are hollow charges, and simply made in order to score a political point. As to the charge made against us by the right hon. Gentleman with reference to newspapers, he was perfectly inaccurate as regards the facts. He said in eloquent language—"How can these poor men know the contents of the paper which they are selling?" They may know the contents of the paper. They had been distinctly warned by the police before, that if they sold the paper they would be sent to gaol. [*Home Rule cries of* "Oh!"] I might repeat the observation of an hon. Gentleman opposite and say that hon. Members do not see the point. The point is not what the Government did, but what the right hon. Gentleman said they did. The right hon. Gentleman charged the magistrates and the police with sending men to prison who were perfectly innocent of the offences of which they were convicted. Is that a fair statement? The right hon. Gentleman asked how these men knew what was in the paper. I answer him that they knew they were breaking the law, and that they intended to break it under the pressure of the National League. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] It was part of the organization of the League. I may say distinctly that it is not the Government who have sent these persons to prison. They have been sent to prison in the ordinary course of the law, and I demur to the statement that the Executive Government in this House is to be held responsible for every act done in the ordinary process of the law in Ireland. At all events, I have answered the right hon. Gentleman on this point. The facts which the right hon. Gentleman presented to the House are totally inaccurate, and I repeat that these men were sent to prison because they had deliberately defied the law. Of course, this is an offence which has ceased to be an offence since the new doctrines preached by hon. Members below the Gangway were accepted by hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway. It is impossible for me at this time of night to follow the right hon. Gentleman through the whole of his speech, but I have done my best to answer some of his accusations on points of detail. I will now deal with the graver questions which he raised towards the end of his speech. He said that we had failed to establish our case. He contended that we had failed to put down crime and the Plan of Campaign, and, above all, that we had failed to establish a connection between the National League and crime. The right hon. Gentleman reminded the House, too, how differently he himself had dealt with the League. The House will remember his own phrase—"Crime dogged the footsteps of the League." We know now that this statement was no inference on his part. He has told us to-night how carefully he had examined the case. It was after that careful examination that he declared that crime dogged the footsteps of the League. He had gone through the case district by district, county by county; he had brought his great experience and information to bear upon the question, and as the result he introduced a Crimes Bill into this House, and stated on his own responsibility afterwards that crime dogged the footsteps of the League. The National League, we know, is the direct heir of the Land League, and we are told by authorized spokesmen of the League that they have not changed their methods and that they have not abandoned their policy. I noticed that it was with some consternation that hon. Members below the Gangway listened to the right hon. Gentleman when he explained how carefully he had examined the manner in which crime dogged the footsteps of the League. I leave it to him to explain, or to any of his Friends to explain, when crime ceased to dog those footsteps. The right hon. Gentleman has complimented the men who organized the League and who were its chief members at that time. Has he forgotten or has he forgiven them since he found that crime dogged the footsteps of the League? I leave that question for him to answer. It is difficult enough, and the right hon. Gentleman knows it, as having been once responsible for the government of Ireland, to discover the distinct link and to trace those connections, many of which are underground. But evidence has been brought forward now which shows that there are cases which can be traced, I will not say to the direct action, but I will say to the system of the League. If it is not through the influence of the organization of the League that these crimes have taken place, to what results are they due? It is not from some sudden impulse that Moonlighters have visited the cottages of persons obnoxious to the promoters of the national movement, but it is in consequence of an organization, and I should have thought that with the immense means at the disposal of the League they might have been able, had they been willing, to assist the Government in discovering many of these crimes. What is the only possible inference when we see that resolutions passed by branches of the League have been followed in many instances by crimes committed against the people whom these resolutions denounced? We have been challenged as to whether there is an improvement or not in the state of Ireland. Evidence has been given of that; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has asked whether we can show that there is a diminution in the number of farms remaining unlet on account of that cruel system of Boycotting men who have taken evicted farms. We can give the right hon. Gentleman the assurance and we can make to him the statement that there is an improvement and a decided improvement in that respect. There was a time when there was a constant increase in the number of farms thus lying desolate, ruining agriculture, and ruining the prosperity of Ireland, because branches of the National League would not let men who had wives and children whom they wished to support find the means of subsistence on a farm that was awaiting his labour. I say we see a distinct improvement in this respect. But the right hon. Gentleman will ask us to lay statistics on the Table. He himself was unable when at the head of the Government to assent to the production of such statistics, because it is dangerous and against the public interest to publish particulars of the farms which are derelict or have been derelict in a schedule. No, we cannot produce these statistics; but I trust that the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends will be glad to learn that under the effect of the legislation of Her Majesty's Government there is in this respect, as well as in respect of the diminution of crime and to the greater liberty of the loyalist minority in Ireland, a distinct and decided improvement. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) spoke of the assurances which he is now getting continually from those who belong to the loyal minority in Ireland. [An hon. MEMBER: Give us proofs.] We have endeavoured to put evidence and proofs before you; but there are many points on which the facts are as clear and as plain as day, which yet cannot be scheduled in the columns of a Return presented to Parliament. If the loyal minority are feeling greater courage, if they are feeling greater confidence, if they are shaking off the intimidation that was practised upon them, if they are bringing daily to the Government evidence that they believe there is an improvement in Ireland, that of itself proves that we have made progress, and that something and even much has been gained. Hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, if they like, may triumph at what they think the progress of their cause. [*Home Rule cheers, and a cry of* "Southwark!"] Above all, they have cause to triumph in thinking that they have won over to the Plan of Campaign and to the milder forms of Boycotting and to that organized intimidation of which the hon. Member for North-East Cork boasts, the right hon. Gentleman who has been Prime Minister of England. Why do they not cheer? That certainly is a great gain for them, and one which heightens the difficulty of the Government, but which does not heighten it to a degree which makes us shrink from the tremendous task in which we are now engaged. In his eloquent peroration, the right hon. Gentleman pointed out to us the enormous difficulties which lie in our path. Although I do not say that he spoke in a menacing way of possible foreign complications, he yet spoke of the difficulties that might surround us, and he asked us to be wise in time. In no speech, however, that we have heard from the Benches opposite has there been any recognition of the duty which we owe to the loyal minority in Ireland. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), in his able speech yesterday, emphasized that duty, and pointed out how it would be a disgrace and a dishonour if we were to hand over Ireland now to the forces of the National League. And what said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle? He calls that a platitude. He says that the duty of this country to the loyal minority who have stood by us is a platitude. Well, I believe that the Unionist Party do not so read their political duty. We do not consider that even if expediency, even if our political interests pointed in that direction, we could for one moment swerve from the course that we are now pursuing. If we saw that our difficulties were greater than they are—and I admit to the full how those difficulties are heightened by the present action of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—I believe that we should be false to the mandate which we received at the hands of our countrymen, if we were to allow any threats or menaces from whatever quarter they may come, whether from America or from Ireland, or from the lips of the right hon. Gentleman, to divert us from the duty which lies upon us. The right hon. Gentleman spoke as if it was in coercion alone that we were engaged—["Hear, hear!"]—while at the same time those who cheer forget that their Leader himself has acknowledged the beneficial effect of our legislation. In one sentence they denounce us for having no other policy than coercion, and in another they compliment us on the success of our Land Act. It is not only on coercion that we are engaged. We wish as sincerely and as earnestly as any Gentlemen opposite to be able to serve the interests of Ireland; but obstacles are thrown in our path. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle said that even if we attempt to develop the resources of Ireland, unless we took the National League as our advisers and assistants — ["No!"] Not the National League? Why, the right hon. Gentleman himself will not disavow the sense of his remark.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: It is not a question of sense. I did not say the National League. What I said was that it was in vain for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to dangle his bag of British sovereigns before the eyes of the Irish people in order to carry out public works for Ireland unless he took the Irish nation into co-operation.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I see very little difference. ["Oh, oh!" *and derisive Home Rule cheers.*] The right hon. Member for Derby had better strike out the note he is making because he has not heard what I was going to say.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will take that down too.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Why hon. Members opposite cheered was because they thought I had made a slip. With their habitual impatience and intemperance they scarcely listen to the end of a sentence, and then they take advantage of a truncated bit of one's periods. I was about to say that from the lips of the right hon. Gentleman and those who claim that the National League represents the Irish nation, it is precisely what he wished to indicate, that unless we took the National Party into co-operation we should do no good whatever by advancing public works in Ireland. As we do not intend, in the sense which he wishes, to take the National League or the National Party into co-operation, as we do not intend to grant Home Rule to Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman means this—and it is my charge against him—that he recommends that Ireland is to be left without that development of her resources which hon. Members for Ireland so urgently believe she needs, lest any grant for that purpose should be sullied by coming from the hands of an Imperial instead of a local Parliament. I have ventured to point to that in order to show the difficulties which surround the Government, not only in its task of maintaining law and authority, but also in its task of doing that justice to Ireland which we are as anxious to do as hon. Members opposite. They declare beforehand that even if we attempt to assist Ireland we shall be met by opposition which shall thwart us. All I can say is that the responsibility of such hostility will rest upon the so-called friends of Ireland; it will not rest upon the majority of the Imperial Parliament. We shall endeavour to go forward in the duty which has been imposed upon us, and in doing so we shall rely upon, and we shall receive, the support of the majority of the people of Great Britain.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I think, Sir, that this will be a memorable debate, memorable not only for the speeches which have been made in the course of it, but for the incidents which have occurred in it. The Government have, in what has been called "a challenging speech," invited the judgment of the country upon their conduct in Ireland, which, I venture to say, after the course of this debate—and I say it with confidence—has been a history of humiliating failure. But there is another tribunal and another Court before which they have to be tried—a Court, not of Resident Magistrates, not a Court in communication with Dublin Castle, but a Court which consists of the free tribunal of the people of England. Yes, Sir; their history for the last six months has been before the people of this country. They have gone about assuring and re-assuring their followers that in no circumstances shall there be a Dissolution. Ah! they are right to fear a Dissolution. They are right to fear the terrible judgment which is awaiting their acts. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has "orated" about the country; he has laid the case of the Government before the country. He complained in his speech that the House of Commons was like a public meeting; but I observe that in what he called his truncated periods at the commencement of his speech the right hon. Gentleman said — "I appeal to this House, and I appeal to the public;" and such observations occurred by the dozen. The right hon. Gentleman said—"The country will know;" but the country does know. You need not go very far away—not even outside of your pet preserve of the Metropolitan constituencies—to find out that the country does know. But after the news which saluted him in the course of his speech, I really felt a compassion for the right hon. Gentleman's feelings when the result of the poll at West Southwark was made known to him. [An hon. MEMBER: How about Dundee?] We heard no more about the country, and the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman was addressed altogether to the undissolved and the indissoluble Union majority in this House. At the commencement of his speech the right hon. Gentleman told us that he was coming to the heart of the Irish Question. I waited with great patience for one hour and 20 minutes, and I could not discover from that speech what the heart of the Irish Question was. I rather think that, from the point of view of the Ministry, the Irish Question is defective in the particular quality of heart. There may be a great deal of administrative detail; but there is evidently no heart in it. We have had some very singular statements made from the Government Benches in the course of this debate. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer have both made very long speeches, and there is not a very long time left at my disposal in which to reply to those speeches; but I must say that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has treated me very fairly, because, although he has made a very long speech and has given me very little time to answer it in, he has given me very little to answer. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman falls back upon that great refuge of the Treasury Bench, the *tu quoque* argument; but it strikes me that in the instances relied upon by the right hon. Gentleman there was plenty of the *que*, but that the *quo* was altogether missing. The instances upon which he relied had not the remotest resemblance to each other; and it is the essence of the *tu quoque* that there should be some resemblance between the two cases. The right hon. Gentleman compared a case in which a man had asked to have a higher sentence of two months passed upon him in order that he might appeal with that in which a man had received two consecutive sentences of one month each, neither of which would entitle him to an appeal. Under the Coercion Act, it does not even require us to be Resident Magistrates to see that there is a vast distinction between the two cases; and I must apologize to the House for having even noticed the matter. In answer to the complaint about the treatment of newsvendors, he said that they were told that if they sold certain publications they would be sent to prison; and he relied upon that answer to the complaint as conclusive, as though it were sufficient to tell these people that they must give up their perfectly innocent means of livelihood, or else they must go to prison. The right hon. Gentleman objected to my taking a note of his admission that the National League was the same thing as the Irish nation. I do not differ from that conclusion, nor even from the changed form of the expression, when the right hon. Gentleman substituted the words "Irish Party" for "Irish nation." [An hon. MEMBER: The Nationalist Party.] Well, I do not object to adopt even the expression "the Nationalist Party," because that Party represents 86 out of 103 Irish Members in this House, and, therefore, it comes round to the same thing, though, of course, we know that in their political arithmetic the Party opposite do not believe that the 86 Nationalist Irish Members are equal to even the smallest Member among them. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he wanted to go into the heart of the Irish Question; but why did he not do so? The heart of the Irish Question, as I understand it in this debate, is whether your system of government in Ireland has been a success or a failure. Has coercion produced the results which everyone would desire? I suppose the results of all government which everyone desires would be a contented people. Have you produced by your system of government of Ireland a contented people, or are you likely to produce it by the course you are pursuing?

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, S.W., Bootle): In another five years.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The time varies. It was 20 years just now; and the hon. and gallant Gentleman now says five years. You have had 700 years, and you have not done it yet. [Colonel SANDYS: Cromwell did it.] There is a disciple of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and of the Cromwellian policy of Hell or Connaught. The Attorney General the other night said to us—and it is quite true—"You change your policy and you change your opinions." And then he said—"Why not give a reason for it?" That is not correct; we have given a reason for it. It is because we have come to the conclusion that the policy of coercion is a failure, and ought to be reversed. Do not say that is not a reason; you may not agree with it; but, if true, that is the best reason that could possibly be given. The remarkable part of the matter is that you yourselves came to the same conclusion not very long ago. I am not using this as a *tu quoque*, and I hope the House will believe that I do not use it in a Party sense, when I say that it is a very remarkable circumstance. I will assume, in your favour, that you were not acting from any Party motives whatever, but that you were acting from sincere conviction and careful observation of the working of the Act of 1882, when you came to the conclusion, which all of you expressed in 1885, that the policy of coercion in 1882 had been a failure, and that it ought not to be resumed, and that you ought to govern Ireland not upon principles of coercion. Then how can you with any justice say, having yourselves arrived at that opinion, that we are wrong in arriving at that conclusion, too? It seems to me that that is an argument deserving your attention. You are going to put down the National League. Hardly the most sanguine among you claims that you have put down the National League. No doubt it is a powerful organization; and, as I understand, it has two objects. One is a political object, and the other I may call in the true sense of the word, and not in any invidious sense, is an agrarian object, to deal with the relations between landlords and tenants in Ireland. You have determined to put that organization down by exceptional laws and by an exceptional administration. I would take leave to ask, is that a wise thing to attempt? Is it an attempt which is likely to succeed? We are not altogether without lessons of experience in this matter. Unfortunately, you have taught Ireland that she can never get the most ordinary justice except by the only resource which belongs to the weak, the resource of combination. Among all the great boons of justice given much too late to Ireland, every one has been extorted by the combination of the Irish people. You cannot expect that the Irish people should not remember that lesson which you yourselves have so repeatedly taught her. That was the case with Catholic Emancipation. I do not wish to weary the House; but I should like to call attention to the history of the Catholic Association. It has a resemblance to the National League—a very close resemblance, indeed. Let me read an account given of the Catholic Association by Mr. Dawson, a very well-known man, and a relation of Sir Robert Peel. He says—

> "The state of Ireland is an anomaly in the history of civilized nations. It is true that we have a Government to which an outward obedience is shown, which is responsible to Parliament and answerable to God for the manner of administering its functions; but it is equally true that an immense majority of the people look up, not to the legitimate Government, but to an irresponsible and to a self-constituted Association for the administration of the affairs of the country. The peace of Ireland depends not upon the Government of the King, but upon the dictation of the Catholic Association. It has defied the Government and trampled upon the law of the land. . . . The condition of the landlords is not more consoling; already they have been robbed of their influence over the tenantry—already they have become but mere ciphers on their estates; nay, in many places they are worse than ciphers, they have been forced to become the tools of their domineering masters, the Catholic priesthood; and it depends upon a single breath, a single resolution of the Catholic Association, whether the landlords are to be robbed of their rents or not. So perfect a system of organization was never

yet achieved by anybody not possessing the legitimate powers of government. It is powerful, it is arrogant; it derides, and it has triumphed over the enactments of the Legislature; and it goes on filling its coffers from the voluntary contributions of the people."

Could you more accurately describe what is now said of the National League? [An hon. MEMBER: The same thing.] It is exactly the same state of things. In 1825, that being the state of things, Parliament determined to put down the Catholic Association. I advise you to read the history of those debates. We, the Liberal Party, are told that we are acting in a manner unworthy of the Liberal Party, because we do not support you in endeavouring to put down the National League. What did the Liberal Party do in 1825? They resisted with all their might, and to the point of obstruction, the Act of Parliament to put down the Catholic Association. I think the introduction of the Bill was debated for five nights—a remarkable thing in those days. Every great man in the Liberal Party declared that until the Catholic claims were conceded they would be no parties to putting down the Catholic Association. And until the legitimate demands of the National League are granted we will be no parties in assisting you in putting down the National League. We will offer precisely the same opposition to your attempts to suppress the National League as was offered by our forefathers to the attempts to put down the Catholic Association. The Tory Party got their Act of Parliament to put down the Catholic Association. Did they put it down? They were not inferior men. There was the Duke of Wellington. He was the equal of the present First Lord of the Treasury. Then there was Sir Robert Peel. He might be matched even with the Chief Secretary for Ireland. They got all the powers of Parliament to put down the Catholic Association. They felt it was a question whether the Catholic Association should govern or whether they should govern. They went on just as you are going on. They said in those days that the Catholic Association was dependent upon coercion, and that if the people were free they would resist the Catholic priests. They declared that never, no never, would they yield. Well, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer could not be more emphatic. They, too, had a Lord Lieutenant who was not quite sound, and they dismissed him, because they thought he favoured the Catholic claims. So Lord Anglesea was dismissed. Up to the very last moment they declared that they never would yield; and all of a sudden it was not they who suppressed the Catholic Association, but it was the Catholic Association which suppressed them. If you read the reasons which Sir Robert Peel gave for conceding the Catholic claims you will find that one of the main arguments he put forward in his speech was the result of the Clare election. That election was an open defiance of the then existing electoral law of the country. Sir Robert Peel foresaw that election after election would go with the Catholics, as the Clare election had gone; and you will find in that remarkable speech that one of the main reasons he gave for conceding the Catholic claims was that it was impossible for any English Government to carry on a policy of coercion against the views of the majority of the Representatives of the Irish people. You are going, you say, to put down the National League. Will you succeed? What politically does the National League represent? It represents the struggle of the Irish people against the policy of the Party of Ascendency. You are the Representatives of that Party of Ascendency. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) went to Belfast, it was to that Party of Ascendency that he appealed, and not to the Irish nation. He spoke o Ulster as a fortress placed at the back gate of Ireland. It was by the Party of Ascendency that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) were surrounded when they went to Dublin. What is all this talk we hear of the loyal minority? What do they understand by it? It means that garrison, that fortress that you have planted in a conquered country—it means the minority that by means of your bayonets have been assisted to trample on the majority of their countrymen. The Unionist policy is the policy of ascendency; and as far as I understand the political object of the National League—and it is only in that sense that I approve it, and in that sense I approve it altogether—it is the old policy of the struggle against the Party of Ascendancy in Ireland, and it is a struggle in which we have always been successful, and in which you have always been defeated. But the National League has another object—an agrarian object—namely, to deal with the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland. The Chief Secretary has found fault with some things that I have said of the Irish landlords. I have nothing to retract. The more I see of the evidence of the conduct of the landlords of Ireland, the more I am convinced that there is no language too strong to condemn their conduct. The history of their injustice and their cruelty for generations is written in the evidence taken by Royal Commission after Royal Commission. Read the Reports of the Devon and Cowper Commissions. You talk of the highway robbery of the Plan of Campaign. But by the evidence taken before these Royal Commissions it appears that the landlords of Ireland have robbed their tenants of their property and driven them from their native land. In my opinion, there is no language too strong to characterize their conduct. You placed the landlords in Ireland originally as a garrison, and gave them a power so large as to be demoralizing to every class in the country. Do not suppose that Lord Clanricarde's case is an exceptional one. I could mention other similar cases; but I do not desire to detain the House. But what are you going to do? The thing is going to be tried out in the case of Lord Clanricarde between you and the National League, which in other cases has invariably succeeded in securing fair terms for the tenants. It is said that the Irish tenants enjoy exceptionally favourable terms under the land legislation of recent years. But what help did you give in passing that legislation? Why, quite recently the Marquess of Salisbury went down to Liverpool and denounced the Land Act of 1881. He spoke of it as subversive of society; and he condemned the men who were parties to the carrying of the Act of 1881—a condemnation in which the Earl of Selborne and the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale were necessarily included. What conclusion should we draw from such language of the Prime Minister? Is it not to be naturally inferred that such animosity and denunciation means that you will strain every power of the Coercion Act to thwart its beneficent working? And that is what you are doing every day. If there be an act of administration which can encourage—which can support—the injustice of a landowner there you will find the Chief Secretary for Ireland at the back of it. If there is an act of administration which can be done to warp the beneficient action of the Land Act, there you will find everything done to trip up and thwart it. And that is the consequence of the attitude which the Government have taken up with reference to the Land Act. Now, the methods pursued by the National League are condemned. Well, Sir, if the National League has conduced, or is conducing, to crime, it deserves to be condemned. What proof have you attempted to adduce that it is now acting in that direction? You have shown none whatever. Even, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) showed most conclusively, the Attorney General has utterly failed to make out any case. The whole evidence I have is that the National League is doing, and has done of late, at all events, a great deal more than you have done to put down agrarian crime in Ireland. In that sense, I believe that the National League has been of immense value to the country in Ireland. But then you condemn Boycotting, and say that it is the wicked engine of the League. If the House will have patience with me for only a few minutes I should like to say a word or two about Boycotting. The hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), in a speech which was one of the most remarkable and impressive speeches I have ever heard in the House of Commons—the Chancellor of the Exchequer taunts us for our admiration of that speech; but, depend upon it, it will be read and admired and will arouse sympathy in every part of the Dominions of the Queen; and if the Chief Secretary for Ireland thinks that he will countervail its effects by insults directed against the hon. Member for North-East Cork, I can assure him he is very much mistaken. The

Chief Secretary for Ireland personally is a most amiable man; but does he think it is a proof of strength to insult people whom he has in his hands? He has not had a long experience in the art of government; but I can tell him that is not the best way of governing. When you have locked a man up in prison, to write sneering letters is not generous, is not magnanimous; and if those are qualities to which the Chief Secretary for Ireland does not aspire, let me assure him that he will not be successful. I know, however, that he is only following a more august example. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian challenged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-night to make an answer on behalf of the Marquess of Salisbury. The Marquess of Salisbury, knowing that a man had been cast into prison and could not answer for himself, made a charge against that man which has been proved in every particular to be absolutely untrue—[Mr. BALFOUR dissented]—in every particular to be absolutely false. Does he mean to make amends for that calumny? If he does not, he may depend upon it that the hon. Member for North-East Cork will hold a higher position in the estimation of his countrymen—I mean Englishmen as well as Irishmen—than is held by the Marquess of Salisbury himself. I only say that in alluding to the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork; but I wanted to make a remark on what he said about Boycotting. I understood him to say—and I agree with him—that there are two kinds of Boycotting; one kind that deserves to be highly condemned, namely, that Boycotting which uses unjust force and pressure upon people in pursuit of their just rights. I have heard—and I have never heard it contradicted—that the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington), the Secretary of the League, read out lists of branches of the League that had been suspended and dissolved on account of improper Boycotting; but the most ingenious, and I think, on the whole, the most satisfactory, defence—or shall I call it apology—for, or palliation of, Boycotting I have heard, comes oddly enough from the Marquess of Salisbury. It is quite true that it came at an opportune moment. It was just before the General Election of 1885, and this is what the Marquess of Salisbury says about Boycotting—

> "There is, therefore, no ground for saying that in the present condition—I am not speaking of the past condition—of the Irish people the Crimes Act was a restraint on outrage, and it was certainly no restraint on Boycotting."

Now mark these words. Let them be read in England and let them be read in Ireland; these are the words of the man who was then Prime Minister, and who is Prime Minister now—

> "Boycotting does not operate through outrage. Boycotting is the act of a large majority of the community resolving to do a number of things not in themselves illegal, but which are only illegal from the manner in which they are done. In truth, it is much more similar to excommunication and interdict in the Middle Ages than any other action with which we are acquainted."

If you speak of such Boycotting as we read of in the papers to-day in the case of the man Finlay, I say it is wicked, and cannot be too strongly condemned. But there is another sort of Boycotting, which is the reprobation of the community for a man who had done dishonest acts. I will give you an instance of this kind of Boycotting. I have heard it spoken of as a most improper phrase to use that a man should be treated as "a moral leper." What is Lord Clanricarde? Lord Clanricarde went out of the Court of the Queen, in my opinion, under the sentence of the Chief Baron of Ireland a leper as white as the snow. He brought down upon him the condemnation of every class of society. That is one of the remedies which society has for offences for which the law gives no remedy. I was astonished to hear the Attorney General say that he recognized no offences except those which are punishable by law. I was surprised at that; because the Attorney General is the adviser not only of Her Majesty's Government, but of a more important organization—the Jockey Club. There they are conversant with offences which are not amenable to the law at all; and he knows perfectly well that social ostracism—a most proper kind of Boycotting—is brought to bear for offences of that description. Therefore, when you confound two kinds of Boycotting—the Boycotting of men who have committed the grossest acts of injustice and robbery which the law cannot touch, with the other kind of Boycotting, which we all condemn—you are deceiving and misleading the public. That is what I have to say on the subject of Boycotting. You ought to draw a distinction between the two kinds. What is the issue before us? We are here to try whether you are pursuing a right policy, and whether you have succeeded in that policy? In my opinion, you are pursuing a wrong policy. You will apply *tu quoques* to us in vain; because, though we have pursued that policy, we are convinced that it is a wrong policy, and that it has failed. We have tried out of Office another policy, and we have been far more successful. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has, in my opinion, done much more to suppress crime in Ireland than you have done. He has done much more to engender that friendly feeling between the two peoples which will maintain the unity of the Empire. What is it that you have done? Yours is a beggarly account of empty measures. You talk of the Plan of Campaign. I am not going to enter upon the Plan of Campaign; but I will ask, have you ventured to prove that you have in any one instance beaten the Plan of Campaign? In every instance the Plan of Campaign has beaten you. The Chief Secretary says that in some parish or other there was a begging letter sent from some branch of the League. Of course, there are begging letters. In many parishes of England you have them from the Primrose League; and do you accept letters of that kind as a proof that the League has failed and is being dissolved? But what have you gained? You have put a few dozen men into prison? What do you gain by that? Have you weakened the influence of these men? Do you think that the late Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), or the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), or Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, is less high in the affections of their countrymen than they were before you put them into prison? I will not allude to the unworthy sneer of the Chief Secretary for Ireland at the hon. Member for North-East Cork; I will not inquire what the weight of his body is; I know the weight of his speeches; and you have not diminished that by what you have done; and I begin now to understand why the Attorney General at a public meeting expressed the wish, or the opinion, that, instead of three months, the hon. Member for North-East Cork had better be kept in prison for five years. After hearing that speech, and after having seen the humiliating spectacle of the impotence of the Government, I think the Attorney General gave a very sagacious hint to the Government. Well, do you not know—every man on this side of the House knows—that the most popular names that are ever named in a meeting of English people, are those of the men you have imprisoned. ["No!"] I know it very well; I know that the names which are received with the greatest acclamation in the great assemblies I have attended are the names of O'Brien and Sullivan and Wilfrid Blunt, and many in this House can bear testimony to it. You can go on imprisoning; you can go on with your cumulative sentences; and with what, repeating the words of my right hon. Friend, I will call your unutterable meanness. I have charged the right hon. Gentleman to his face, and I charge him again, with breach of faith, and he has never dared to answer it. He made a solemn pledge to the Irish people that in every case there should be an appeal. He broke that pledge; and, having broken it, he has made use of that violation of faith for the purpose of carrying out those judicial tricks. When you had got a sentence of three months upon an accused person, and he was admitted to bail, then you used this breach of faith with reference to a sentence of one month to deprive him of the bail to which he was entitled. I say that conduct of that kind is dishonourable to any Government; I say that you are dishonoured before Irish and before English people. When I read of these transactions, and remember that pledge which was given personally across this Table, I say that, without exception, I know of no record in the public life of an Administration in England which is so dishonourable to their character. I have never known a Government make a pledge, and, having made it, break it in that way; and, having deliberately broken it, then use it in that tricky manner to defeat the liberties of their fellow-countrymen. What is the meaning of the rising disgust of the English people? It is that they are reading the history of your Irish administration; it is the manner in which you are treating Irishmen; and I am happy to say that it is the Irishmen themselves who go and explain to the English constituencies the wrongs that you are inflicting upon them. There are no speakers—I know it myself—who are received with greater welcome than the men whom you are habitually slandering and calumniating. Talk of Boycotting! You have attempted to Boycott the whole, or the great majority, of the Representatives of Ireland. You are attempting to Boycott them in this House. You are endeavouring to deprive them of that fair play to which every man is entitled. [*Murmurs.*] Yes; I have seen it night after night. You have insinuated what you dare not speak out. You have suggested, with the countenance—often with the co-operation—of the Front Bench, that those men—the Representatives of Ireland—were the partners and instigators of crime. [An hon. MEMBER: Question!] I have spoken on what is dishonourable to the Government; but I say that the treatment to which Irish Members have been exposed is dishonourable to the House of Commons. I hope we will have no more of it. ["Hear, hear!" *and a laugh.*] Yes; but these have been the great instruments of the defeat that is awaiting you, and of the triumph that is attending our cause. It is the disgust with which you have filled the minds of the English people by the unfairness with which you have treated the Irish nation in Ireland, and the unfairness with which you are treating Irish Members in England, which is working for the deliverance of Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer tries to make us ashamed of acting with the Irish Members. He has tried to Boycott us out of co-operation with the Representatives of Ireland. But I assure him he will not succeed. The fact is, in our opinion, it is impossible to govern the Irish nation without co-operation with its Representatives. If representative government means anything at all, it means that the Representatives of the people should be treated with respect, and that the wishes of the nation they represent should be listened to. If there is any sense in the language which you hold, if there is any reason in the policy you pursue, why do you not disfranchise the Irish people? This is a natural and inevitable result. I apologize to the House for having detained it so long. I come to this conclusion. We have heard the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien). We have heard the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). We have heard the great and immortal speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), which had a reception which will be historical—a speech which has found its echo in the constituency of Southwark to-night. We hail with satisfaction the triumph which awaits the cause that we sustain, and we look with satisfaction upon the overthrow and the humiliation you have so richly deserved.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he had no personal desire to address himself to the House at that moment. He should have been very willing to have allowed the debate to terminate with the speech to which they had just listened with admiration; but if he did so, he should lay himself open to the charge of not replying to a challenge which had been twice made during the course of the debate. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) had read to the House the other day what he gave as an extract from a speech which he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was alleged to have delivered in Jersey City. The words used were—

> "I know that there are within the United States emissaries of the British Government anxious to earn, or prepared to earn, the pay which is drawn from the Secret Service Fund of the Government. If such a man is here, I invite him to report that here, in public, I state what I know to be a fact—that in whatever war Great Britain may be involved, that whatever Power may be involved, that Power may count upon 100,000 armed men to fight under her flag against Great Britain."

The hon. and gallant Gentleman had not taken the trouble to inquire whether the report was correct. He did not know that he had any ground to expect anything different from him, and he did not complain; but on the following day the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), who was a gentleman by birth, education, character and conduct, also challenged him as to the same words. The hon. and gallant

Baronet had the advantage of having seen the *ipsissima verba* quoted by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh printed in *The Times* and other papers, and from that verbatim report he quoted—

> "If any English spies are present I want them to know what I say. These men are ready to fight for Ireland if the chance should arise, and any nation which England tries to strike shall have 100,000 such men to fight against the British guns."

He complained that no notice of this palpable discrepancy had been taken; the hon. and gallant Baronet had not taken the trouble to ascertain the accuracy of either the one report or the other. He thought he might have expected something better from the hon. and gallant Baronet. The object of the quotation in both cases was two-fold. First, it was intended to suggest that the alleged extract furnished a test of the kind of threats which Irish Members made before American audiences; and, secondly, to suggest, what the hon. and gallant Baronet had the frankness to state in terms, that he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) said things in America which he did not dare to say in this country. With regard to the last point, he hoped the hon. and gallant Baronet would prepare his nerves for a great shock, take out his note-book, and invite his hon. Friends to assist him in taking an accurate note of what he now said. He believed that if the Government found itself at war with the United States to-morrow, there would be—he could not give the exact number—but tens and tens of thousands of Irishmen who would rush to the standard of the United States, not for the sake of the pay attending the service, but in the hope of gratifying the feelings of animosity and hatred which had been engendered in their breasts by evicting landlords, by laws which had enabled those landlords to evict and helped them in their iniquity, and of the Administration which enforced those laws. He had said no more than this in America, and he flung back in the teeth of the hon. and gallant Baronet the challenge that he was incapable of saying here what he had said elsewhere. The hon. and gallant Member for Armagh knew perfectly well that the only occasion on which any newspaper in America spoke in any terms of unfriendliness and dissatisfaction of Irish Members when at St. Louis, on the banks of the Mississippi, he had sneered at the cheap valour which affected heroism 4,000 miles away from action in Ireland. What he said in America he was prepared to state in that House; he would not abate one jot or tittle in the whole of it. But with regard to the other object with which the quotation was made—namely, that of inducing people in this country to suppose that the addresses made by Irish Members to American audiences were couched in terms of hostility to this country, he would say that at the meeting at Jersey City, he had reason to believe that among some uninformed men before him, there were those who entertained a feeling of deep resentment at the eviction of themselves and their relatives; men who were impatient, and not perhaps unnaturally impatient, at the slow progress of Constitutional agitation. The majority of the people at the meeting were, he believed, Americans. But he had gone to America for the purpose of enlisting sympathy upon the side of peaceful and Constitutional agitation; he admitted that he knew of the existence of those feelings, and that they probably existed in the meeting before him; but he appealed to the experience of the last eight years to show that, not by violence, outrage or force of arms, but by legal and peaceful proceedings within the open channel of the Constitution, the work was to be done. He pointed out that, whatever might have been the experience of the past, they had then at least Scotland and Wales with them, as well as an ever increasing proportion of the people of England itself; he declared that there was no war between the two nations, that the democracy of Great Britain and Ireland were then at one. That was the drift and character and purpose of his address in Jersey City, the same as it had been throughout the whole of the United States, and he challenged anybody to show that the words used by him at all the meetings in America were not such as he had described.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 317; Noes 229: Majority 88.

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.

Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Baring, T. C.
Barnes, A.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bass, H.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beckett, W.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Corbett, A. C.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Courtney, L. H.
Cross, H. S.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Greene, E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, F.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Manners, right hon. Lord J. J. R.
Maple, J. B.
March, Earl of
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.

Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Sutherland, T.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Barry, J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biggar, J. G.
Blane, A.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, W. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. L.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Cavan, Earl of
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Cobb, H. P.
Commins, A.
Conway, M.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Davies, W.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Evelyn, W. J.
Evershed, S.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gray, E. D.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Haldane, R. B.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harrington, T. C.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, M.
Healy, T. M.
Hingley, B.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, J. E.
Kenny, M. J.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. J. G. S.
Lewis, T. P.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marum, E. M.
Mason, S.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A. E.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Quinn, T.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Reynolds, W. J.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, E.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheil, E.
Simon, Sir J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.

Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Flower, C.
Morley, A.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, AND PATHWAYS (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Thomas Ellis, Bill to secure to the Public the right of access to Mountains, Rivers, Lakes, Moors, and Waste Lands, also ancient or disused Pathways, in the Principality of Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. William Abraham, and Mr. Bowen Rowlands.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 129.]

COLONIAL MARRIAGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Bill to legalise certain Colonial Marriages, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, and Sir John Puleston.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 130.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Two o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 20*th February*, 1888.

OFFICE OF WORKS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS.—OBSERVATIONS.

Lord LAMINGTON, in rising to call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the constitution of the Office of Works and Public Buildings, and to the unsatisfactory state of the public buildings of the Metropolis, said, he brought the subject forward thus early in the Session because of his great disappointment, which no doubt their Lordships shared, at finding that not one of the public improvements connected with the Office of Works had been carried out during the Recess. Whether it was the new Admiralty and War Office, the alterations to be made in Parliament Street, or the new buildings of the National Portrait Gallery, nothing had been done. The facts in reference to the former of these promised buildings constituted a history which read very like a romance. In 1866—22 years ago—the matter was brought before Parliament, and it was decided that new buildings must be constructed. Nothing was done, however. In 1869 a Bill was brought in giving power for the acquisition of a site. In 1872 the question was again brought before Parliament, and in 1877 another Committee was appointed, and the Report which it issued deprecated in strong terms the continuance of the existing state of things. Nothing, however, was done, and nothing material had been done up to the present day. The Government having acquired the Spring Gardens site for £490,000 in 1882, designs for the new buildings were asked for in 1884. No further practical steps were taken, and in 1887 the condition of things remained the same. It should be borne in mind that all this time we were paying £33,000 for the hire of buildings, representing £1,000,000. Only last week a Report on the Civil Establishments was issued, which called attention to the miserably inadequate accommodation and the multiplicity of small rooms in the War Office and Admiralty, as shown by the fact that there were comprised in the War Office 19 houses and 289 rooms occupied by 805 persons. The Report continued—

> "We strongly recommend, in the interest of economy and efficiency alike, the new War Office should not be delayed; nor is the consideration to be neglected that work is at present done under conditions which are not favourable from any point of view, sanitary or otherwise, to its being well done. These observations apply with equal force to the Admiralty buildings, and in both offices we believe that a considerable reduction in expenditure and great improvement in efficiency would follow a concentration of work."

A similar story could be told of the action of the authorities in the case of the National Portrait Gallery. When the pictures were removed to Bethnal Green Museum a promise was given by Mr. Gladstone that a Vote should be taken and a permanent gallery erected.

Nothing, however, was done, and he now asked whether there was to be still further delay? He did not wish by his observations to reflect upon the management of the Office of Works. It was the system that was at fault. How could it be thought that any special great work would be done when our system was such that in a period of 30 years there had been 18 First Commissioners? He would appoint two eminent architects, men of high cultivation, as permanent officers of the Department of Works, to act with the First Commissioner for the time being, and to this Board should be intrusted the discussion and determination of the plans. Under their supervision we might expect something like continuity in the work of the Department. It was hopeless to look for such continuity under First Commissioners who were changed with every change of Government. At any rate, the present ridiculous way of conducting important works ought not to be allowed to continue any longer, and arrangements ought to be made to obviate present inconvenience and to secure public buildings that should be worthy of the country. He left the question with the Government.

Lord HENNIKER said, their Lordships would be glad to have heard the noble Lord speak upon a subject in which he had taken great interest for many years past. The noble Lord had suggested very great changes in the constitution of the Office of Works. Personally, in the position he occupied, as only answering for the Department in that House, he could hardly give an opinion on the noble Lord's plan, which appeared to involve so much change in the present arrangements as to raise a question for the Cabinet rather than for the Department. The noble Lord had been rather severe upon the Office of Works; but, from his own short experience, he thought the Department hardly deserved the criticisms of the noble Lord. No doubt there had been failures in the Office, as there had been in others. But he must remind their Lordships what were the functions of the Office of Works. They were, first of all, to maintain all public buildings that were at present erected; and, secondly, to provide new ones when they were required. In this way only the Department was an important agency as to architecture; even then in only a few cases, as a great deal they had to do was of a purely utilitarian character. There really was no scope for architectural fancy. With regard to the architecture of important public buildings such as the Royal Courts of Justice, plans and designs were usually obtained by competition, and the successful architect was intrusted with the execution of the work. In these circumstances he felt that the Department might be considered fairly competent to deal with the work it had to undertake. If the Department had the additional officers suggested by the noble Lord, men of high technical and artistic qualifications, it would not be strengthened in any way for the ordinary work of the Office. On what might be regarded as extraordinary occasions every scheme which was put before the Office of Works for new buildings was submitted to Parliament; and, in the opinion of the First Commissioner as well as himself, it was doubtful whether an increase in the number of tastes, if he might so call it, upon the Board would improve the schemes or advance their progress. It was possible that there might be greater activity in the Office, and more schemes might be put forward; but then that raised the question whether Parliament would grant money to carry out these new schemes. In this practical age there was some difficulty in persuading Parliament to spend public money on fine buildings. Therefore, he could not see that there would be any great advantage in increasing the staff of the Office in the way proposed, increasing the expense of the Office, and making it of more importance. With regard to the Admiralty and the War Office, the noble Lord had stated what had happened. A good many plans had been under consideration. The plan of Messrs. Leeming and Leeming was adopted. It was put up to competition as usual, and the work was actually begun. There had been several plans thought of from time to time; at last this plan had been adopted. He might mention that the judges of the plans were Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, and two architects—Mr. Christian and Mr. Hardwick; but it was stopped on the appointment of a Committee by the House of Commons in 1885. This Committee did not sit, on account of the dissolution of Parliament; but another Committee was appointed last year, which reported against the plans. The noble Lord could hardly blame the Office of Works for the delay resulting from the action of Parliament. In obedience to the Report of the last Committee, the Office was having plans prepared to carry out that Committee's recommendations. With respect to the National Portrait Gallery, their Lordships would recollect that in 1885 the galleries were pronounced to be unsafe, and nothing could be done but remove the portraits for safety to Bethnal Green, where they had been greatly appreciated. Three or four times as many people had seen the pictures as visited South Kensington Gallery in the same time. It was only proposed that the pictures should stay at Bethnal Green until a permanent home could be provided; and the provision of that home depended upon the necessary grant being made by Parliament. There had been no delay on the part of the Office of Works, whose plans would be ready directly the money was granted. Moreover, the Chief Commissioner had given no pledge that a new building would be erected at once; but he said he would be very glad if a permanent home could be found for this collection. He had, therefore, committed no breach of faith in the matter. The pictures were only on loan where they were. That was distinctly understood. With regard to Parliament Street improvements, the delay had arisen not in consequence of any action of the Office of Works, but because the Company had not as yet complied with the condition which Parliament imposed in the Private Bill before allowing the work to be commenced—namely, that £500,000 should be subscribed before the work was begun. That provision had, no doubt, rendered it difficult for the Company to raise money; but the money would be forthcomig, although it would, perhaps, come in slower than would otherwise have been the case. The Office had no power to pull down houses in Parliament Street. It was purely a matter for the Company to deal with under their Private Act. Meanwhile, they might congratulate themselves that the Office of Works had secured a scheme for pulling down the old buildings in Parliament Street before any other work was begun. This and other advantages his right honourable Friend the First Commissioner had secured for the public. He thought that he had answered the Questions of his noble Friend, and that he had justified the action taken by the Office of Works.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY wished to say a word or two upon this subject, as he had once occupied the position of First Commissioner of Works. He did not think that in calling attention to the condition of Government offices, and in laying to some extent censure on the First Commissioner of Works, the noble Lord had quite laid the saddle on the right horse. Neither was he quite certain that the alterations suggested by the noble Lord were such as to bring about a remedy for the state of things of which he complained. One, at least, of the questions which the noble Lord had dealt with was due to what many of them had cause to regret—namely, the constant change in the Administrations of the country in the last two years. This brought about a change of policy in many respects, and in other offices than the Department of Works. With regard, for instance, to the question of the Admiralty and War Offices, the Government of which he had the honour to be a Member had a policy in which he confessed that it was not very enthusiastic. But it was a policy—the design of Messrs. Leeming & Co. It was a distinct and intelligible policy, and the Government which next came into Office reversed that policy and dismissed the project to the limbo of many other projects. That was the cause not merely of delay in the proper organization of the Admiralty and War Office buildings, but it was also the cause of a very considerable sum of money being expended in the shape of a fine to the architects. He did not think that the First Commissioner who was his Successor could properly be blamed for the change in Imperial policy on the part of successive Governments. As to Parliament Street, that was a very important question, but he thought that his noble Friend who spoke last had amply answered the noble Lord who introduced the subject. The question was not one which was in any degree dependent upon the action of the First Commissioner of Works. The question really depended upon a clause which was inserted in the Bill last year, which stipulated that no part of the buildings should be pulled down until a certain portion of the subscribed capital had been raised. Parliament Street was one of the great permanent questions of the Office of Works. There was the question of the Burlington House Colonnade, but the question of Parliament street was more important than that, and it would always beset the Office of Works until some scheme was brought forward by a solvent company which enabled a profit to be made out of a process of a most expensive kind. There he thought again, that the blame ought to be laid upon the First Commissioner. If the noble Lord had made a practical proposal, founded on the instances he had cited, it would have been a matter of vast importance. If they once let loose a board of architects, as he had suggested, a very strong supervision and control would be required. While such a Board would be going one way, the Board of Treasury would be going another, and he ventured to suggest to the noble Lord that unless his project was sustained by a Board of Treasury, such as he had had no experience of in his short official career—a board of a most blind, lavish, and inconsiderate description—it would be impossible that such a plan could be successful.

Lord HENNIKER wished to say, with regard to the remark of the noble Earl, that the scheme of Messrs. Leeming was thrown over in consequence of the change of Government, that the Committee appointed by the late Government, of which the noble Earl was a member, was re-appointed last year, and he thought that he had stated that the change of scheme was entirely in consequence of Parliamentary action and not because of any action on the part of the Board of Works.

The Earl of ROSEBERY admitted that that was so, but said had the late Government remained in Office, and been supported by a majority, they could have carried out their policy with regard to the new Admiralty and War Office.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, he entirely agreed with the noble Earl as to the danger of introducing what might be called a Board of Consulting Architects. He believed he was present when the plan of the new Law Courts was discussed more or less by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and he was very much struck with what the President of that day said. He said that he was far from approving the plan, and that probably most of his audience would agree with him; but, inasmuch as Mr. Street had been selected to carry out the plan, it was the duty of the British nation to submit themselves to Mr. Street. He had some dealings himself many years ago with several Commissioners of Works while the Westminster Clock was being constructed. Some of them were extremely capable of carrying on the business, a great deal more so than any architect. He was bound to say that the best of them all was Sir Benjamin Hall, little as he agreed with his political opinions. He could say the same of Mr. Ayrton, who introduced the new form of agreements with architects which prevented the increase in Estimates to which the noble Lord had referred. During the construction of the Westminster clock the solicitors of the Office asked him about a form of contract which was generally made with builders. He told him that form would never enable the Office to control the architects, or prevent the enormous increase upon the estimates which the noble Lord had truly spoken of. And Mr. Ayrton adopted a new one. He suspected, from something he had heard since, that form had been departed from, but to what extent he did not know. He mentioned this as a warning, and urged that Mr. Ayrton's arrangement should substantially be reverted to when any great works were to be carried out. With regard to the new Law Courts, Mr. Street was appointed architect by Lord John Manners, and the competition might as well never have taken place. Although it was given out that convenience was the chief thing to be attended to, Mr. Street's plans were notoriously defective therein, and, architecturally, it was considered the worst great public building in the world, and in the matter of convenience it unquestionably was the worst. Mr. Street was determined to sacrifice everything to his Gothic and ecclesiastical prejudices; and the great hall was made simply to gratify his vanity, that he might say he had made the widest vaulted hall in England, and yet it looks the narrowest, and is utterly useless besides. All this he was afraid he must say was the result of the present system; but he must add that the noble

Lord's suggestion for improving the system would, he feared, make it worse. Appointing a strong permanent secretary who would control architects and direct his masters as permanent officials sometimes did, might be an improvement, but that he would not then discuss. As to the plans for the new Admiralty and War Office, he had read the Report of the Committee of last year, and, as far as he could judge, he agreed with it. Perhaps he might be allowed to mention a very humble matter connected with that Office. Some 20 years ago, when he had to come down to that House daily, he used to come down the steps near the Duke of York's Column. He never did so in frosty weather without fear of falling. Somebody persuaded the Commissioner of Works to put up an iron railing on each side in order that people going up and down the steps might be able to lay hold of it; but so simple a thing could not be left to an ironmonger, but some architect must be called in, and, accordingly, a railing as thick as his arm, supported on large square pillars, was put up at some distance from the wall. Thereupon the boys found the railings the most convenient place in all London to slide down, and the rails became useless for everybody else. That might easily have been stopped by putting in a few spikes, which any ironmonger in London could have done in two days. But the ingenuity of the Office and the architect were not equal to that, and so the railings were entirely swept away and had not been replaced to this day. Therefore, in slippery weather he went round another way to avoid those steps. There were steps in various other parts of London, and particularly under Charing Cross station, where the Metropolitan Board of Works had done what was wanted by a simple thin rail, which made the steps quite safe. He hoped, therefore, that the Commissioner of Works would condescend to employ an ironmonger to enable people to go down the steps of the Duke of York's Column safely in frosty weather, and to help infirm people to get up in all weathers.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My Lords, I wish to make two observations—one in which I quite concur with the noble Lord who has brought the Notice forward (Lord Lamington); one in which I may appear to differ from something he has mentioned incidentally. I much approve the course he has adopted in pointing to the imperfection of our public buildings and of the Board of Works, to which they are in some degree to be attributed. On the whole of that subject, Mr. White, the secretary to the Institute of Architects, not long ago produced a volume which abounds in luminous materials to support the general position of my noble Friend this evening. The noble and learned Lord who has just sat down, in an amusing speech, referred to his own protest against the scheme of the New Law Courts. It is curious that the late Mr. Fergusson—so great an architectural authority—when he became for a short time the regular adviser of the Board, was forced to leave it, because upon that scheme his counsel was entirely disregarded. However, the point on which I cannot go with my noble Friend who opened the debate is as to censure of the Government for not having carried out the Public Offices Site Act and the plan of Messrs. Leeming for a new construction in Spring Gardens. On the contrary, the Government appear to me to merit praise for having left that Act, which is entirely optional, unexecuted. The arguments against proceeding on it have been so often stated that it would be improper to repeat them. They have been given in a number of debates, and in a Protest which was signed by many of your Lordships. They were repeated often by our lamented Friend the former Chairman of Committees. Beyond that, a deputation of the architects impressed them on the late Lord Iddesleigh when he was First Lord of the Treasury. Last of all, a Committee of the House of Commons has decisively adopted them. If, therefore, anything is said in favour of reverting to that plan, it is necessary to remind the House under what circumstances it has been discarded, so that we may guard to some extent the equilibrium of the Government.

LORD LAMINGTON explained that he had not suggested that there should be a consulting board of architects, but that there should be a board, two Members of which should be permanent, to assist the First Commissioner in carrying out works which had been determined upon, and for which the House of Commons had voted the money. What he complained of was that under the present system nothing was ever done at all, and decisions made 20 years ago were still unexecuted. He wanted the Government to keep a permanent control over that Office.

ARMY—ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN—INSANITARY CONDITION.

RESOLUTION.

Earl BEAUCHAMP, in rising to move—

"That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that the Return of all cases of febrile disease in the Dublin Garrison since January 1881, ordered by this House to be printed 9th September 1887, be continued to 31st December 1887"—

said, the matter to which that Return referred was a very serious one. There had been constant complaints for many years, yet nothing had been done by the War Office to improve the sanitary condition of the garrison which the Return disclosed. Within the last few weeks three very grave cases had occurred among the officers of the garrison; and their Lordships must see that whatever affected the health of the officers must also affect that of the men. If the officers were living under insanitary conditions, much more must the men composing the rank and file of the garrison be doing so. The unwholesome conditions in which the Dublin Garrison were placed were a source of serious expense and loss to the Army. The Army Medical Report for 1884 was presented only in 1886, and he thought it was a great pity that statistics of that description should be submitted to Parliament so long after date, as it prevented their being turned to as useful account as they otherwise might be. Taking, however, the Return for 1884, he found in regard to enteric fever that Dublin showed the greatest number of cases. Again, he found in the same Report in respect to invaliding that the highest ratio of admissions to hospital per 1,000 men occurred in the Dublin district. He urged Her Majesty's Government to remedy this serious injury which was being done to the troops. It might be said that the question of expense stood in the way, but he was quite sure that no one would grudge any expense which was incurred in maintaining Her Majesty's Army in health and strength.

Lord Lamington

Moved, "That a Return of all cases of febrile disease in the Dublin Garrison since January 1881, ordered to be printed 9th September 1887, be continued to 31st December 1887."—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

Lord HERSCHELL said, he wished to add a word to the remarks of the noble Earl, and to point out to the Under Secretary of State for War the extreme urgency and importance of this question. He had studied the Returns, and it was really appalling to consider the number of cases of fever which had occurred, enteric and otherwise. The Return for the first half of 1887 pointed to the same conclusion as the Returns for the whole of 1886. From what he had personally heard, he had reason to believe that matters were not in the slightest degree better during the last part of 1887 than they were during the earlier part of the year. It was not right to subject our troops to insanitary conditions which could be avoided by attention, and even, if necessary, by the expenditure of money. The fact that the remedy would be costly was no sort of justification or excuse for sending men to a place where they must contract a serious and dangerous disease.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Lord Harris) said a Report had been received as to the state of Dublin Barracks from Dr. Grimshaw, Registrar General of Births and Deaths, and Sir A. Cameron, Medical Officer of Health for Dublin. Her Majesty's Government had not the slightest desire or intention of shutting their eyes to the serious condition of the barracks in Dublin. The Report pointed out several unhealthy conditions about the barracks, and he would suggest to the noble Earl that this Report should be laid on the Table of the House and the Motion of the noble Earl for the continuation of the Return of febrile cases withdrawn. The Report would strengthen the case of the noble Earl as to the insanitary condition of the barracks without the continuation of that voluminous Report. The Secretary of State for War was prepared to lay the Report on the Table; it showed conclusively in what an insanitary condition the barracks were, especially the Royal Barracks. In the first place the Committee recommended an alteration of the subsoil drainage and removal of the inequalities of the ground. The most important part of that undertaking was now in hand. The removal of a considerable portion of the present buildings was recommended; but with that recommendation they could not deal at present, because the troops could not be removed and placed under canvas at this time of the year. Last year he mentioned that there were legal difficulties in the way of going on quickly with the new Cavalry barracks. Those difficulties had now been removed. £15,000 from last year's Estimates would be expended upon the work. The land had been bought and about £3,000 had been spent in laying the foundations. £35,000 had been taken this year, and he was informed that the whole of that sum would be spent in the ensuing year. The Committee recommended the removal of the timber and renewing the floor. This work would be undertaken as soon as possible. The doctors also recommended that certain ventilation tubes should be used, but he understood that the military medical officers took exception to that recommendation. A re-arrangement of the hospital drainage was also recommended, as well as a disinfection of the sewage from the hospital, together with a suggestion that it should be diverted from the rest of the sewage system. This work had been ordered and was being carried out at the present time. A reconstruction of certain closets and an examination of their connection was recommended, and this work was also being carried out. The Committee recommended that a certain alteration should be made as regarded ash pits and receptacles of that kind. The attention of the local Military Authorities had been called to the matter, and the work was now in hand. An improved system of ventilating the main sewers was recommended, and the work was also in hand. The isolation of infectious disease was recommended. There had been some difficulty in providing a hospital for these cases, but that difficulty had been removed and was now arranged for. The medical officers, however, pointed out that cases of enteric fever were not always easy to diagnose as such until some time had elapsed, when it was too late to remove the patient. The Committee further recommended that care should be taken with regard to the supply of milk, which they seemed to think was suspicious. This question had been referred to the local Military Authorities. As to the officers, he pointed out that one of the cases was that of an officer who had been in lodgings. Another case was that of an officer who, although in quarters, had been a great deal with his friends; and there appeared to be an idea prevalent that this officer might have contracted the disease in lodgings, as his friend did. The Government did not conceal the condition of the barracks, and they had every intention of carrying out the alterations recommended.

EARL SPENCER said, as he had some peculiar means of knowing a few of the facts connected with this question when he was in Dublin, he should like to offer a few observations. While in Dublin he was in constant communication with some of the officers who were quartered in those barracks. While in Dublin on the last occasion nearly all those barracks had cases of illness of an enteric character in them. The Royal Barracks, however, was the place whence the officers came with whom he was in constant communication. During the time he was in Dublin one officer died in that barracks, and the other officers felt that they were in daily danger of catching typhoid fever owing to its condition. This was not a new question. He believed the question of illness in the Royal Barracks was a very old-standing grievance. He thought the evil had been going on for 25 years, and at different times there had been deaths not only among the officers but among the rank and file as well. He hoped the Government would seriously take this matter into consideration. It required to be dealt with immediately. He was glad to hear the noble Lord say that the immediate difficulty with regard to the site of the new barracks had been overcome. He should like to know whether the Government had consulted what were known as sanitary engineers, independently of the Military or Civil Authorities. He believed a question of this kind could only be dealt with by specialists who thoroughly understood the subject.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: All I can say, my Lords, is that if this barracks is not healthy I lived in it for seven years, two years in the House where one of the officers has, unfortunately, died, and five years in the Royal Square. There has been a large increase in the number of cases of enteric fever among British troops all over the world, and therefore the spread of that disease among the troops stationed in the Royal Barracks in the City of Dublin is not by any means extraordinary. Throughout the whole of Ireland there has been more fever than usual, and no doubt the Royal Barracks have had their share in the increase of that disease. It must be borne in mind that when a large number of men are brought together there is great danger that diseases of this class will spread among them. The spread of the disease among the troops in Dublin may further be accounted for by the fact that the Royal Barracks are situated in the neighbourhood of a very low class of houses, which, however, are not specially connected with fever, although they are inhabited by a very low class of persons. The condition of the Liffey is certainly not all that could be desired. The difficulty which we have to face at the present moment is how we are to provide accommodation for the troops if we were to remove them from the Royal Barracks. We certainly could not place them under canvas at this time of the year; and the only other way to deal with the matter would be to hire large accommodation premises, which would be difficult to find, and, even if found, would be very expensive. The noble Lord the Under Secretary for War has assured us that the recommendations of the several Commissions which have sat to consider the question of the sanitary condition of our troops are being largely carried out at the present moment, and that any other suggestions that may be made in the same direction will receive very careful consideration. If it were decided to pull down any portion of the Royal Barracks in Dublin, considerable troop accommodation would be lost, and new barracks would have to be built somewhere else at great expense. All these points to which I have referred involve very serious questions, and naturally anyone occupying my position must take all the difficulties to which those questions give rise into consideration. I feel as strongly as the noble Lord who brought this subject under the consideration of the House how desirable it would be to ascertain absolutely what is the cause of the Royal Barracks being so unhealthy, and whether there is any necessity for pulling even a part of them down. The Local Authorities, who ought to know more about the matter than we do, do not advocate pulling down the barracks, even although that course had been recommended by the Commissioners. Then we come to the other question, as to new barracks being built. Of course, when such barracks are built, it will enable us to reduce considerably the number of men now in the Royal Barracks; but it will take some two or three years to build these new barracks. I think that in the meanwhile something may be done to make the Royal Barracks more healthy by opening up the passages on both sides of the Royal Square and by pulling down a portion of the gable ends of the barracks. I can assure your Lordships that the Secretary of State for War is anxious to effect all necessary improvements in these buildings; and I believe that no endeavour will be spared to put these barracks into the best possible condition.

Earl BEAUCHAMP said he would remind the Under Secretary for War that it was not only the Royal Barracks that were unhealthy, and he was very glad to hear the assurances of the Illustrious Duke. He trusted that any financial difficulties would now be overcome. The time for consideration had gone by, and the time for action had arrived. He might add that while he was desirous of having the medical Report which had been referred to by the Under Secretary for War, he was also anxious for the Return for which he had asked.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY asked the noble Lord if he could give them any information as to the condition of the Richmond Barracks at Dublin. In cases of this kind the truest economy would be to place the troops in healthy barracks. The question of the sanitary condition of the barracks ought to be referred to experts, and he trusted that such persons would soon be able to point out the cause of the unhealthy condition of these buildings.

Lord HARRIS said he would obtain full information with regard to the state of the Richmond Barracks. He quite agreed with the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) that the question of the sanitary condition of these barracks was one for experts. He should like to point out that if Dublin Barracks were in the insanitary condition of which the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) had spoken, it was a pity that he did not interfere when he was in Office in Ireland.

Earl SPENCER: A report on the subject was sent in.

Lord HARRIS said, that notwithstanding that, the Government of the day did not accede to the representations made to them. All he could say was that the present Government had now the information from experts which they desired last year upon the matter, and they had no intention of delaying the work.

Motion, as amended, *agreed to*.

House adjourned at Six o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 20*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Affirmation.—Joseph Firth Bottomley Firth, esquire, Member for the Burgh of Dundee, being one of the people called Quakers, made the Affirmation required by Law.

New Member Sworn.—Richard Knight Causton, esquire, *for* Southwark (West Division).

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment * [131]; Criminal Evidence * [132]; Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment * [133]; Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister (India) * [134]; Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation) * [135].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (REMAND OF A MEMBER IN CUSTODY).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received the following Letter relating to the Remand in Custody of a Member of this House:—

Clonmel,
Ireland,
16th February, 1888.

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you that late last night I remanded Douglas Pyne, esq. a Member of the House of Commons, until Wednesday next the 22nd February, when he is to be brough up for trial, under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, at Clonmel. He is now, and will remain until that day, in Clonmel Prison.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
S. T. Carew,
Resident Magistrate.

The Right Honourable,
The Speaker, House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

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INDIA—RAILWAY FROM SUKKUR TO SIBI—THE SCINDE-PISHIN LINE.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will supply the House with details of the cost, up to date, of the railway from Sukkur to Sibi; and, also, of the railways known respectively as the Scinde-Pishin line and the line through the Bolan Pass; also, the estimated cost of the extension, by means of tunnelling, to Chaman?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The cost of the line from Sukkur to Sibi was Rs.x. 1,293,710, exclusive of Rs.x. 294,941, the cost of the Sukkur Bridge. The cost of the Scinde-Pishin line was Rs.x. 4,085,603; of Bolan Pass line, Rs.x. 875,711; of Killa Abdullah Branch, Rs.x. 48,351; of extension, with tunnelling, to Chaman, Rs.x. 1,408,697. The total cost of all lines and branches was Rs.x. 8,007,013.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Is it intended to carry out the tunnelling?

Sir JOHN GORST: The work is in course of construction.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED ATTACK ON CHURCHES, &c.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the speech of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh (Mr. W. H. K. Redmond), at the meeting of the National League, as reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 15th instant, in which he is reported to have said that the

> "Orangemen of Ireland" were "hirelings engaged in attacking their own churches, so as to have the fact of these outrages wired to England;"

whether he has any evidence to support the allegation of the hon. Member, that they were committed by "some Orange enemy of the Nationalist cause;" whether, on Friday, the 20th of January, there were illuminations in those parts of Fermanagh where there were branches of the National League; and whether a light was seen in Oughterdrum Church, near Castlecaldwell, by parties across Lough Erne; whether, next morning, the church door was found open, and, on the remains of a fire, the large Bible of the church half burnt, and burnt parts of the communion cloth were found among the ashes; and, if he will make further efforts to discover the perpetrators of the outrages near Castlecaldwell and at Mulloughdun?

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I would like to ask him whether it is a fact that some years ago an outrage was committed in Castlecaldwell, and whether efforts were not made to fasten the outrage on the Catholics of the district; whether it turned out that the author of the outrage was not a Catholic, but a stranger brought into the neighbourhood by a local magnate; whether it is a fact that the perpetration of the present outrage has been charged against the Nationalists and Catholics of Fermanagh; whether there is evidence to prove the contrary of Mr. Redmond's allegation; and whether, under the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman intends to resort to the provisions of the Coercion Act to let in light upon these mysterious matters?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give Notice of his Question, as I have no knowledge whatever of the events to which he refers. In reply to the Question on the Paper, I have to say that my attention has been called to the speech referred to. The County Inspector of Constabulary reports there is no ground for the allegation contained therein. It appears that there were illuminations at Derrygonelly, where there is a branch of the National League, on Friday, the 20th of January, and on the following day at several places in Fermanagh, where there were branches of the National League. A light was seen in the direction of Oughterdrum Church between 5 and 6 o'clock on Saturday morning, and later that day the outrage alluded to was found to have been perpetrated. The police are making every effort to discover the guilty persons.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—NON-DELIVERY OF A REGISTERED LETTER.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N. asked the Postmaster General, Whethe he is aware that a registered letter, containing a money inclosure, was posted in Curry, County Sligo, on the 29th of October last, by Patrick Howley, and addressed to Messrs. Neale, Jones, and Co., Mincing Lane, London; whether its non-delivery was duly reported to the Department; and, if so, what inquiries were made, and with what result; whether the Department will now pay to Patrick Howley the value or amount of the inclosure—namely, £5 5s., as the letter cannot be delivered; and, what is the usage in all such cases of the non-delivery of registered letters?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I have been informed that the registered letter referred to by the hon. Member was delivered at the address given on the letter, and that the receipt was duly signed by the house-porter. The letter appears to have been lost by the porter, and he has this day handed to one of my officers the amount (£5 5s.) contained in the letters for disposal.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND) — ALLEGED POLICE OUTRAGES IN CORK.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether information has reached him that on Tuesday night last, the 14th February, in the City of Cork, a local band, on returning from accompanying the hon. Member for the Eastern Division of Cork (Mr. Lane) from the Great Southern and Western Station to his residence, was charged and batoned and their instruments smashed by a body of police under Sub-Inspector Creagh, and that one of the bandsmen, Alexander McCarthy, was so seriously wounded that he had to be immediately removed to hospital; whether another member of the Barrack Street Band, after having been knocked down by a baton blow, was kicked by the police in the head and face while lying insensible on the ground, inflicting such serious injuries that his life was considered by the medical gentleman under whose care he was placed to be in danger; whether this is the third attack which has been made upon local bands in Cork for having, in response to the request of the citizens, played in the streets of the city upon the release of Representatives released from imprisonment under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and, whether an inquiry will be made into the circumstances of the case, and similar occurrences in the future be prevented? The hon. Gentleman also asked, Whether it was not a fact that the drummer was knocked down, and another policeman deliberately kicked him whilst on the ground, breaking his upper jaw; whether another man sustained a severe fracture to the base of his skull, and his life has been in imminent danger since; whether upwards of 30 people were not seriously wounded by the police; and, also, whether at the North Infirmary, where the policemen would be treated if injured, not a single policemen was brought for treatment?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: With regard to the Questions which are not on the Paper, I can give no information. In reply to those which are on the Paper, I have to say that the Constabulary Authorities report that the occurrences referred to arose out of a riotous assault on the police, at whom a volley of stones was thrown as the band, accompanied by a large crowd, passed, the stone throwing being kept up for half-an-hour afterwards. The police charged with batons, when some of the instruments were broken. McCarthy did not go to hospital. He received a bruise on the right side from a fall, which he states he got when running away from the police. Another member of the band was seriously injured, and the doctor stated he could not pronounce his life out of danger; but he has not alleged that he was kicked by the police. Several constables were struck. Two of them are under medical treatment, one suffering from concussion of the brain. Bands have not been interfered with, as alleged. Whenever it is proposed to prevent any demonstration as likely to lead to a breach of the public peace, the bands are invariably warned beforehand. The occurrence in question was due altogether to a most unwarrantable attack on the police.

DR. TANNER said, that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had not answered the third portion of his Question, as to how it was that if the stone-throwing continued for half-an-hour none of the police had to be treated at the infirmary? He also wished to ask, whether this was not the third time those wanton attacks had been made on the citizens of Cork by an infuriated constabulary?

[No reply.]

DR. TANNER intimated that he would repeat the Question.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked, was the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that one of the injured men stated to him (Mr. Gilhooly) that a policeman knocked him down and kicked him?

[No reply.]

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONS, COUNTY DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, considering that according to present arrangements no sitting of any of the Sub-Commissions can be held in the County of Down before April next, he will take steps to have an additional Sub-Commission appointed, in order that the tenants of the principal landlords in Down may have their fair rents fixed at once, and not be compelled, as at present, to pay their old rents when they are entitled to the benefits of the judicial rents?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: As I have already explained to the hon. Member, a sitting of a Sub-Commission in the County Down will be held in about six weeks. To adopt the course suggested in the Question would not expedite the matter, even if it were found feasible.

MR. M'CARTAN: Under the circumstances, would the right hon. and gallant Gentleman not consider the advisability of appointing a new Commission which could sit during the next month in County Down?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: There would be some delay in the appointment of a Sub-Commission.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): How many Sub-Commissions are operating now. Is there one for each county?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I must ask the hon. and learned Member to put the Question on the Paper.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —TRAVELLING POST OFFICES— SUNDAY DUTY.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the officers employed in the travelling post offices in England are paid overtime for every hour they are on duty on Sundays; if so, how is it that two hours' pay per Sunday is stopped from officers doing similar duty in Ireland, notwithstanding that the late Postmaster General, Mr. Fawcett, undertook to place the men in this Department in both countries on the same footing; whether it is a fact that the officers employed in the travelling post offices in England are paid 6d. per trip risk money when dealing with registered letters; and, if so, why a similar allowance is not made to officers doing the same duty in Ireland; and, why a Memorial on the latter subject to the Inspector of Mails, bearing date 30th of April, 1887, still remains unanswered?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member's Question, I have to state, first, that in England officers attached to offices where Sunday duty is part of the regular work of the staff are, when employed in the travelling post office, paid extra for all Sunday work in excess of an average of two hours per Sunday, and officers in Ireland are so paid also. In England, however, much of the work is performed by officers attached to the General Post Office, London, where Sunday duty is not part of the regular work of the staff; and these officers, when working in the travelling post office on Sunday, are paid extra for all the work they do. As regards the payment of 6d. per trip risk money to officers of the travelling post-office, when dealing with registered letters, I understand that such payment has been made in some instances. Should the practice be maintained as a permanent arrangement, I will take care that, the conditions being similar, it shall be extended to Ireland. The matter, which is still under consideration, will necessarily take time to settle.

LAW AND POLICE — REVIVAL OF PUGILISM.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the sudden outbreak and rapid increase of pugilism in this country recently, under the designation of sport, boxing, prize-fighting, or other euphemistic terms; whether this mode of combativenesss is in accordance with the law of the land; and, whether newspaper reports of these encounters are legal; and, if illegal, whether the Government will institute proceedings against all those who take part in such practices, whether as principals or accessories, and against the newspapers which contain reports of them?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to a certain amount of increased interest which has recently been displayed in pugilism. Prize-fighting, as distinguished from boxing or sparring with gloves, is illegal. A concourse of persons attending a prize-fight in this country is an unlawful assembly, which the authorities ought to prevent or to disperse. A newspaper paragraph, of which the object is to promote a prize-fight, or to incite people to attend one, in this country would, I apprehend, be illegal; but, speaking generally, a mere narrative in a newspaper of a past prize-fight, even in this country, would not be illegal. The Government have used, and will continue to use, their best endeavours to prevent those different breaches of the law.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Arising out of that answer, may I ask why it is that the publication of a bare record of the meetings of a political Society in Ireland are subject——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I ask why it is that the editors and proprietors of such newspapers are subject to a month's imprisonment?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. HOWELL: May I further ask whether the publication of challenges for a prize-fight would or would not be an infraction of the law?

MR. MATTHEWS: Really, Sir, it does not belong to me to answer questions of law; but if the hon. Member desires to know my private opinion I should say it would.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, When building operations will be commenced on the site that has been cleared in St. Martin's-le-Grand; and, whether he will have them started as soon as possible, in order to give employment to some of the men now out of work in the building trades?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Treasury sanction has now been obtained for the works at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and they shall be commenced as soon as possible; but some time must be occupied in getting working drawings and entering into a contract; but there shall be no unnecessary delay.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—TRIAL OF THE MAYOR OF CORK.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state why the Mayor of Cork, Chief Magistrate of the City, was tried before two Resident Magistrates under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act for a petty assault on a policeman on the 14th instant, and not tried before the ordinary Petty Session Bench of Magistrates which sits every day, or made the defendant in a civil action; and, whether this departure from the ordinary practice was taken with his sanction?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: As already stated, the assault was by no means a petty one, but a gross interference with a policeman in the discharge of his duty. The practice is to try under the recent statute charges of assault on the police when the section dealing with such charges is in force in a district where the alleged assault occurs. There was no reason for departing from this practice in the case in question.

MR. FLYNN said, that the practice was quite the other way. The case should have been tried before the ordinary Court, which sat every day.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked, Whether it was a fact that Sergeant Knox, who had brought the accusation against the Mayor of Cork, had been promoted to the position of Head Constable—had, in fact, been rewarded?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had no information whatever upon the subject; but with regard to the Question of the hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn), he believed that the answer he had given was quite correct.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Who decides whether a case of assault is to be tried by a Crimes Act magistrate or is to be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Justice of the Peace?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I do not know. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would ask the Solicitor General perhaps he will be able to tell him.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Solicitor General if he can state whose province it is to decide when the jurisdiction of the ordinary magistrate should be withdrawn in assault cases and the matter dealt with by Government magistrates?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): If the hon. and learned Member will give me Notice of that Question I will inquire.

SCOTLAND—MEASLES IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he can state the number of cases of, and of deaths from, measles, which took place in the last three months of 1887 in each of the parishes in the Island of Lewis; and whether in any of these parishes any steps were taken to relieve the sick, or beyond the closing of schools to check the spread of the disease; and, if so, what steps?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My information is that in Stornoway burgh there were a large number of cases and four deaths; Stornoway parish, many cases and 18 deaths; Barvas parish, nearly 300 cases and one death; Lochs parish, 300 cases and 16 deaths; Uig parish, two cases and no deaths. The disease has been, on the whole, of a mild type; and in all these cases medical attendance was given, and the sick supplied with medicine and such necessaries as were ordered by the medical men. Isolation, wherever practicable, was insisted upon.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the intention of the Government, in their Bill, to obtain powers to deal with the drainage of the River Barrow, to ask the House to give a larger contribution, by way of a free grant, than the sum of £75,000 recommended by the Royal Commission on Public Works in Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; it is not the intention of the Government to increase the sum.

ADMIRALTY—DEVONPORT DOCK—VICE ADMIRAL GRANT.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is his intention to retain Vice Admiral Grant in his position of Superintendent of Devonport Dock, notwithstanding the fact that he has attained to the rank of Vice Admiral; if so, whether there are any, and what, reasons for adopting this special course; what is the difference in the pay of a Vice Admiral and a Rear Admiral when employed; and, whether there are several Rear Admirals on the Active List who are thoroughly competent to discharge the duties of Superintendent of a Dockyard, by reason of their having served as Captains of Steam Reserve?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Under the old Regulations the post of Admiral Superintendent of a Dockyard was only tenable by Rear Admirals, promotion to the list of Vice Admiral, necessitating retirement from the appointment, although the period of three years for which the appointment ran might not have been completed. Short terms of service being prejudicial to the efficient working of the yard, I made an arrangement by which an officer might, irrespective of his rank, complete his term of service with the consent of the Admiralty. The difference in pay between a Vice Admiral and a Rear Admiral when so employed is £117 2*s.* 6*d.*; but the difference between their half pay is £136 17*s.* 6*d.* The State, therefore, retains the services of the officer of experience, and saves £20 per annum under the arrangement. Vice Admiral Grant is the first officer to whom the change applies.

POST OFFICE—THE SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Postmaster General, If the House may depend on him to continue to resist the attempts of the Submarine Telegraph Company to re-establish the monopoly under which the country has so long suffered?

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is it true that, after enjoying a monopoly of the Cable traffic between this country and the Continent for the past 20 years, the Submarine Telegraph Company have obtained the further concession of an extension of time for three months valued at £25,000; and, is it true that, notwithstanding the fact that besides paying heavy directors' fees and declaring dividends of from 15 to 25 per cent for many years, the Submarine Telegraph Company have obtained the promise of the Government to grant a bonus to each shareholder on the conclusion of the term for which the monopoly was granted, beside purchasing from the expiring Company the whole of their old Telegraph Cable and working appliances at valuation?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Submarine Telegraph Company have been informed that it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to agree to any renewal of the concession to them which will expire shortly. No agreement has been come to with the Company as to the purchase of their plant and transfer of their undertaking; and I do not think it would be to the public interest that any statement as to the details of negotiations should be made until some definite decision shall have been arrived at. I may say, however, that the inferences suggested by the Question of the hon. Member for Canterbury are very inaccurate.

EGYPT—THE SUEZ CANAL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether successive Governments of this country have always been in favour of keeping the Suez Canal open to ships of war of belligerents, or whether any Government has ever proposed to limit its use to commercial purposes and the peaceful passage of transports and vessels of war in time of peace between the Great Powers; and, whether the French Government has always insisted on keeping the Canal open to belligerents, or whether any French Government has ever proposed or suggested to Her Majesty's Government that it should be consecrated to peaceful purposes only, as always urged by its founder, M. de Lesseps?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): It is unnecessary, for practical purposes, to go further back than the Convention of London of 1885, conducted on behalf of this country by the Government of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, when the Powers then assembled agreed to a Declaration that the freedom of the Suez Canal at all times should be guaranteed. Her Majesty's Government then and since proposed that the Canal "should be free for the passage of all ships in any circumstances;" and I cannot find that any former Government—at least, since the opening of the Canal—held any other view. This, I think, was also always the view of the French Government, and it was the expressed view of the Canal Company as early as 1869, although they always wished the Canal to be excepted from military and naval operations.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that on the first appropriate Vote I shall call attention to the inconvenince and complications that would be likely to arise from the use of the Canal by belligerents to the world in general, and to this country in particular.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—CHECKWEIGHMEN.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received any information respecting the appointment of one James Watts as checkweighman at Farrington Gurney, in Somersetshire; whether such appointment was made by a majority of the workmen voting by ballot; and, whether it is true that since his appointment the owner of the colliery has refused to allow him to perform his duties?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received, just before I entered the House, a lengthy Report on the subject which I have scarcely had time to master, but from which I collect that the owner, who is also the manager of the colliery, has not received any intimation from the workmen of the appointment of Watts as checkweighman, and that from inquiry he has made he believes that no ballot has taken place for the appointment of Watts. Watts came to the colliery one afternoon after work had ceased, and interfered with the weighing machine without authority, being at the time in the employment of a neighbouring mine-owner, to whom he has not yet given notice to leave his employment. Watts was ordered away by the clerk.

IRELAND—THE MITCHELSTOWN INQUEST—COUNTY INSPECTOR BROWNRIGG.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the two following questions which were addressed, as reported in *The Times*, to County Inspector Brownrigg, who was in command of the police at Mitchelstown, when a meeting took place there last September, by District Inspector Irwin, who was second in command on that day, during the inquest that took place in respect to the death of certain persons at that meeting:—

> "Was it your object, after the previous day's occurrence, to deter me from adhering to my original words?
>
> "Would it be correct to say that the object of bringing these men (the police constables) to the office was to coach them?"

whether any investigation has been made into these charges made by the District Inspector against the County Inspector; and, whether both are still members of the Royal Irish Constabulary?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The matter referred to by this Question is to be dealt with by a Departmental inquiry.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH MONEY ORDERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, in reference to the promise made in reply to the hon. Member for Canterbury, during the discussion of the Estimates last Session, to establish experimentally telegraph money orders in this country, What steps have been taken in the matter?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that this matter has been under consideration, as I promised in answer to the Question addressed to me when the Estimates were under discussion last year; and I hope before long to be in a position to institute an experiment in this direction.

ROYAL PARKS AND PLEASURE GARDENS—THE RETURN.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, What is the cause of the delay in presenting a Return, ordered on 16th June last, of certain particulars respecting the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens; and, if he can state when this Return will be presented?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): It was not possible to have the Return referred to in the Question respecting the Royal Parks ready before the close of last Session; but I am informed by the Treasury that it will now at once be laid on the Table.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—FAILURE OF A 10-INCH GUN.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a large gun, stated to be a 10-inch gun, has lately failed under proof at Woolwich; and, if so, under what circumstances and from what causes, and where it was designed and constructed; and, whether any guns have burst, or otherwise failed, since the failure of the 43-ton Collingwood gun; and, if so, what guns, and in what particulars?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): A 10-inch gun lately failed under proof at Woolwich, the chase snapping in two at the forward end of the liner at the first proof round. The gun was otherwise uninjured. The cause of the failure is now under investigation by the Ordnance Committee. The gun had been designed at the Royal Gun Factory; but the design was modified during manufacture, the gun being chase-hooped and lined in accordance with the proposal of the Elswick Ordnance Company, who made it. No guns have burst on service since the failure of the 43-ton Collingwood gun; though several have been found defective at proof. I think it only right that a marked distinction should be drawn between failures at proof and failures on service. Our guns are subjected to very severe proof; and I should be sorry if severe criticism in Parliament upon failures at proof were to produce any tendency to pass into actual service guns which had not been most scrupulously tested.

INDIA—THE DIRECTOR OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPHS.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the retirement of the present Director of the Indo-European Telegraphs is overdue under the Service Rules; and, whether he is not only allowed still to retain his appointment, with all its valuable remuneration and perquisites, but that he is also allowed to hold the appointment of Director of the Edinburgh Museum on a large salary?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham), in reply, said, there was no Service Rule regulating the retirement of the late Director of the Indo-European Telegraphs, who had retired, as settled in January, by an Order of the Secretary of State, on the 15th of February.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC—THE NEW HEBRIDES.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the French troops have yet evacuated the New Hebrides; and, when the Papers relating to that evacuation and the future regulation of those Islands will be delivered to Members?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The French troops have not yet evacuated the New Hebrides; but the French Government undertook to withdraw them at the expiration of four months from the signature of the Convention—namely, from the 16th of November last—if it were not possible to do so earlier. Copies of the agreement, with regulations for the guidance of the Joint Naval Commission, will be delivered to hon. Members on Wednesday morning at furthest.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—RE-ARREST OF MR. PYNE, M.P.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. P. J. POWER) (Waterford, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what charge was the hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne) re-arrested at Kilmacthomas, on the 15th instant, after he had entered into bail to prosecute his appeal against the decision of Messrs. Considine and Bodkin, Resident Magistrates; why bail was refused for his appearance at Petty Sessions, at which the second charge against him was to be heard; if on the hearing of the second charge the Crown applied for a remand for eight days; if it is a fact that bail to a large amount was offered for the hon. Member's appearance at the end of that period, and on what grounds was that application refused; if when making this application to be admitted to bail the hon. Member was suffering from a severe wound inflicted by a police bâton; what action is to be taken with regard to the police constable who inflicted the wound; on what grounds, and by whom, were the police ordered to disperse by force any people accompanying the hon. Member to the Waterford and Limerick Railway, on his way to Clonmel, on the 15th instant; were the wishes of the Mayor and the Local Justices consulted; and, if not, why, before issuing such orders to the police; whether he has information to show that much indignation prevailed at the treatment which the hon. Member received, and at the manner in which the Mayor and the Local Justices had been treated, and that a collision between the police and the people was averted only by the influence of the Mayor and his friends; and, why did the police authorities refrain from giving notice of their intention of dispersing the hon. Member's friends until near the hour at which he should start for Clonmel? The hon. Gentleman also asked, Whether the right hon. Gentleman can state if the hon. Member for West Waterford, while in custody under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, and on his way to the Clonmel Court House yesterday, received a severe bâton wound on the head from one of the policemen on duty; whether his attention has been called to the report of the case in *The Daily News* of the 17th instant, where it is stated that Alderman Strange applied to the Court to have the hon. Member admitted to bail in order that he might receive proper medical treatment for the wound thus inflicted on him; that a Mr. Lonergan offered bail to the amount of £5,000; that the District Inspector of Constabulary had received instructions (from Dublin Castle) not to accept any bail, and that Colonel Carew, R.M., said "he could not accept bail under the circumstances;" and, whether, having regard to the decision of the Queen's Bench Division in admitting to bail the hon. Member for West Cork, he will consider the propriety of extending to magistrates the right of exercising some discretion on the question of admitting to bail the political prisoners brought before them under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887? The hon. Gentleman said, the quotation from the remarks of Colonel Carew as given in the Notice Paper should read—

> "He could not attempt to accept bail under such circumstances."

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The hon. Member referred to was, in the second case, charged with unlawfully taking part in a criminal conspiracy, and with inciting to intimidation. The Resident Magistrate reports that he refused bail because it was opposed by the District Inspector; and also because, in his own opinion, a person who does all in his power to evade arrest is not entitled to bail when made amenable. The Crown applied for a remand to next Petty Sessions. Bail was offered to a large amount, and refused for the reasons just stated. The police were not ordered to disperse by force any people accompanying the hon. Member. A crowd of roughs did follow the party, and on arrival at the railway station threw stones at the police. It is believed one of these struck the hon. Member, as the immediate police escort were armed with rifles, not with bâtons. The doctor who examined the cut refuses to say it was caused by a bâton. A torchlight procession with bands had been contemplated; but on the representation of the police the Mayor prevented it. I have no information as to the alleged indignation of the Mayor and Local Justices. The magistrates had full discretion as to admitting to bail in a case such as that referred to in the Question.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. and gallant Member say whether an investigation will be ordered as to whether the hon. Member was struck by a stone or by a bâton, as we have seen statements which lead us to suppose that it must have been by a bâton?

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, the Government had no information which would lead them to call for any special investigation. He had also seen statements that the blow was inflicted by a stone, and as the police escort were armed with rifles and not with bâtons, it was natural to suppose the wound was not caused by a bâton.

Mr. DILLON said, that his information seemed to show that the blow was given by a police bâton. He wished to know whether the Chief Secretary would order such an inquiry into the circumstances of the case as would enable independent testimony to be brought to bear upon it?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I must ask the hon. Member to put the Question on the Paper.

Mr. M'CARTAN asked, if any inquiry was made as to how the wound was inflicted; and he also wished to know how many of the policemen who were on duty in Clonmel had been engaged in guarding Lisfinny Castle while the hon. Member was patiently awaiting arrest?

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, he had no information on these points.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—IRISH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any large measures involving his personal supervision are now in course of preparation for Ireland; if not, what reason exists why the subjects dealing with Irish administration, brought forward by means of Questions in this House, are no longer answered, as has been the practice since the Union, by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, but are left to a subordinate official, for whose appointment no legislative sanction exists; and, whether any precedent can be cited for this devolution of responsibility in dealing with Irish subjects?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. and learned Member has referred to the practice since the Union. I may remind him of two changes that have occurred since then. One is the gradual, but still recent and enormous, increase in the number of Questions put to the Irish Government; the other is the appointment of a Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. It is in consequence of these changes that a partial alteration has been made in the method of dealing with Questions. I may remind the House that answering Questions is probably of all Parliamentary operations among the least difficult and responsible; for the answers are, as the House is aware, read out from manuscript by the Minister in charge. It is true that occasionally Questions of great nicety, or involving large principles, are asked; and on such occasions the answers are prepared, in the Irish, as in other Departments, after consultation between the Under Secretary and the Chief Secretary. But, for the most part, answers are merely a transcript of information received from Ireland with respect to some local incident, condensed and arranged for the convenience of the House. It is not accurate to say, therefore, that there is any devolution of responsibility. All I have done is to assume that a Question addressed to the Chief Secretary is addressed to the Department of which he is the Head; and have made it a matter of arrangement between the Parliamentary Representatives of that Department who shall answer it. This is, I think, highly conducive to the proper despatch of Public Business, in which the House is primarily interested; and the hon. and learned Gentleman will, I think, himself see the absurdity of leaving it to the Chief Secretary to decide who shall have charge of a Bill, and not at the same time to allow him to settle who shall read out an answer relative to alleged misconduct on the part of a constable. I may add that no Minister in my recollection has answered Questions more to the satisfaction of the House than my right hon. and gallant Friend, and that I am always here in time to deal with Questions put without Notice when such a course seems desirable.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the right hon. Gentleman is never in the House at Question time, I should like to know from what source he gathers that his right hon. and gallant Friend's answers are to the satisfaction of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE WATER SUPPLY—APPREHENDED WATER FAMINE.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the letters which have recently appeared in *The Times* newspaper on the question of the water supply of this country; and, whether, in view of the opinions expressed by Sir John Lawes and other eminent authorities as to the possible danger of a water famine occurring during dry summers, and in view of the vast importance of the question of the proper storage of water throughout the Kingdom, the Government will consider the advisability of appointing a Royal Commission to inquire and report to Parliament on the whole question?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): My attention has been called to the letters which have appeared in *The Times* on the question of the water supply of this country. The question is, undoubtedly, an important one; but it would be impossible for any steps to be taken now which could affect the water supply of the ensuing summer. Looking to the fact that large sums of money have in late years been borrowed by Local Authorities for the purpose of providing water in the districts for which they are responsible, the Government hardly think that a Royal Commission, such as is suggested by the hon. Member, is at present advisable. I may state, for the information of the hon. Member, that in 1884 the Local Authorities obtained powers to spend £750,000 to obtain water; in 1885, £1,613,000; and in 1886, £1,741,000; so that in three years £4,000,000 have been authorized for the purpose of water supply.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES)—LEGISLATION.

MR. RICHARD (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government, in accordance with the assurance given last Session by him, to deal with the question of Intermediate Education in Wales during the present Session?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government have been giving attention to this important subject during the Recess; but the hon. Member is aware that the earlier part of the Session must be occupied by legislation of considerable importance to which the Government is specifically pledged. Should, however, opportunity be afforded to them at a later period, Her Majesty's Government hope to be able to ask Parliament to consider a measure dealing with intermediate education in Wales.

EGYPT — THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL AT CAIRO.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that, before proceeding to Egypt to prosecute the claims of the ex-Khedive Ismail, the Judge Advocate General offered to place his resignation in the hands of the Prime Minister; and, whether it is the fact that the Prime Minister declined that offer?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Judge Advocate General, with reference to a discussion which took place in this House towards the close of last Session, placed, shortly after the close of the Session, his Office absolutely at the disposal of the Prime Minister. No answer has yet been given to his letter. The Government are, however, of opinion that it is advisable that the arrangements for the discharge of the duties of the Office should be modified, and they are considering in what manner that can best be done.

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS—TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether "I, Charles Warren" has removed his ukase prohibiting the right of free speech in Trafalgar Square; and, whether the Square is now available for the citizens of London for free meeting or not?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Mr. Speaker, the Regulations issued by Sir Charles Warren, under the Metropolitan Police Act, have not been revoked.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM: I would like, then, to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Her Majesty's Government is afraid to allow—["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman must couch his Questions in proper Parliamentary language.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM: I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Her Majesty's Government see reasonable reason for apprehension from the law of free speech—whether they have any reasonable ground of apprehension in prohibiting meetings—what reason they have for prohibiting meetings?

[No reply.]

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW (IRELAND)—"BLUNT *v.* BYRNE."

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to the public importance of the questions of law and facts raised in the action of "Blunt *v.* Byrne," he would lay a full and accurate report of the proceedings on the Table of the House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E): The hon. Gentleman has not given me Notice of this Question; but I am of opinion that it would be very desirable if an authentic report could be laid upon the Table. I am not aware that there is any precedent for laying the evidence upon the Table of the House, and I do not think it is possible to do it if our sole authority is newspaper reports. If, on inquiry, I find that any authentic transcript could be put in, I will consider the propriety of laying it on the Table.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary, Whether he is aware that the proceedings against myself in the Parliament of 1880-1885 were laid on the Table of the House, and in my absence and to my detriment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know from what source they were taken. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will communicate with me on the subject.

MR. BRADLAUGH: It appears from the Papers as printed that some of them, at any rate, were taken from the attorney employed against me.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary, Whether, in view of the fact that 11 of the jury who tried the case of Mr. Blunt were of opinion that the meeting was a legal meeting, and were in favour of a verdict against the Government, and in view of the principles laid down in the Charge of Chief Baron Palles, the Government did not see their way to immediately liberate Mr. Blunt?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks me to advise the Lord Lieutenant to review the sentence on Mr. Blunt, on the ground that if one juryman had been of a different mind Mr. Blunt would have got a verdict for damages. I answer, in the first place, that the question of the illegality of Mr. Blunt's intentions was never submitted to the jury, being withdrawn from their cognizance at the request of Mr. Blunt's own counsel. In the second place, that the unauthorized gossip on which the hon. Gentleman bases his request could, under no circumstances, be a ground for Executive action. In the third place, that the gossip which has reached me on the subject of the distribution of opinion among the jurymen is of an entirely different character to that which appears to have reached the hon. Member. In the fourth place, that I cannot consider a civil action as providing an appeal against a verdict given in one Criminal Court—[An hon. MEMBER: A verdict?]—and confirmed, on appeal, in another. And, finally, in the fifth place, that, if I did so regard it, the character of the evidence given in Court, and the tenour of the Judge's Charge, must entirely remove any doubts which could have previously been conceived to exist as to the gross illegality of the meeting which Mr. Blunt, in spite of the warnings of the Executive, persisted in attempting to hold.

GREAT BRITAIN AND VENEZUELA—RUMOURED HOSTILITIES.

MR. HANBURY-TRACY (Montgomery, &c.) asked, Whether it was true that orders had been given to the Naval Commander in Chief to take hostile steps against the Government of Venezuela? Had not the latter Government made repeated offers to submit the various disputed questions to arbitration, especially that of territorial boundary, and on what grounds had this offer been refused?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer together Questions of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the hon. Member for Montgomery Boroughs. There is no truth whatever in the report that any naval or military action against Venezuela on the part of Her Majesty's Government is being taken, or is in contemplation. Negotiations have been for some time going on respecting the doubtful territory between British Guiana and Venezuela, and proposals for arbitration have been made by Venezuela. Her Majesty's Government were not averse to the principle of arbitration, but were not able to accept the bases proposed by Venezuela. But all negotiations were necessarily stopped in consequence of the suspension of diplomatic relations by the late President Guzman Blanco.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ALLEGED MEETINGS OF SUPPRESSED BRANCHES OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether he can give the House any information as to the alleged meeting of a suppressed branch of the National League at Droumtariff, as reported in *United Ireland*, on the 28th of January last, and quoted by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) in his recent speech?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The facts are — as reported by the local police — that on the day in question no meeting whatever of this branch took place. The only thing which, by any stretch of imagination, could be construed into a meeting was a football match, which took place in a field at a place called Islandhill, near Droumtariff; and if any election took place, or any voting occurred, as reported in *United Ireland*, it must have been in the course of this match. Certainly no attempt whatever was made to hold a meeting in the League Hall, or in any other place in Droumtariff on this occasion.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.) asked, Whether the statement the right hon. Gentleman had just read out was given on the authority of the local policemen, who failed to detect the meeting?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, Why the Question had not been answered by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman)?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I said in my reply to the hon. and learned Member a short time ago, I am always here to answer Questions put without Notice when such a course seems desirable.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Was the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Waring) asked to put the Question to the right hon. Gentleman?

[No reply.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [EIGHTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February.]—[See page 64.]

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, that before the discussion closed he was anxious to refer to one paragraph in the Gracious Speech from the Throne to which he had heard no reference made by any of the Ministers. The paragraph to which he referred stated that "the prospects of commerce are more hopeful than they have been for many years past." Well, if that were so, no one would be more rejoiced to hear it than he was; but he confessed he had considerable doubts on the subject. He was very sceptical indeed as to the possibility of any material or permanent improvement occurring in their trade until they had, in the first place, a genuine revival in the agricultural prosperity of the country. He was sceptical for this reason, that other countries were becoming more and more surrounded by a wall of hostile tariffs, which absolutely prohibited English trade. If that were so, it seemed to him the only real improvement they could look for was in the increase of the purchasing power of the markets at home; and that, in his opinion, was to be found only in a large increase in the agricultural productions of the country, and in the wealth which ought to be annually created by agricultural prosperity. Now, could this be done? Could any means be devised for bringing about this state of things? Why, English manufacturers would then have at their very doors the very best markets for their goods—markets far superior to those for which they were looking in vain abroad. Every additional quarter of wheat that would be grown in this country would provide an additional market to that extent for the goods the manufacturers desired to sell; but not one single quarter of wheat brought from America at the present moment provided the least additional market for British manufacturers, for the simple reason that the Americans refused to purchase in return. How much they had lost in this way in the last few years could be shown by the simplest possible computation. If the House would allow him he would refer to the evidence given by Sir James Caird before Lord Iddesleigh's Commission. He should take only one paragraph from the Report—paragraph 73. He pointed out that as regarded the home markets there had been a serious loss in the purchasing powers by reason of the deficiency or decrease of the produce of the soil. That was what occurred in 1885; but matters had become considerably worse since then. Sir James Caird spoke of the loss in that year as £42,000,000 or more, and the loss in several of the preceding years must, no doubt, have been equal to or even greater than that. This amount had been lost to the markets in which it was formerly spent, and could not fail to have had an important influence upon the demand for manufactured goods. He would ask hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House whether that was not a lamentable state of things? But since 1885 matters had become considerably worse, and from later computations the loss could not now be put down at less than £50,000,000. Exports had diminished by something like a quarter. The exports of British and Irish manufactures for last year, given in the Official Returns, amounted to £220,000,000, and, according to the latest computation, the loss was equal literally to a quarter of the whole of their export trade. That was exactly what the depression in agriculture was costing at the present time; and it was literally nothing to what it would cost in the future if the present state of things continued. It was as certain as that he was speaking there that thousands on thousands of additional acres of land would go out of cultivation if the prices remained as they were. He wished to say a word upon the subject of land which had gone out of cultivation, for the latest Returns upon this subject had given, he believed, a totally false impression. In 1881 a special Return was made upon this point. It was called a Return of the acreage of unoccupied farms and plots of land available for cultivation. Under this head the quantity of unoccupied land was shown as 43,000 acres. No subsequent Return of this kind was made again until last year. This showed it to be 25,000 acres, or apparently a diminution of 18,000 acres; and it was argued in consequence—and very naturally—that, as there had been a diminution of 18,000 acres in the area of uncultivated land, that betokened a considerable improvement in the agricultural position. He wished to examine this question a little more closely. Where did they find that the chief increase in the cultivated area was shown? It was shown under the head of permanent pasture. Arable land had fallen from 17,600,000 acres to 16,900,000 acres in round numbers since 1881. Permanent pasture, on the other hand, had during the same period increased from 14,600,000 acres to 15,600,000 acres. Now, he ventured to express the confident opinion that thousands of acres had gone out of cultivation between 1881 and 1887, of which we had no account whatever. What had happened had been this. A considerable proportion of the area which was now returned as permanent pasture, and which accounted for the large increase under that head, was simply land which had been left to go waste, and had what was called "laid itself down to grass," growing little but weeds and thistles, and little, if any, grass at all, and probably fit to feed nothing but a donkey. Some of it, no doubt, had been let of late for whatever it would fetch, probably a shilling or two an acre, and consequently it was now returned as permanent pasture, and no longer reckoned as uncultivated land. That was the explanation of the apparent improvement under that head, and he should be much surprised if hon. Gentlemen well acquainted with agriculture did not agree with him. There was another aspect of the case which he desired to put before the House, which showed the remarkable result that, although there was so large a diminution in arable land and so growing an increase in permanent pasture within the last two years, although there had previously been an increase, there had been a considerable diminution of stock and a great falling-off both in cattle and sheep. Happily, however, in consequence of the good lambing season, there was last year a considerable increase in the number of lambs. But the most lamentable and painful feature connected with the agricultural depression was the terrible number of labourers throughout the country who, in consequence of this depression, had been thrown out of work. There was an instructive Memorandum issued on this subject in *The Board of Trade Journal* of November last year, which referred to questions of labour and wages in the South-Eastern Counties. The interest of that Memorandum consisted in a comparison of the numbers of unemployed, and of the rate of wages at present as compared with 1880. From them it appeared that there were now many more labourers out of employment than there were seven years ago. It would also be seen that not only the rate of day wages, but those of piecework, had been materially reduced. On the first page he found such items as these with respect to piecework. In the first village mentioned in this Return the reduction was from 30 to 40 per cent; in another one-half; a little further one-third; and in others 25 per cent. Weekly wages had also fallen, but not so much. In the column which indicated the number of labourers out of employment he found that in one village the number was 20; in the next two-fifths of the total number; in others 15 and 40 or 50. All these were at places where in 1880 there was not a single man out of employment. In a large village with which he was personally acquainted he was told, to his great distress, that there were from 60 to 80 labouring men willing to work, but absolutely unable to obtain work the whole of the winter; and the most miserable part of the story was that those on whom these men had been previously dependent for employment were now, in consequence of the reduction of their own incomes, unable to provide work and wages. He was, however, glad to say that some alleviation had been found for these poor and deserving people in the increase of the number of allotments, the granting of which, he was happy to say, had been stimulated by the Bill of last year. But allotments were never intended to be, and could not be, regarded as a substitute for wages and employment, however desirable they might be as a supplement to them. What, then, was to be done? It was no use for these unhappy people to go into towns, where a similar state of things was already in existence. The number of artizans out of employment was something of which few people had anything like an accurate conception. There was some remarkable evidence given by a man who was specially competent to speak on this question, and whose statement had, within the last few hours, been laid on the Table of the House. He would venture to call the attention of hon. Members to it. This evidence was given by Mr. J. C. Fielden, a gentleman intimately acquainted with the condition of the working classes, and connected, as he said, with all the movements among the working classes in the cotton district since 1859, and the arbitrator for the operatives in all the great wage questions when the question had been settled by arbitration. His evidence came to this—that out of the total number of men, women, and children of the people employed in the country earning wages, no fewer than 700,000 were out of employment altogether, owing to the depression in trade and agriculture, and those that were in employment were receiving greatly reduced wages, and what was more in what was described as real wages. And this estimate, he told us, was put even higher, 200,000 higher, by the delegates representing all the principal trades at the Trades Conference at Wolverhampton. If that was anything like an approach to a true description of the present state of things—and there was every reason to believe that it was—it was not unnatural that he had taken a great interest in the paragraph of Her Majesty's Speech of which he had spoken. It deeply regretted that there should not be in agricultural matters a corresponding improvement to that in trade. It commended that industry to the care of the House, in the hope that means might be discovered to meet the difficulties under which it laboured. It was for no light reason that such a paragraph was inserted in the Speech. It indicated a very deep concern on the part of Her Majesty's Government for the condition of agriculture, and all classes connected with that industry would be proportionately grateful for that concern. But it would be more interesting to the House to know what was the view of the Government on the subject, and what were the means which they proposed to improve our position in that regard. He, of course, presumed that no return to Protection would be suggested. The speeches of Ministers during the Recess had put that out of the question entirely, and so long as the exports of wheat from silver-using countries were stimulated as they were at present by the existing rate of exchange, which many competent authorities considered to amount to something like a bounty of 25 to 30 per cent upon every quarter of wheat sent to us from those countries, he confessed that he had come to the conclusion that Protection would not have the beneficial effects which were expected from it so far as the English producer of wheat was concerned. Several other measures were mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. There was a Bill dealing with the question of railway rates, which he was glad was to be introduced again and hoped would be carried. But it would have to be considerably different from the Bill of last Session if it was to have the desired effect. He also rejoiced at the indication of an intention on the part of the Government to mitigate the burdens which now fell on the ratepayers of the country. But he, for one, could not think that these were all the measures which were in the minds of Ministers when that paragraph of the Speech to which he had referred was framed. If that were so, and the Government were able to give any hope or to throw any light on the present position of the agricultural interest, it would be matter of great encouragement at a time when encouragement was sorely needed. He did not think it was necessary for him on this occasion to suggest any remedy for agricultural depression, even if it were possible for him or anyone else to do so. His object was to ascertain from Her Majesty's Government what they were really to understand from the expressions contained in that paragraph of the Speech from the Throne. He thought any Member of the House was fully justified in pressing this question upon the attention of the Government. There were, it was true, more exciting questions, yet he was sure that the depression in trade and agriculture, with its results shown in thousands of people out of employment, was not a less important subject even than the Irish Question, of which, in his opinion, it formed a most material part. It formed, in his opinion, the gravest, most difficult, and, perhaps, the greatest problem for solution at the present time; and he was certain that any Government, whichever Party might be in power, would shortly have to deal with it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): I am sure my right hon. Friend need not apologize for having brought this subject under the consideration of the House. No set of men can be more aware than Her Majesty's Ministers of the terrible depression from which the agricultural interest is, and has been, suffering. It is nearly 10 years since the agriculturists began to struggle with unabated energy and dauntless courage against the difficulties which threaten to overwhelm them. My right hon. Friend has divided his observations into two main heads. First, he made some observations upon that portion of the Queen's Speech which refers to the presumed revival of trade, and he assigns many reasons to show that that revival of trade does not really exist; and I think he went so far as to say that there could not be a revival of trade until agriculture was flourishing. To a certain extent I agree with him; but I would ask him whether the position might not be reversed, and whether we might not say that agriculture could not really flourish until trade revived? Her Majesty's Government do see some symptoms of a revival of trade—speaking generally, I am not asserting that in some trades there are not a great lack of employment and diminished profits; but, taking the trade of the Kingdom as a whole, we have reasons to believe that there are signs and symptoms of revival, and *pro tanto* I think those signs of revival of trade do augur well for the future of agriculture. My right hon. Friend went at some length into the statistics of unoccupied farms. I think that, on the whole, his explanation of what appears to be a discrepancy in these Returns is probably correct, and that certain farms after two or three years have managed to put forth a rough kind of grass upon them which produces a certain amount of revenue to the owners, so that the farms are not included in the Returns. I do not know whether my right hon. Friend has seen a remarkable paper in *The National Review* by Mr. Harris, who gave chapter and verse as to two farms of his own that were bringing in between £200 and £300 a-year each.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he thought the farms referred to by Mr. Harris had been laid down to grass, whereas he had spoken of farms which had laid themselves down.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I am speaking from memory. My right hon. Friend drew a very sad picture indeed of the condition of the labourers. I know nothing more painful and nothing more sad than the facts to which my right hon. Friend has called attention. It is impossible to controvert them; but I should like anyone to point out how, under the circumstances, the case is to be remedied. I am afraid it will be a slow process before we can again see the agricultural labourers restored to their former position and employed at good wages. Then my right hon. Friend asked what the Government meant by the paragraph in the Queen's Speech, and what we meant to do in consequence of that paragraph. Those two questions are most reasonable, and the only purpose I have in rising is to explain what the Government intended by that paragraph, and how they propose to give effect to it. The paragraph is undoubtedly worded rather abnormally. It invites the attention of the House. We inserted that paragraph advisedly, as we wish to take the House fully into our confidence in regard to this subject, and to have the support of Gentlemen on both sides in endeavouring to palliate the disastrous situation described by my right hon. Friend. A great deal has been said about the character and composition of the Department with which I have the honour to be connected. A good deal of misconception has arisen on that subject; but I admit that the constitution of what is called the Committee of Agriculture is not what it ought to be, if agriculture is thought worthy to have a Department of its own. It is a misnomer; there is really no such thing as a Committee of Agriculture. There is a most admirable Department with two objects. The first is to make regulations with reference to the prevention of diseases among animals, and the regulation of the transport of animals to and from this country; the second, to obtain, tabulate, and publish agricultural statistics. In regard to these objects there cannot be a better

Department than that which exists at the present moment. It has so far worked admirably with the able assistance of Mr. Peel and Professor Brown, together with an excellent staff of Inspectors. Again, I think extremely well of the way in which the statistical branch is conducted. I see no reason to make any change in these two branches. But when I have said that I have said all. I have described the whole Agricultural Department. I am, however, glad to say, on behalf of the Government, that having regard to the great and unprecedented depression to which agriculture has so long been and is still subjected, we propose to introduce a Bill establishing an Agricultural Department. We think, however, it would be premature to describe at present the character of that measure; but I may mention that we propose to adopt several of the recommendations of the Committee on Agricultural Education and Dairy Schools. Another topic on which I desire to lay stress is the paragraph in the Queen's Speech referring to the re-adjustment of local and Imperial taxation. I must not anticipate what the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to say on this interesting subject; but we hope that the measure we shall introduce will be a measure of sufficient magnitude and importance to make the agricultural world feel that a great operation is being performed, and that justice, which has been so long delayed, is now being tardily rendered to them. Then, Sir, my right hon. Friend has made some comments on the proposal to re-introduce the Railway Rates Bill. All I can say on that subject is that it will be introduced by Her Majesty's Government in the sincere hope and expectation that it will have a practical effect in the way of putting an end to the bounties which now exist upon the introduction of foreign produce, and that the agriculturists of the country will gain relief, at any rate, from that unjust burden. I am aware that any measure I may have indicated can have really but a small effect in diminishing the evil of which the agriculturists complain; but, at any rate, we will do all that it is possible for us to do within the limits of the existing fiscal system, and we shall make our proposals in the hope and expectation that by their agency the oldest, the greatest, and most important of all our national industries may be fostered and preserved.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, the information which the noble Lord had been able to give as to the intention of the Government to create a Department of Agriculture was, doubtless, very interesting to the right hon. Gentleman who initiated the debate, but not so much interest to the remainder of the House; while that was the case he was willing to admit that some of the measures indicated in the Queen's Speech were of great importance to the agricultural community. The Railway Rates Bill was one which, if carried out in a proper spirit, would be a great benefit to the farmers of this country. He regretted that no legislation had been proposed in the interest of agricultural labourers, but trusted that if any was put forward by the Opposition the Government would not oppose it. He was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) make no reference to the Tithes Bill. He hoped the Tithes Bill of this Session would not be a sham one, as he regarded that of last year. He disagreed with hon. Gentlemen opposite on this question. The levying of tithes was neither a landlord's, a farmer's, nor a labourer's question in particular, but it was essentially a land question. In his opinion, though the State might do much for the agriculturist, it could not do everything. The key to the situation was the individual himself. Naturally, the first remedy that occurred to the farmer was a reduction of rent and in the cost of production; but he was certain that hon. Gentlemen would agree that the landlords of England, Scotland, and Wales had done their duty in this matter. ["Hear, hear!" *and* "No!"] The reductions of rent throughout the country had averaged something like 25 per cent. In trade and manufacture the energetic man met the situation by what was called a system of expansion. It was said that the farmer was not able to do that; but he thought he might meet the situation partially and improve his position materially by producing more largely such things as cheese, butter, and eggs, for all of which the demand was always great and a good price could always be obtained. The British farmer unfortunately had one fault, one inherent weakness, and that was a strong hankering after the fleshpots of Protection. He was therefore very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman opposite disavow any intention of supporting a protective system. It was a most delusive and unsettling notion to put into the heads of the farmers—namely, that their position could be alleviated by any return to a duty on corn. Yet some hon. Gentlemen and others were going about the country apparently preaching that doctrine. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division, who justly possessed such influence with the agricultural community, might do something to disabuse the minds of the farmers on this point; but now that he had given up the position of Leader of the Protection Party in the House, the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) had stepped into his shoes. He hoped that the hon. Member would take this opportunity of explaining to the House what he meant by Fair Trade. A great deal of vague language was used by its advocates, but what they exactly meant it was difficult to discover. As one deeply interested in the agricultural community, he had to thank the right hon. Gentleman opposite for his speech, and to express the hope that Her Majesty's Government would bring forward real remedial measures. If they did he felt sure they would be heartily supported by the Agricultural Members on both sides of the House.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, that with the permission of the House, and as a borough Member, he should like to say a few words upon that portion of the Most Gracious Speech from the Throne which had been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). He felt certain that the whole agricultural community would read with the greatest satisfaction the speech of the noble Lord the Member for East Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), who so ably represented the agricultural community in the House, and that they would be grateful for the indication afforded in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech that speedy relief might probably be attainable. But he joined with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford in saying that it would have been far more satisfactory to the unfortunate farmer and agricultural labourer if more precise information had been afforded to the House of Commons as to the measures to be adopted for the relief of the agricultural interest at the present day. The sympathy of Her Majesty's Government—and more especially the sympathy of the noble Lord—would be highly acceptable to the suffering and depressed agricultural interest; but he certainly thought that what was wanted was an early and thorough and practical remedy for a great and crying evil. He confessed he did not see, in the measures which had been foreshadowed in Her Majesty's Speech from the Throne, any great sign of a remedy for the agricultural depression at the present moment. The extension of local government was, no doubt, desirable; but he only hoped that it might be obtained without any increase of local burdens. Technical education had, no doubt, been scandalously neglected in the past; but he felt quite certain that any effort on the part of Her Majesty's Government to promote and encourage it would be received with ready favour by both sides of the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division had given an indication that he thought the first remedy might be found in what was known as bi-metallism. The right hon. Gentleman's authority was great in the country—his experience in agricultural matters was unequalled—but he (Mr. Howard Vincent) ventured to think that the right hon. Gentleman would have some little difficulty in persuading the country of that fact. No doubt the hon. Baronet the Member for the Wells Division of Somerset (Sir Richard Paget) would hear with great satisfaction the statement of the noble Lord that it was in the contemplation of Her Majesty's Government to establish an Agricultural Department; but he (Mr. Howard Vincent) should like to say this—that, having acquired considerable knowledge of the feeling of the agricultural community in the country, he was in a position to state that they were not only anxious for men, but also for measures. One of the measures which would be most acceptable to them—in fact, the chief amongst those which they wanted—and he was not singular in this belief either in the House or in the country—was a measure which would stimulate British and Irish production, and which would give the British and Irish consumer a direct interest in the encouragement of the industry and labour of their fellow-countrymen. He had no intention of going at any length into this matter at the present time, in spite of the observations addressed to the House by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Saffron Walden Division of Essex (Mr. H. Gardner). Other opportunities would, he believed, occur during this Session, when he would be able more fully and thoroughly to gratify the hon. Member's curiosity, and when he would also be able, with the assistance of hon. Friends, to bring this matter before the House on an occasion when a more practical result would be obtainable than was possible this evening. No doubt, the hon. Member for the Saffron Walden Division of Essex had noticed, in common with other hon. Members, that on the Order Book was his (Mr. Howard Vincent's) Motion on the subject, and similar Motions in the names of other hon. Members. Upon some of these Motions he trusted that they would be able to get the opinion of the House. Of course, the opinion of the House would only be taken provided it could be done without endangering the present patriotic Government, which nine commercial men out of every ten recognized as alone capable of bringing about any real revival of industry. Perhaps the House would allow him to say that in all parts of the country energetic men were actively at work in arousing public opinion upon this question, and he did not think there was any prospect of their relaxing their efforts until the interests of the masses of the whole population were regarded as more sacred than those of a small minority who produced nothing more deserving of legislative protection than the interests of the foreign importer and producer. He thought his hon. Friend the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. C. W. Gray) would corroborate the statement that the revival of agricultural industry was a matter of the greatest importance to the home population, and for this reason he asked for a few minutes. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire had remarked, the state of agriculture was terrible; numerous farms had been deserted, and thousands of acres of arable land had been laid down in permanent pasture. The wages of the agricultural labourer had shrunk to 8*s*. or 9*s*. a-week, and many men with wives to maintain and children to support were unable to obtain employment. For the urban population the state of affairs was also very serious. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford did not refer to the influx from the unhappy country districts into the towns during the past few years, but it had been enormous, and amounted to hundreds of thousands of persons. With the depression in trade and the decreased purchasing power of the agricultural population, amounting—according to Sir James Caird—to over £42,000,000 a-year; with the increased and increasing taxation and increasing competition on the part of foreigners in the home market which had rendered employment in the towns scarcer and scarcer, it was no wonder then that the bitter cry of the unemployed became every day louder and louder. He was satisfied that the sights to be seen on the high roads of the country and at every street corner of London—a gaunt man, a miserable woman, and the famished children—must pierce the heart even of the most zealous member of the Cobden Club. The pauperism in London alone showed an increase of more than 10,000 persons in the first week of the present month, compared with the corresponding week in 1886. Thousands of persons were fed by charity, and it was stated by Mr. Shipton, of the London Trades Council, in a deputation which recently waited on the Prime Minister, that there were numbers of persons who would rather suffer martyrdom than let their sufferings be known outside the circle of their friends. In Sheffield and many other towns and villages numbers of deserving persons were altogether unable to obtain employment, and numerous unprofitable relief works had been undertaken in many parts of the country. A high authority—Mr. Francis—the Chairman of the London and County Bank, stated recently that the depression in agriculture amounted in the last 10 years in Great Britain to £10 an acre, with an addition of £2 per acre for the tenants' capital. If the land were to be realized now at the present prices there would be a loss in money of more than

£600,000,000 sterling. With these facts before them, he was justified in saying that the question was one which deserved attentive consideration. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) wrote a letter a few weeks ago in which he said that £50,000,000 sterling a-year, which might be applied to the encouragement of agriculture in this country, now went over to the foreigner in the trade of butter, cheese, poultry, eggs, vegetables, and bacon. He submitted that these were matters which deserved the close and speedy attention of Parliament. He was quite sure that neither he nor his hon. Friend the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex, nor any other Member of that House, intended to make any attack upon real Free Trade; but bearing in mind that this country raised a far larger revenue from import duties than any other country in Europe, his hon. Friends and himself intended to attack, singly and together, wherever and whenever they could, in that House and in the country, that unfair system of one-sided Free Trade which admitted the produce of the foreigner into the British markets, while the same privileges were rigidly denied to our produce in every quarter of the globe. They intended to assail, by every legitimate means the circumstances of the hour might justify, those abuses which the Prime Minister pointed out at Liverpool had crept in under the broad mantle of Free Trade. He felt convinced that the great body of public opinion was being aroused in this matter with a view of securing the legitimate defence of British industry. The struggle they had before them might be a long and difficult one; but they would not flinch from it, because they were of opinion that the welfare of the British producer and of the great masses of the community of the country rested upon the prosperity of British industry. They knew that on their side was ranged the opinion of every other nation, of every self-governing British Colony, and of every democracy in the world. They believed that they were working for the welfare of their own countrymen, and endeavouring to secure their industries from destruction at foreign hands; and, with all deference, he would remind their opponents of the well-known dictum pronounced at Manchester by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—

> "It is in vain that you struggle against the opinion of civilized mankind. The judgment of the whole world continued and prolonged is never wrong."

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, that judging from the speech of the hon. Member opposite who had just spoken (Mr. Howard Vincent), there would be no great result from his efforts on the question of Fair Trade if it were likely to interfere with the patriotic Government now sitting on the Treasury Bench. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) would, before long, drop his new nostrum of bi-metallism for agricultural distress, and go back to his old love, Protection. Whatever the landlords of Ireland and Scotland might have done in reducing rents—although in the latter country the Crofters' Commission had to lower them 40, 50, and 60 per cent—the majority of the Welsh landlords had not met their tenants fairly. The consequence was that thousands of tenant-farmers in Wales were on the verge of ruin. Landlords had been somewhat startled by the establishment of a Land League in the Principality. He did not then wish to discuss the rise of the League, or argue whether it was justified or not; but he would point to two counties in Wales where there was no Land League—namely, the counties of Anglesey and Montgomery. A short time ago, at the invitation of the landlords, a conference of farmers was held in Anglesey to discuss the causes of agricultural depression and the best means of meeting it. The result of that conference was that the tenants came to the conclusion that unless the landlords met them more fairly than they had hitherto done, much of the land in that Island would fall out of cultivation, for this reason — that while the price of agricultural produce had fallen 30 per cent, the landlords had made only temporary reductions of 10 per cent in the rent. The farmers had year after year been paying rent out of their savings. Those savings had now gone; and they were now paying rent from loans obtained from the banks on the security of one another's credit, and everybody knew that a system of obtaining money from the banks on credit, with a falling market, must in the end land the farmers in ruin. The same state of things existed in the county of Montgomery. The fall of prices there amounted to from 30 to 35 per cent, and only temporary abatements of 30 per cent had been made to meet this terrible fall. The farmers said that it was impossible to effect further economy either in labour or in manure, and if any reduction in labour were made the only result would be that the land would be deteriorated and go out of cultivation. The farmers further complained of unnecessarily restrictive covenants in regard to cropping and sale of produce, which operated prejudicially in creating a feeling of distrust and insecurity among the peasantry. Whatever greater measure might be under consideration for the improvement of trade, they might give the farmers greater scope in cultivation and freedom of sale for their produce. The reforms which the farmers asked for were, that in connection with County Boards there should be a board of conciliation and valuers, who should settle disputes as to rent between landlords and tenants, that the farmers should have security of tenure so long as they paid their rents and complied with the clauses of their rents, so that they should not be liable to be turned out from their farms for taking part in political or religious combinations. Finally, they demanded that the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883 should be strengthened by giving fuller and more ample compensation for the improvements the tenants had made. As yet the only indications the farmers had of any readiness to receive them was a threat from a land agent, who is a Welsh Tory Member, that he would make a clearance of all his tenants and resort to co-operative farming, while his antidote for Welsh agitation was the threat of a Coercion Bill for Wales. Another cause of the deepening dissatisfaction among the farmers in Wales was the method of collection and application of tithes in the Principality. It was a matter for regret that during the whole of last year the Government refused to give the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), or any other Member, an opportunity of bringing before the House their grievances as to tithes and the Church Establishment. The hon. Member for Swansea had obtained a favourable place in the ballot, but the Government refused to give him the day he had secured. A still deeper cause for dissatisfaction was in the methods resorted to in the Principality for the collection of the tithe. Not only were Emergency men employed, but the police and military had been called upon the scene. He had no wish to refer to the condemnation which the Welsh people had passed repeatedly on the alien Establishment. At five General Elections the Welsh people had, by overwhelming majorities, condemned the continuance of this alien Establishment in their midst, and at their last Election they sent 28 Members out of 34 to vote for its discontinuance. Apart from that question he desired to enter a protest against the employment of emergency men and military in the collection of tithes in Wales. He admitted that in the earlier history of the movement there was a considerable amount of groaning at the bailiffs, clergymen, and others, who refused to make a reduction in the tithe, and that on one or two occasions the bailiffs were pelted. In the face of such manifestations it was right that the police should be in readiness to prevent injury to life and property. But he maintained that no cause had been shown for the employment of military for the collection of a debt, whether the debt belonged to a tradesman or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. It might be said that the state of feeling had been such as to justify the calling out of the military; but he thought he should be able to show from the Report of Mr. Bridge—the Special Commissioner sent down to inquire into the matter—that there was no cause whatever for sending the military into Wales. Mr. Bridge said—

> "The commencement of the disturbances, which have occurred in Wales, was contemporaneous with the agricultural depression, which became acute when the price of stock fell in the years 1885 and 1886. This took place after a long-continued fall in the price of wheat."

Mr, Bridge went on to say—

> "There existed in Wales from old times a strong feeling among the Nonconformists that the tithes were improperly claimed and taken by the Church of England, and a desire has grown up, not that the tithes should be abolished, but that they should be applied to some lay purpose for the benefit of the nation. This feeling has arisen from causes partly religious, partly social, partly national, and partly political, and, although it had formerly been to a great extent passive, it became active and aggressive when the demand of the farmers

for the reduction of the rent-charge had been refused."

Mr. Bridge gave an account of all the disturbances which had taken place in Wales, and he said that—

> "The first place where the police appeared to protect the bailiffs was at Llanorman, on the 26th of August, 1886. In this case a few stones were thrown at the police, but on the whole the proceedings were good-humoured and orderly."

In another case the Report said—

> "There was a very large number of people present; there was much pushing, yelling, and horse play, and in one place a large stone was thrown. This was the only violence, and a cry of 'Shame!' seems to have arisen from the mob at the throwing of the stone."

Mr. Bridge said further, in reference to the most serious of all the tithe disturbances—that at Mochdre—

> "It will also be seen that there was probably no intention on the part of the people to use force, and that but for the steepness of the lane the collision would not have occurred."

This is the only case in which there was any excuse for employing a large force to collect the tithe. Mr. Bridge said that no blame attached to the people, and that there would have been no collision but for the steepness of the lane in which the people and the constabulary met. That was the only excuse of the so called riot at Mochdre. Whatever may be the sins of Welsh Nonconformists, it is not their faults that lanes on Welsh hillsides are steep. The only other serious riot was that at Llangwm. The auctioneer and the police refused to give notice of the day of sale. They instructed their men to go down on the dawn of day and sweep away the cattle of the peasantry. This cattle-lifting naturally irritated the peasantry, and the district became much disturbed. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners only took three policemen to this disturbed district, and there is no doubt but that the bailiffs and the myrmidons of the Commissioners were treated with some harshness, and some of them received injury. In Flintshire, the landlords had had to revert to the Emergency men, but he protested against the importation of such men into Wales, for they formed the most repulsive feature of the doomed system of Irish landlordism. They were dressed in a semi-military uniform, and armed with the new regulation police baton that did such execution in Trafalgar Square. He did not know whether these men were sworn in as special constables, but if so he would ask the Government to confine them to the use of the police baton alone. He said this because the last few weeks they had been marching about the country armed now with cutlasses, and then with revolvers. He wished to give fair warning to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews), who was responsible for the peace and order of the country, that he must not expect the peasantry to remain quiet and passive when such exasperating methods for collecting iniquitous imposts were resorted to. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman what justification he had for sending detachments of Cavalry into Wales in order to assist in the collection of debts, and he pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman and to the Government that, upon the evidence of their own Commissioner, the use of a military force was altogether unnecessary. Not only was it unnecessary, but it involved considerable cost, and was irritating and exasperating to the people. Although the military, each man armed with 20 rounds of ball cartridge, might overawe the people, still such a deep sense of dissatisfaction and exasperation was aroused that it will be difficult to make the peasantry submit peacefully to their grievances. He would ask the House to note the strange anomaly which existed in Wales at the present day. There they found the Church of the State supported by galling imposts levied by the use of the bayonet and the ball cartridge, whilst the religious and moral life of the people was fostered by Nonconformity, the adherents of which were worried from day to day by the presence and action of the emergency men and military. He (Mr. T. E. Ellis) asked the Government if it was not time that this system should end? His view and the view of the Welsh people was that the first charge on land and industry in the Principality ought to be devoted to some lay purpose that would be for the general good of the mass of the people. For years they had pressed both upon Liberal and Tory Governments the necessity of inaugurating a system of intermediate education for Wales. It was admitted on all hands that in the matter of intermediate education Wales was absolutely starved. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) gave a promise that the question should be grappled with; but he now found the right hon. Gentleman promising in a hesitating sort of way that some measure should be introduced towards the middle or end of the Session. That was a mere mockery. If the Government would introduce their Bill at once, and allow it to go side by side with the Bills of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) and that of the Tory Members for Wales, it could be discussed by a Select Committee, a general agreement could be come to, and a measure could be passed this Session. He had only one other point. The new President of the Board of Trade, the ex-Member for Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), in a remarkable speech, made five or six weeks ago, said that one of the chief causes of the difficulty in Ireland was that this country had persistently refused to give to the Irish people the same respectful hearing and attention which they had given to the people of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that one of the chief causes of Irish discontent was that this country refused to listen to the expressed wishes of the majority of the Irish people, and he added that the first ray of hope and the best method of meeting the Irish difficulty would be to give to the Irish people and the Members for that country the same consideration which they gave to the Scotch people and the Scotch Members. He (Mr. Ellis) trusted that in future the Government would extend to Wales the same principle. It was certainly the best way of settling Welsh grievances, and of doing away with the rising irritation of the Welsh people. He maintained, and he appealed to the whole House, that Her Majesty's Government, whether it happened to be Liberal or Tory, should pay the same attention to the Welsh Members on exclusively Welsh questions as they now paid to Scotch Members on Scotch questions, and as would soon, he hoped, be paid to the Irish Members on Irish questions.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, he did not intend to follow the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. T. E. Ellis). He would only express a hope that the good sense of the people in Wales would induce them to pay their debts like honest men. When they did that, there would be no necessity for taking the extraordinary precautions against which the hon. Member had protested. He trusted, further, that the good sense of the landlords of Wales would induce them to follow the example which had been set to them by the landlords of Ireland. Turning to the speech of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy (Lord John Manners), he ventured to say that the little agricultural episode which had taken place would form by no means the least interesting part of the debate on Her Majesty's Speech. There was only one expression that fell from the noble Lord to which he would venture to take the slightest exception. He certainly could not feel the noble Lord's confidence that the present revival of trade *pro tanto* augured well for a corresponding revival of agriculture. He wished that he could entertain the same view. He saw little reason for believing that the increase of manufactures was likely to give to agriculture that which was necessary at this moment—namely, an interest in the value of produce. The real difficulty in agriculture was this—that the value of produce was so small that it was impossible to pay the necessary expenses of raising a crop in order to realize profit. The land was rapidly going out of cultivation. That was the real difficulty, and how was it to be remedied? To his mind there were but the four directions which had been indicated that night from which they could hope for assistance, and, of these, two had been mentioned in the Queen's Speech—namely, railway rates and the adjustment of taxation. He wished to say a word or two on the question of railway rates. With regard to that question, it was not a political one, but it was none the less one which had two sides to it. On the one side would be found those who were interested in railways, and on the other those, far less organized, who were interested in agricultural and commercial pursuits. The question of railway rates was one which largely affected agricultural difficulties. He would venture to put before the House one set of figures, and one only. Mr. Howard, formerly a Member of that House, had recently prepared a careful estimate of the annual value of agricultural produce, not that which was merely moved from farm to farm, but that which found its way into the outer market—and he put it at no less than £216,000,000 sterling. He (Sir Richard Paget) would like to put side by side with those figures another sum of a very similar character—namely, a sum of £212,000,000, which represented the total value of their manufactured exports in the year 1886. So, consequently, the value of their agricultural produce was acknowledged to be more than that of the whole of their exports. Now, what became of this agricultural produce? It was sent all over the land, North, South, East, and West, mainly by railway; and if, through legislation or the action of the Railway Companies, they could get it carried at a lower rate—at a rate at all equal to that for which agricultural produce was carried in America—they would then have contributed materially to the revival of agriculture. There could be no doubt that at the present moment agriculture was heavily handicapped. What he wanted to see was not so much low rates for full truck-loads carried for long distances, but the charges reduced for short local traffic from station to station. It was the local traffic which handicapped agriculture. They were told that they ought to be Free Traders, and most of them were; but if they were to have Free Trade, let them have fair play also. He could not for the life of him call it fair play that a Company of Traders, or any member of a Company of private traders, who had been granted by statute, the practical monopolies of our highways, should be induced by any process to give preferential rates to foreigners and refuse them to the English producer. He would now pass from that question of railway rates, merely saying this—that he hoped the Government would take into consideration the opinions which had been expressed with regard to the Bill brought in in "another place" last year. He hoped that Bill would not be persisted in by Her Majesty's Government until it had undergone those material modifications which the farmers considered necessary for their own interests. With regard to the question of the re-adjustment of taxation, he ventured to say that there was nothing in the Queen's Speech which was of greater importance. Of all the classes that suffered by the present depression in agriculture, none had suffered so bitterly as that class which they all professed to wish to retain—he meant those who were known as "statesmen" in the North of England, and as independent yeoman farmers in the South. They knew only too well that the land which was the possession and the birth-right of these men had been depreciated in value to one-half of what it was formerly, and its produce in even a greater degree. He maintained that these men were burdened by an unjust amount of taxation. He therefore hailed with delight the announcement that there was to be a re-adjustment of the incidence of taxation, and he hoped that the re-adjustment would be made in a manner sufficiently broad and comprehensive to give complete satisfaction. He believed it was perfectly capable of proof that, taking Imperial taxation alone and leaving local taxation out of the question altogether, the burdens of taxation on real property far exceeded those on personal property. If the two were taken together, and local taxation added to Imperial taxation, the injustice and inequality were more distinctly marked. He would only allude briefly to two other points where he considered that injustice was done to agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had brought forward what he thought was absolutely necessary for the relief of agriculture; and the right hon. Gentleman said that nothing would do more good than largely to increase the produce of the land. What was wanted was to improve it both in quantity and in quality. To accomplish that, they must do what every other nation under the sun did—namely, provide agricultural education. They were told that enormous quantities of butter were annually introduced into England. Any hon. Member who would take the trouble to look into the figures would see how that arose. Look at the case of Denmark. That was a country which, a few years ago, was distinguished for the production of execrable butter; but the importations from Denmark had been increasing in value year by year, until last year they amounted to £2,600,000. Let them go behind the figures and see how this arose. It would now be found that the Danish butter market had reached a high pitch of perfection; and why? Because a complete system of agricultural education had been established; dairy schools had been set up, and the immediate result had been an enormous increase in the production of butter. As a matter of fact, Denmark was supplying the butter which we ought to produce ourselves. The noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy had referred to the Royal Commission on Agriculture. He would not enter into the recommendations of that Commission, of which he had himself been a Member; but he learned with great satisfaction from the noble Lord that Her Majesty's Government intended to act upon several of the recommendations of that Commission. One of the recommendations of the Commission was a novel one; because they suggested that State aid was necessary in order to set up those schools which they maintained it was absolutely requisite to establish. They hoped that in England and Ireland, too, there would be a multiplication of these schools. There was only one other matter upon which he would say a word, and it had reference to the formation of an Agricultural Department. He trusted that the Department would be on a footing worthy of the great industry it was to benefit. That it would be of substantial benefit to the country he could have no doubt whatever. The work which had already been done had an admittedly insufficient Department, and he hardly agreed with all the noble Lord had said; still, many things remained to be done, and he hoped that the new Department would be able to do substantial service to the country. Without detaining the House any longer, he would only say that out-of-doors there would be a general feeling of satisfaction at the announcement which had been made that evening on the part of Her Majesty's Government. After what had occurred in the debate since the speech of the noble Lord, there was every reason to expect that the subject would be approached from both sides of the House; not from the point of view of Party politics, but with an earnest desire to do something for the interests of agriculture. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would receive every assistance from both sides of the House in passing the measure which had been announced. He also trusted that the Government would receive from hon. Members opposite reasonable aid in the legislation they were about to attempt; that no obstruction would be placed in the way of the rapid passing of the measure; but that, on the contrary, hon. Members would assist Her Majesty's Government in doing something for the industry which had been suffering so long, which had been well-nigh driven to despair, and which would be very grateful for the smallest measure of relief that Parliament could pass.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, that during the debate several allusions had been made to the Welsh Tithe Question, and to the absence of any mention of Wales in the Queen's Speech; but he thought the House hardly appreciated the serious state of affairs that existed in the Principality. It was admitted that the people of Wales were among the loyal and law-abiding subjects; it had been stated in that House by a Home Secretary that Wales gave him less trouble than any other part of the country; and the charges of Judges attested the comparative absence of crime in Wales, where crimes of violence were almost unknown. But, unfortunately, a change had occurred; their normal conditions of peacefulness had well-nigh come to an end, and something approaching to a state of civil war had been brought about. How was that? The reason was not far to seek. The Church was reduced to collecting its own tithes, and to do this it employed an army of bailiffs or emergency men, who had required the aid of a troop of Hussars, provided with 600 rounds of ball cartridge, to collect the sum of 12*s.* 6*d.*, arrears of tithes from an old woman. He thought that operation beat the record of even the Irish Secretary. The revenue of the Church was collected exclusively from agricultural holdings—in other words, from that part of the population which was most thoroughly Nonconformist and which suffered most from agricultural depression. If the Church of England had made any progress in Wales, which he very much doubted, it was certain that that progress had been made in the towns and in what might be called the English colonies, and that in the agricultural districts 19 out of 20, or 99 out of 100, of the ratepayers were Nonconformists. One man had told him that he had been compelled to pay £800 for the support of a Church which he had never entered for the last 30 years. The House was bound to recognize the serious dissatisfaction which prevailed, and, if possible, to remove it. As to the stock arguments that it was due to the efforts of interested agitators, he wondered that sensible men could be found to lend themselves to such absurdities. Why, they might as well blame the vanes of a weathercock for the violence of the storm. No agitation like this could flourish unless there was a substantial grievance to feed it. If the Tithe Bill referred to in the Queen's Speech were at all like that of last Session, it would be a most inadequate remedy, for its simple effect would be to shift the burden from the right shoulder to the left by transferring it from the occupier to the owner, and leaving the latter to recover it from the former as part of the rent. He wished the owner joy of the compromise, for there was little hope that when he had paid the tithe he would recover it from the rack-rented occupier. It seemed to be generally supposed that the great bulk of the farmers of Wales were tenant-farmers; but there were thousands of them who were small freeholders, and who therefore would not be benefited at all by the proposal to throw the burden upon owners. What they objected to was not the sources from which tithes were collected, but their application when collected. Let the Church of the rich minority be disestablished and disendowed, and let the tithes, which were national property, be applied to national purposes and readjusted to meet the justice of each case, and the poor Welsh farmers would make as honest a struggle to pay them as they now made to pay School Board rates. If the Government would not go so far, they might, at any rate, allow the subject to be discussed. Last year his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea Town (Mr. Dillwyn) had obtained the first place on the first working night of the Session for his Motion on Welsh Disestablishment. But his coign of vantage was filched from him by the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), supported by Members on that side who should have known better, on the plea that not a single night could be spared from the discussion of Procedure Rules, which it took two months to pass, and which when passed had proved so worthless that they required to be retinkered on the first opportunity. Another ground of complaint was the indifference of the Government to the question of Intermediate Education, which was a burning question among all parties in Wales. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) had brought in a Bill on the subject; but with 50 or 60 Private Bills in front of him, what chance was there of his obtaining a second reading for it? Returning to the question of the Tithe Riots, he said that they could not dragoon people into an enthusiasm for an alien Church, and that the only result of the late high-handed proceedings was to quicken indifference into active hatred. If they wanted to have another Ireland in Wales, they were taking the best steps to get it. The Government were playing with fire, and he trusted that before it was too late they would remember that it was neither wise nor just to turn a stone deaf ear to the demands of the Representatives of 1,500,000 of Her Majestys subjects, who were easy enough to govern if treated with ordinary consideration, but who were quick to resent neglect and still quicker to resent injustice.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said, he did not think that the agricultural interest would suffer from the fact that some of the younger Members of the House had ventured to raise their voices in support of what had been said, and also to express their appreciation of the propositions likely to be made by the noble Lord (Lord John Manners). It was not his intention to attempt to elaborate any fresh propositions or to suggest any new plans beyond those which had been shadowed forth to the House; but he urged with all the power that belonged to any Member representing an almost entirely agricultural constituency that it was absolutely necessary and vital that the Government should not play with the measures they had promised to introduce—that the measures should be introduced in no niggardly spirit, but in such a manner as to satisfy the needs of the agricultural population, and not merely the ends of a political Party. He believed it was well known throughout the rank and file of the agricultural community that they had not for a long time had better friends to their cause than those now occupying the Front Bench in this House. They were grateful, and ought to be grateful for the measures introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year. Probably, the most important of these measures had not received that consideration at the hands of the agricultural community that it deserved. If the farmers had taken advantage of it throughout England, and had chosen to seek for the relief that measure afforded to them by coming under the Schedule for assessment, which was suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, there would have been a much more widespread feeling of gratitude than even existed now. He (Colonel Kenyon-Slaney) was very glad indeed to notice the words which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) as to the necessities of the labouring portion of the community. It was very often forgotten by those who dealt with these subjects in the House of Commons that labourers formed an important element in the agricultural community, and that they were championed by the Conservative Party just as much as were the other classes connected with the land. The question of the condition of the landlord and farmer and the question of the condition of the labourer were essentially one and the same question. The questions could not be treated differently, but must be co-extensively and comprehensively dealt with. As to the table of wages referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, he might venture to assert that it would portray even a more terrible state of things for the agricultural labourer, if it were not that so much land was now held in cultivation by the landowners themselves, or by gentlemen at large throughout the country, who had an old-fashioned and hereditary and worthy wish not to lessen wages so long as they could afford to pay them. Inasmuch as many farms had been given up, and labourers were now drawing their wages directly from the landowners, instead of from the occupiers, and drawing the same amount as before, he thought it could be proved that the general run of wages was even worse than was stated by the right hon. Gentleman. He was most thankful to the Government for what they had promised to-night, and he hoped that what the Government proposed to give would not be in shadow, but in actual substance, and that it would be given promptly. It was certain that the heart of the agriculturist was getting sick with deferred hope, and that he really wanted something which would make the coming year better than those which had gone before it. He understood that the two measures which the Government proposed were, one for the relief of local taxation and one dealing with railway rates. The agriculturists of the country were told again and again that they were wanting in energy, and were in fault in not adapting themselves to the necessities of life now-a-days. They were told that they did not bring themselves as producers sufficiently into contact with the great centres of consumption. He ventured to assert that that was exactly what agriculturists were longing to do, and were bending all their best efforts to do, but they were warded and fenced off by almost hopelessly heavy railway rates which were levelled against those who lived at any distance from the great centres. It was not for him to bring figures before the House, as statistics would come with much greater effect from those who were acknowledged authorities. Figures, however, were at hand with regard to this subject, and he believed it was utterly impossible to contest their correctness. These figures proved that it was almost impossible for agriculturists who lived any distance from the centres of consumption to bring their produce to those centres because of the large and prohibitive tariffs that were exacted from them. They had been told over and over again that they ought to try to help themselves first, and then to seek relief from the community at large and the Government that ruled over them. He did not think it could be charged on the landlord or tenant or labourer or farmer, that the class to which he belonged had been backward in trying to help themselves. They had, he thought, exhausted almost every means of helping themselves. They had drawn on all the funds at their disposal; they had drawn on their savings; they had drawn on their capital; they had drawn on their industry; they had drawn on their labour; and now they came to those who led and guided them for that help which it was necessary they should give, and give freely and largely if they wished to step between the sufferers and a ruined industry. It would not be becoming in him (Colonel Kenyon-Slaney) to attempt to elaborate on this scheme. He would only now express his hearty thanks for that which had been promised to agriculturists, and for the hearty willingness of that section of the community to co-operate with hon. Gentlemen wherever they sat in that House in dealing with any measures which might be brought forward for the relief of agriculture, and a hope that, at last, they might see the dawn of brighter days for the agricultural community.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) said, he wished to say a few words on this subject as agriculture was a staple industry in Ireland, and there was a general opinion that the depression in that industry at the present time was unexampled in its severity. The agricultural industry in Ireland had of late years received great consideration from Parliament by reason of the fact he pointed out, and also by reason of another fact which he did not bring forward in an invidious manner—namely, that the absence of a commercial community in Ireland was owing to the direct interference of this country in preventing Irish manufactures. That Ireland was entitled to special consideration by reason of this interference on the part of England had been clearly shown in leaflets circulated during the General Election by English politicians; that even Mr. Cobden, in years gone by, had declared that the policy of this country had been directed incessantly to the destruction of the foreign trade of Ireland, whose industries had been mercilessly nipped in the bud. It was therefore especially necessary that Irish agriculture should receive attention at the hands of Parliament. He was glad to recognize the view which had been put forward with regard to the establishment of a Department of Agriculture, and he trusted a Minister of Agriculture would likewise be appointed. He regretted that the terms of the Queen's Speech were extremely vague. It struck him, that though there was a Department of Agriculture proposed, and that very likely a Minister of Agriculture would also be proposed, it was an abnegation of duty on the part of Her Majesty's Government not to propose measures of relief. The mere creation of a Department would not mean that steps were being taken to relieve the industry, which was in a most distressed state. As showing the necessity for the establishment of some supervision or control over agriculture, he would refer to what had recently occurred. In connection with the Land Commission in Ireland a very singular thing had happened. The Land Commission had had entrusted to them the administration of a most serious part of the legislation of last year—namely, the clause enabling them to reduce the judicial rents. Upon that clause there had been considerable difference of opinion amongst the Commissioners. At the time the clause was passed it was declared that prices should regulate the reductions; but the Commissioners had made the reductions vary from 3 to 14 per cent, and they had made those reductions over extensive areas of Poor Law Unions. They had given, say, 10 or 11 per cent of reduction in a particular locality which was stretched over pasturage, feeding land, and tillage land, altogether irrespective of the fact that a 10 per cent reduction on feeding land was equal to 30 or 40 per cent reduction on tillage land. The Land Commission, however, had thrown indiscriminate reductions on all classes of property. That illustrated the necessity of having some agricultural supervision—of having some active Minister to supervize these matters. Something even beyond a mere Department of Agriculture was necessary. The agricultural loss last year, owing to the unfavourable season, had been enormous. Agricultural statistics had been published in Ireland which showed conclusively that the loss during the last season by the agricultural interest had been £6,000,000 sterling, and it would be seen how enormously this must affect the community when it was borne in mind that the agricultural valuation of that country was only between £10,000,000 and £11,000,000. It would be seen from this that some supervision of agriculture was asolutely necessary, and that it was not by coercion that the Government would get rid of the causes which lay at the root of the distress of the Irish people.

Colonel DAWNAY (York, N.R., Thirsk) said, that the agricultural classes had reason to be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) for calling the attention of the Government to this subject, and also to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners) for the satisfactory statement he had made. One proposal for the relief of agriculture was to return to Protection; but that policy had to-night received its death blow, and he was glad that the Government had brought forward a scheme of their own to enable our greatest industry to adapt itself to the altered times in which we live. It was true that we did not hear so much about agricultural distress in England as we did in Ireland; but that was not because the distress did not exist, but because the English farmer knew how to suffer like an Englishman. He knew how to suffer without complaining, and to fight doggedly on when other people surrendered themselves to despair. There was no doubt about the facts of the case. According to the Earl of Derby, who could not be accused of making exaggerated statements, the loss of those who cultivated the land in England during the past 10 years was something like 30 per cent, and reckoning the value of the land at £1,000,000,000, that would make a loss to this country during the 10 years of something like £300,000,000, which did not of course include the largely increased burdens which had been imposed on the land during that period. Those who desire to see the extermination of the landlords, if they would only exercise a little patience, were likely to get what they wanted, without having recourse to anything in the way of heroic legislation. The condition of the farmer was even worse than that of the landowner. Thousands of people 10 years ago, who were making incomes out of farming, were now abandoning that industry, or pursuing it at a loss. Many of them had gone on hoping against hope for a turn of the tide. They had not only to contend with bad seasons, but they had to compete with Russia and America, and now a new factor was brought in against them in India. The wheat supply of India was practically inexhaustible. The railways were opening up new tracts of that country. The Indian peasant did not live on wheat, but on cheaper kinds of grain, and he was an individual who could live, marry, and bring up his family on 1*s.* 6*d.* a-week. He wore no clothes to speak of, and could work on one meal of rice per day. This showed how terribly the English agriculturist was handicapped, seeing that he had to pay his labourers 2*s.* a day as against 3*d.* a day. The struggle was as futile as the well-known struggle of the old woman against the Atlantic ocean. What he would ask the House to consider was this—if wheat growing in this country was doomed to destruction, what was going to be the fate of the agricultural labourer? Up to the present time the agricultural depression had sat very lightly upon him. Parliament had set itself to work to improve his condition, and had thrust a large measure of political power into his hands; but in spite of this, the prospects of the agricultural labourer were never more gloomy that at the present moment. An allotment and a cow were very good things in their way; but they did not enable a man to keep a family without regular wages, and if we cannot grow wheat in this country except at a loss, clearly the occupation of the agricultural labourer was gone, and the consequence must be the depopulation of our rural districts. We were already face to face with this calamity. Our agricultural community was drifting into the great towns at the rate of 50,000 or 60,000 a year, to exchange a hard lot for one which was perfectly hopeless, and, as if this were not enough, we alone of all nations in the world were permitting the unrestricted immigration of pauper foreigners, who were pouring into the East End of London and elsewhere by thousands, burdening our rates, bringing down wages to starvation level, developing the sweating system, and swamping and overstocking the labour market, and depriving our own labourers of the last chance of obtaining a livelihood. For a great number of years the agriculturists had received little sympathy from any Government. Some sympathy was now being shown them by Her Majesty's present Advisers. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what he had done; and he trusted the Government would yet see their way to deal with the difficult problem before them, and to arrest the ruin which was now impending over the agricultural population, and save the country from a great national disaster.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) said, he wished to express the feeling which he knew was uppermost in the minds of the tenant farmers of England, which was one of great satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government had recognized the gravity of the agricultural situation, and at their having referred in such important terms to it in the Queen's Speech. He agreed in the main with what had been said by other speakers; and there was, no doubt, gratitude due to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) for having given them an opportunity for having an agricultural discussion, and clearing up the somewhat dark terms of the allusion to agriculture in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. The question of the remission, or rather of the transfer, of taxation from local to Imperial sources was one of the utmost importance, and was one which he knew would be deeply appreciated. With regard to the Railway Rates Bill, he trusted Her Majesty's Government would not be frightened by the opposition which had been, in part, brought forward by the Railway Companies; and they knew, from the speeches which had already been made by the Chairmen of some of the leading Railway Companies at the annual meetings, that there was a considerable amount of opposition in store for the Railway Rates Measure. He hoped the Government would make up their minds that the Bill was not to be a sham measure. He knew that those who represented the agricultural interest in this House would do their best to amend the Bill if it required amendment. The agricultural community would not be satisfied with the Bill brought in last Session; and he trusted that the one now brought in would be amended in the direction required. He did not think that any speaker this evening had referred to the extraordinary bad season that the country had just experienced. The year ending Michaelmas last was unquestionably the worst year for agricultural purposes that this country, or, at any rate, the Eastern counties, had experienced for the last 10 years. The Returns for Great Britain, published during the last month, showed that there had been a decrease in the number of bushels of barley and oats, as compared with the year 1886, of no less than 18,103,000. He was bound to say that there was a set-off against that in the shape of an increase of 12,855,000 bushels of wheat. The Return was important in another direction, because it clearly stated that the turnip, the mangold, the hay and the hop crops had largely decreased. With regard to the question of grazing stock, he supposed there was no district in England where there were more fat bullocks and fat sheep than in the Eastern counties. Well, the loss in grazing during the past year had been most serious, though he was bound to say that this was the only point in which he could see any hope of daylight for the future, because the tenant farmers had had an opportunity of buying their lean stock on more favourable terms. With regard to grain crops, he did not see how, under the present prices, they would ever be able to grow wheat, barley, or oats at any profit at all. It was just nine years ago that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) brought forward the question of the then agricultural depression, and asked the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the then state of agriculture. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) was quite convinced of this—that there had not, in the interval between 1879 and the present year, been one single good season, or one which the farmers could say was a favourable one to their pockets; and, in addition to that, prices had fallen every year, and had been going from bad to worse. What was even more unfortunate for the tenant farmers was that their capital had been gradually decreasing, and that many of them at the present time had no capital at all to farm with. With regard to the question of the labouring classes, there had been undoubtedly a large number of labourers out of employment in the last winter in the Eastern counties; but where they had good allotments or gardens, they had been able to keep themselves alive. Allusion had been made to the question of allotments, and he might say that in his county of Norfolk, there had been undoubtedly a very strong expression of approval on the part of the labourers, and a sense of the benefits they were likely to derive from the Act passed by the right hon. Gentleman below him. There had been from time to time criticisms of the working of that Act; but he believed that there was ample proof already that in many districts excellent organizations had been put into force for carrying out the working of the measure. With regard to the poor landlords, it would, no doubt, astonish the House when he said that in his own county, at the present time, no less than 50 per cent of the larger class of landlords were no longer able to live in their own homes. They were obliged to desert them or let them, and if the times did not improve, in another two years 75 per cent of the landlords of Norfolk and Suffolk would have shut up their houses on account of the agricultural depression. He was glad that hon. Members had spoken out on this question of Protection, and he thought it was a most unfortunate thing that, either during the Recess or in the House, any hon. Members should in any way have misled the tenant farmers in England, by holding out to them the hope that there would be Protection in any sense of the term. He believed that his hon. Friend the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) had done more to bury Protection than any other man in England, and which he was sure the farmers were convinced they would never get. He hoped the Agricultural Department would not be a sham Department; and he laid a great deal of stress on the fact that, as he believed, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) would do all in his power, by giving a good Vote, to make it an enlarged, effective, and thoroughly useful Department, and one worthy of this country. He did not believe that without such aid as was given in America and other countries it would ever be effective. He hoped the Government would bring in a Bill to amend the present system of arriving at corn averages. The present system was most unsatisfactory. The averages were taken when the corn had been sold and re-sold; expenses and profits were added, and the prices given did not represent those at which the farmers sold, or the actual prices in the Corn Market, and it must always be remembered that in some seasons half the crop is consumed for feeding purposes. He was confident that the farmers in barley-growing countries were now realizing the fact that the transfer, not the repeal, of the Malt Tax to a Beer Duty in 1880 was proved to be a failure. It enabled brewers to make beer from materials which the British public would far rather they did not use. The country had been led to believe that a repeal of the Malt Tax had taken place. It was nothing of the sort; but, as he had said, only a transfer. Whatever Her Majesty's Government were going to do with regard to the agricultural interest, he trusted they would do it quickly and effectively, and before it was too late for the long-suffering tenant farmer.

Mr. MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) said, the farmers in his part of the country were suffering from the depression; but they were tired of giving expression to their feelings, and were anxiously looking to that House to suggest a remedy. The hon. Member for Merionethshire said that in the improbable contingency of the Government—which he called patriotic—changing their places, the right hon. Member for the Sleaford Division would again become a Protectionist. This insinuation must proceed from the assumption that an alliance had sprung up between Unionists and Parnellites, as the Leader of the Irish Party had declared that if an Irish Parliament were established its first act would be to set up Protection. He did not think that sufficient importance was given in that House to the feeling, general throughout the country, that there was something more to be said for the idea of the hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), who had, as he said, taken Protection at his word and given Notice of a Bill on the subject. He thought it would give great satisfaction to the farmers of the country if a debate on the question were to take place in that House. The hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis) had spoken of Montgomeryshire, and said that the farmers there had suggested that their rents were not sufficiently reduced, and thought there ought to be an independent authority set up there as between landlords and tenants. He (Mr. More) wished to point out that the opinion of those gentlemen who went down to help the re-adjustment of the relations between the two classes was, that this would not in any way interfere with freedom of contract or diminish the interest of the landlords in their estates. He wished to state that the adjoining Shropshire farmers had no wish for any outside interference between them and their landlords. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) for the kind mention which he made of the Commission of which he (Mr. More) had the honour to be a Member. He approved the decision to give a higher agricultural education; and in nothing was this so needed as in the manufacture of butter and cheese; and he thought that in this one possible relief for agricultural depression might be gained, for, as was well known, more butter was imported than was manufactured in the country. The programme of the Government was, as nearly as possible, the Mid Lothian Manifesto of 1885, which they were all returned to support on the Liberal side of the House in that Election. Turning to another subject relating to the introduction of two Bills of which Notice had been given to deal with the Law of Sunday Closing in Ireland, he said that no one could be in Ireland without being struck with the great necessity of amending the present law; and he pointed out that, while the Revenue from the Excise had in England fallen off, there had been in Ireland during the recent agitation a considerable rising in that branch——

MR. SPEAKER: I would call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that it is not competent for him now to discuss the question of Sunday Closing in Ireland.

MR. MORE: With regard to the question of tithes, he was sorry to infer that the Bill to deal with that was to be introduced in "another place," because when that was done last year it was not in unison with the feeling in the House of Commons. He was afraid the Government would have a great deal of trouble with the subject during the present year; and, having spent part of the autumn in Wales, and carefully examined on the spot into the disturbances which had taken place, he could state that, in the opinion of the wisest and most experienced clergymen and churchmen in England and Wales, it would be more judicious if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were to give the 10 per cent which the farmers asked for now than to introduce a Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) stated the other night that the introduction of a Tithes Bill would raise the question as to whether the tithes belonged to the Church or the Nation, and he could not think it desirable that such a question should be raised. He had moved for a Return last Session as to the way in which the tithe was taken in Scotland, and he believed that if the same method were adopted here it would give satisfaction. In Scotland they appointed a Committee to assess the value of all sorts of corn in a county, which was done for the county for one year, and that year only. It was clear, however, that the farmers considered that they had a grievance with regard to the tithe, and, as he had said, he thought it would be better to settle the question in that House rather than in the House of Lords.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, it was admitted on all sides that agriculture was in a most deplorable state; and as in the Gracious Speech from the Throne it was intimated that agriculture was to have some redress, he trusted that they might feel certain that Her Majesty's Government had determined to do all that was right, fair, and just with regard to this question, and that the long-deferred hope which made the heart sick would not be disappointed. It was perfectly true that this had been a most peculiar year, and that they had opportunities of cleaning the land which they had not had for some time past. That, notwithstanding the failure of certain crops, was a great advantage; but there was no man acquainted with agriculture who could not see that there was a great deterioration of the land in respect of cultivation, and which would not admit of the same crops being grown now as heretofore. Again, it would be found that farms were not stocked as they used to be; many farms were stocked by jobbers and dealers. Farmers were taking in sheep, which showed that they had not the money necessary to purchase them. They were delighted to hear the speech of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners), because he had clearly stated certain things which the Government intended to do; and if he could draw one or two other promises from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) he should be still more pleased. The noble Lord said that a re-adjustment of Imperial and local taxation was to take place. That was a very important admission to make, and he himself had urged for many years that everything which tended in the direction of Imperial wants and needs that was now provided by local taxation ought to be paid for out of Imperial resources. Again, real property now paid the whole of this taxation, and his right hon. Friend had stated that personal property was to come in for its full share of the burden. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) hoped that the Government intended to introduce at once a more equitable system in that respect. They were now going to have another Local Government Bill. What might happen to that Bill he could not say; but he trusted that whatever might be the principle of election on which members were to serve on the Local Government Boards, there would be in the Bill some security that the resources of the ratepayers would not be wasted, and that they might find they had some power to prevent the gross and extraordinary extravagance which took place in the case of some school boards. Even on the supposition that the Bill did not pass, he hoped they would not be told that these things were only to be done provided that the Bill did pass. The noble Lord (Lord John Manners) had touched upon some points, but there were others about which he had said nothing. There was the question of indoor relief, referred to by the Duke of Richmond's Commission. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) cited that to his right hon. Friends on the Front Bench as one which touched them most keenly, and because there were grounds on which the recommendation of that Commission should be accepted. Again, there was the important question as to the basis on which the rates were in future to be raised, and he laid it down as the starting point that they must have a new valuation throughout the country, because at present one Union was not rated like another, and, consequently, one Union was more heavily rated than another. They wanted a new assessment throughout the country, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would agree that all rates should be raised on the same principle, whether the county rate, the ordinary poor rate, or those rates which were raised for the purposes of Imperial taxation. They felt that they ought to know at the commencement of the year the amount of rating which they would have to bear. They had been suffering grievously, and in no respect more than in that of local traffic, which the hon. Baronet the Member for the Wells Division of Somerset (Sir Richard Paget) had referred to. The railway rates were so heavy that the farmers were handicapped. He would not go into the foreign produce question, but he was obliged to say that the present system offered a bonus to foreigners to compete with us. They were certainly unfairly treated as long as they were unable to send their goods into the market at the same cost as that which was borne by foreigners, and he trusted that the Bill to be introduced would meet this difficulty in a fair and reasonable manner. They all admitted that railways had been a great advantage to the country; but he repeated that they considered it most unfair that the Companies should charge far less to their foreign competitors than they were called upon to pay. With regard to the question of Free Trade and Protection, he thought it would be most unwise and impolitic to raise a question of that sort at the present time, which was one of peculiar difficulty, and to give hon. Gentlemen opposite an opportunity of saying—"This is a Tory cry; we have nothing to do with it." The question of Protection was one which had been considered by a large number of persons; it was idle to deny that there were many who thought it would be a panacea for all their ills, and it would be foolish, from the Government point of view, to ignore the fact. It could not be denied that there was a large class of men in the country who had suffered most severely, and who still believed that Protection would be their saving, and the only thing that would save them at the present time. The working classes also were beginning to ask how it was that their wages were reduced, and that, instead of 14*s.*, 15*s.*, and 16*s.*, they were now getting only 10*s.*, 11*s.*, and 12*s.* a-week. The House might depend upon it that if the movement came strongly from below, and grew strong, hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite would change their views upon this question as quickly as they had done on a celebrated occasion which occurred a short time ago; they would say that the question was pressing on them more than any other, and that it was one which deserved earnest and serious consideration on the part of the Government, and be forthwith dealt with. The question would never be thoroughly taken up until it was taken up from below; and if the working classes realized the important practical issues which were involved in our fiscal policy, they would make their influence felt, and the policy which they desired, whether it was or was not Protection, would be carried out whatever Ministry happened to be in power. He thought he remembered the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer saying some time ago that the area of taxation was too limited, and he would ask him to consider that question most seriously. He laid down no proposition, nor did he state what ought to be done; but he said it was wise to be prepared in time and consider what in the circumstances might be done to relieve or content a large number of working men in the country. It need not be Protection, but something which would do something to help them in their difficult position He thanked the Government for what they had promised to do. The pledge they had given must be performed. He ventured to hope that, whatever might happen, those measures which they thought they could fairly and honestly give to the agricultural interest would be carried out. Having said this, he should leave it to the Government to carry out their pledges, which he believed would be for the benefit of the country.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—RUMOURED DEFICIT.—RESOLUTION.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): Sir, I rise to move the Amendment to the Address which stands in my name, and I trust the House will not consider that I unduly trespass upon its time in taking this opportunity of calling its attention to the concerns of our vast Indian Empire—

> "But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that another deficit is threatened in the Indian Budget, and that it has been deemed necessary to raise the Salt Tax in order to meet the same: That it views with anxiety these recurring deficits in the Indian Revenue Accounts, and urges greater economy in the Administration: That it calls upon the Government of India to meet the wishes of the Native population, both in respect of finance and administration, so far as it can do so consistently with prudence and sound policy, and that it urges Her Majesty's Government to redeem the promise made in the Queen's Speech two years ago, that an inquiry should be made into the Government of India by the appointment of a Royal Commission for that purpose."

It is several years since Indian affairs have been seriously discussed in this House. The Indian Budgets are invariably kept to the close of the Session, and are feebly discussed by a handful of jaded Members. It was the 8th of September last year when Parliament was invited to consider the affairs of 200,000,000 of the subjects of the Queen, the attendance averaging 10 to 15 Members. The condition of affairs in India demands more vigorous criticism; the finances are steadily drifting into confusion; there is much Native discontent; reforms are urgently needed that will never be granted, unless this House intervenes; and I trust I shall be pardoned if I set before this House, to the best of my power, some of the grievances of the patient and long suffering population of India. My Amendment calls attention, in the first place, to the recurring deficits in the Indian Budgets. Let me state what these are. I find, from the Statistical Abstract of India, that in the 10 years ending March, 1886, the aggregate deficits amount to about 15,000,000 of tens of rupees, or conventional sterling, as it is called in the Indian Accounts, while the surpluses are a little over 8,000,000, showing a total deficit of about 6,500,000. Last year another deficit would have been shown had not the Famine Insurance Fund been intercepted, and this year a still larger deficit unless the Famine Fund had again been taken and the Salt Duty also raised; in fact, the aggregate real deficit in the last 12 years amounts to about 9,000,000, for I regard the Famine Insurance Fund as a sacred trust, which should never be devoted to other purposes. But what adds to the gravity of the matter is this. We have had a succession of bountiful seasons in India; we have had no famine of note since 1879, and in the ordinary course of things we must be approaching what is known as a famine cycle in India; these cycles recur about every 10 or 12 years; the last one commenced in 1866 and lasted till 1879—it embraced five great famines—it cost the lives of 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 of people, and, I believe, cost the Government £15,000,000 to £20,000,000 sterling for relief; and we may depend upon it that if another succession of famine years occurs, the Government of India will not be allowed to let the people die in millions, as happened in those years. A vigilant opinion on this side will insist that, at all costs, the people shall be fed, and true wisdom would point to the need of accumulating a reserve fund in times of plenty to meet the inevitable demands that will come upon us some day. Now I will ask, what are the causes of this lamentable state of things? I reply, the heavy expenses in Upper Burmah and on the North-West Frontier, and the great loss by exchange. The total expenses of the Army has grown, in the 10 years ended 1886, from 16,500,000 of tens of rupees to fully 20,000,000, from which it has come down to about 19,000,000 the last two years. The extra expenses may be divided roughly between the North-West Frontier and Upper Burmah; but there are also heavy civil charges in Upper Burmah; and, as far as I can make out, from the very complicated accounts that are presented to us, the cost of that annexation has been about £2,000,000 per annum the last two years, in place of the estimate of £300,000, which was given to us by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), when he lightly embarked in that aggressive policy. This policy has cost India dear; and I can only repeat the view I have formerly stated to this House, that it was most unjust to saddle the cost of this war upon a poor country like India, whose people were strongly opposed to it, and gained no advantage from it. I will not, however, attempt to re-open a question which the House has decided. I pass now to the other source of embarassment in the finances of India, the loss on exchange. It amounts this year to the alarming figure of £5,500,000. We all know the cause of this, and I will not waste the time of the House in discussing it. There is no remedy that I know of except the re-establishment of the old bi-metallic system of Europe, which for 70 years gave a virtually fixed exchange of 1*s*. 11*d*. per rupee. I am aware there are some deductions and set-offs from this enormous loss; but I think few experts in Indian affairs will put the net loss to the Government of India from exchange at less than 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 of tens of rupees. I now ask the House to consider the means by which the Indian Government is seeking to restore equilibrium to the finances. It is by cancelling the Famine Relief Fund of £1,500,000 a-year, and adding 25 per cent to the Salt Duty, which is expected to bring in fully £1,500,000 a-year. I think both these methods are disastrous. I have already pointed out what a strain may come upon the Famine Fund any day, and with regard to the Salt Tax I assert that salt is about the last thing a benevolent Government should tax. It is an absolute necessary of life to an extremely poor population, and is just as odious as a tax on bread would be to the people in this country. Nearly all the taxation of India is already borne by the poor, and this will add greatly to their heavy burdens. The Salt Tax at 2½ rupees per maund, to which it is now raised, amounts to 16 times the prime cost of the Native product. Think of a tax of 1,600 per cent on a necessary of life. I am told that such is the dearth of prime salt in some parts of India, and such is the poverty of the people, that they have been known to mix earth containing saline particles with their food. Let me quote the opinion of Lord Lawrence on this subject—

"When I was a magistrate many men accused of smuggling salt were brought before me; and I had to try them and punish them under the Customs Law. I thought it was very hard and very severe system. Here are the people in India paying an excessive price for salt. I think it is an enormous rate, and not only does it limit the consumption as regards human beings, but, I think, it limits the consumption very much as regards cattle, and I believe myself that a great deal of the loss of cattle from murrain in India has arisen from want of salt."

I believe the Salt Tax is more oppressive in India than a corresponding duty on tea, sugar, or milk would be in this country. Consider what would be the feeling in this country if a duty of 10*s.* per lb. was levied on tea, 3*s.* per lb. on sugar, or 4*s.* a quart on milk; yet we are doing the same thing in India with a stroke of the pen. We are doing it to a people who have no representation, who are dumb and helpless, and whose silent sufferings are unknown to the nation that governs them. I protest against this monstrous and cruel tax in the name of humanity, and in the name of Christianity, whose voice we are disregarding. I will boldly affirm that if India had popular representation its taxation would be arranged in a very different way. The 200,000,000 of British subjects in India would, with one voice, re-impose the cotton duties, which in no way press on the people, and are hardly perceptible. India imports over £40,000,000 worth of manufactured goods and metals, a duty of 10 per cent on this would produce £4,000,000, and would at once place the Indian Exchequer in affluence. A duty of 5 per cent would produce £2,000,000, and meet the existing deficit. I know how unpalatable this suggestion will be to my Manchester friends; but justice compels me to say that, though interested in the trade myself, I will contend that our duty is to consider solely what is good for India. Of course, Indian machine manufactures would have to be taxed *pro ratâ*, to avoid all appearance of Protection. I fear, however, no English Government will have courage enough to do what is right in this matter, unless we decide on giving to the Native population of India an efficient voice in the Government of their own country. This leads me to what I regard as the pith of my Amendment, and far the most important point of it—namely—

"That this House calls upon the Government of India to meet the wishes of the Native population, both in respect of finance and administration, so far as it can do so consistently with prudence and sound policy, and that it urges Her Majesty's Government to redeem the promise made in the Queen's Speech two years ago, that an inquiry should be made into the Government of India, by the appointment of a Royal Commission for that purpose."

I cannot deny that an implication lurks in these words that the existing policy of the Government is not giving satisfaction to the Natives of India. This House will permit me to say that a recent visit to India, and conference with many of the ablest representatives of the Native population, opened my eyes to the fact that there is much more discontent in India than I was aware of, and than this country is aware of, and that unfortunately there exist only too good grounds for this discontent. It is far better for us not to live in a fool's paradise, and I am sure that this House is only too anxious to know the real state of affairs, and will welcome any light that can be thrown upon it. The universal complaint of the Natives of India is that the country is too expensively governed, considering the extreme poverty of the people and the paucity of its resources. The real *crux* of the situation is the poverty of India, and, till we realize that, all our views, both of administration and policy, are certain to be wrong. The fact is that the vast majority of the Indian population can scarcely do more than support life in ordinary seasons. When a year of scarcity comes their sufferings are extreme; when a famine comes they die by millions, unless supported by the Government. I could not satisfy my mind that there has been any great increase of well-being in India as compared with the early part of this century. Certain it is that there are large districts of India, such as Bengal, Oude, the Deccan, parts of Madras, &c., where human life is supported on the barest minimum. All our wisest Indian Administrators have recognized this. Permit me to quote from Lord Mayo and from Lord Lawrence. Lord Mayo said—

"I admit the comparative poverty of this country, as compared with many other countries of the same magnitude and importance, and I am convinced of the impolicy and injustice of imposing burdens upon this people which may be called either crushing or oppressive. Mr. Grant Duff, in an able speech which he delivered the other day in the House of Commons, the report of which reached by the last mail, stated with truth that the position of our finance was wholly different from that of England. 'In England,' he stated, 'you have comparatively a wealthy population. The income of the United Kingdom has, I believe, been guessed at £800,000,000 per annum; the income of British India has been guessed at £300,000,000 per annum; that goes well on to £30 per annum as the income of every person in the United Kingdom, and only £2 per annum as the income of every person in British India.' I believe that Mr. Grant Duff had good grounds for the statement he made, and I wish to say, with reference to it, that we are perfectly cognizant of the relative poverty of this country as compared with European States."

Lord Lawrence, before the Finance Committee, said—

> "The mass of the people in India are so miserably poor that they have hardly the means of subsistence. It is as much as a man can do to feed his family, or half feed them, let alone spending money on what you would call luxuries or conveniences."

Several years have elapsed since these statements were made; exhaustive inquiries have subsequently been made into the relative resources of both England and India. It is generally admitted that the aggregate income of the United Kingdom is now £1,200,000,000 to £1,250,000,000, or £35 per head; but the best authorities on India state that its income cannot be put at more than £2 per head, or £400,000,000 sterling for the 200,000,000 people that inhabit British territory. Sir Evelyn Baring, one of the best Finance Ministers, estimated the income at Rs. 27 per head; but Mr. Dadhabhai Naoroji, one of the best Native statists of India, and a man universally respected, puts the income at only Rs. 20 per head. Compare that with even the poverty of Ireland, where the income, according to Mulhall, is £16 per head, or with Russia, where it is £9 10*s.* per head. The Income Tax Returns of India fully confirm all this, as I have already stated in this House. They show that a given area of population in India only produces one-sixtieth part as much as in England, and that only one inhabitant in 700 reaches an income of £50 per annum. I apologize for wearying the House with these statistics, which I have already given; but they are essential if any just conception is to be formed of the financial policy we should pursue in India. Now I must protest against the highly misleading statements of taxation circulated by the Under Secretary of State for India in his Explanatory Memorandum along with the last Budget. A table was appended to it, page 19, to show the burden of taxation on the people of British India. In it the total Budget Estimate of Revenue, about £77,500,000, was pared down to £20,500,000 as far as taxation was concerned, and when divided per head over the population of British India was set forth as Rs. 0 : 15 : 2, or something less than one rupee; then a note was appended stating that if the land revenue was included the amount was Rs. 2 : 0 : 3. I should like to know why the land revenue was excluded; it is the sheet anchor of Indian finance; it yields in gross £22,500,000; it is in many parts of the country an oppresive tax. I was repeatedly assured by the Natives that in times of scarcity it was an intolerable burden, and in order to raise it that they got hopelessly in debt to the money-lenders. Sir James Caird says—

> "The right of the cultivator to mortgage the public land has made him the slave of the money-lender. Government rent must be paid on the day it becomes due. It is rigorously exacted by the officials, and as the money-lender is the only capitalist within reach the cultivator gives a charge on the lands and hands over all his crop as a security for cash advances."

The only pretext for not counting it as revenue is that in most of India there is no intermediary between the tiller of the soil and the Government, and it is assumed that what the cultivators pay the Government is equivalent to rent paid the landlord here. The fact is the ryots have no surplus to pay a landlord, for they can barely exist themselves. Sir William Hunter, the well-known Government statist, calculates that 40,000,000 of the people go through life on insufficient food. I was myself repeatedly informed that a large proportion of the people only eat one meal a day; their condition is lower than that of the Connemara peasantry, and it is ridiculous to exclude from consideration the heaviest tax they pay. A large part of the Opium Revenue is also paid by the people of India; for, were it not for the profit made by the Government, the cultivator would get a far higher price. I estimate the true incidence of taxation in India as follows (from "Statistical Abstract," p. 70):—Gross land tax, £22,500,000; one-half the opium duty (not counting what is grown in Native States), £4,500,000; salt tax, £6,250,000; stamps, £3,500,000; excise, £4,000,000; provincial rates, customs, assessed taxes, and sundries, about £6,000,000. Total, in round numbers, £47,000,000. I have excluded any branch of revenue which cannot be clearly defined as taxation. Let us compare it with the taxable Revenue of the United Kingdom. It was calculated in last Budget as £76,000,000; that is almost exactly 6 per cent on the aggregate income of the nation, if that is reckoned at £1,250,000,000. If we take the aggregate income of British India at a point half-way between the estimates of Mr. Dadhabhai Naoroji and Sir Evelyn Baring—namely, £470,000,000, it follows that the taxable revenue is just 10 per cent, against 6 per cent paid in the United Kingdom. I believe these figures to be as reliable as can be given, and they show clearly that the pressure of taxation is already very heavy, and that it would be cruel to add to it, unless on the direst necessity. I am aware that many consider the great increase of the foreign trade of India a proof of the growing prosperity of that country. I believe the figures, if analyzed, show just the reverse. The average imports and exports of India for the last 10 years, given in the Statistical Abstract, excluding Government stores and treasure (p. 138, No. 82) is — imports, including treasure, £58,000,000 a-year; exports, about £77,000,000, or an average surplus of exports over imports of about £19,000,000; but, to make a fair comparison, we must deduct freight and charges on the imports, seeing the exports are valued without these charges. If we put these at only 10 per cent, then it follows that India exports on the average about £25,000,000 more than she receives; in other words, she virtually pays to this country what may be called a tribute to that extent. Of course, I admit she has had value in return for much of this. It represents guaranteed interest on railways, and remittances on private investments; but it also represents a large sum payable for interest incurred in wars of which the people of India disapproved, and a heavy pension list which they do not regard with admiration. In my opinion, the growing indebtedness of India to England is a real source of danger. If the time should ever come when India becomes self-governing, one may conceive the temptation that would arise to repudiate these claims. The fact is, India is, in many respects, what Ireland has been for ages, a country whose wealth is drained by absentees; and the time may come, if we are not careful, when it will reproduce many of the political features of Ireland. One other remark I would make about the growth of the foreign trade; it is largely swollen by the destruction of the hand manufactures of India. Many millions of small artificers and weavers have been thrown out of employment by our cheap-made manufactured goods; and these people have been often reduced to the greatest penury, as no employment could be obtained in lieu of the one they had lost. We have, in fact, by our Free Trade system, forced nearly the whole population on the soil for their maintenance. That soil is becoming poorer and poorer from over-cropping, and the vast bulk of the peasantry are deeply and hopelessly in debt to the money lenders. I repeat that the great expansion of foreign trade is no gauge of the increased prosperity of the people of India; and it is very doubtful indeed whether any substantial improvement is taking place in their condition. Now, I may be asked, what remedy do the Natives of India propose for this state of things? I will reply by calling attention to a Parliamentary Return, moved for in 1878 by the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), of the salaries, pensions, &c., paid to persons in the employ of the Government of India. I find the salaries of those resident in India came to £7,640,000; non-resident, £3,473,000; total, £11,013,000. Of this amount, upwards of 80 per cent was payable to Europeans, while of salaries of £2,000 and upwards, not one was held by a Native. I am aware that since then some changes in favour of the Natives have been made; but I believe the facts thus disclosed are not very materially altered. Now, the people of India think that the time has come to redeem the promise made in the Queen's Proclamation 30 years ago. I will read the noble words in which it is couched—

> "It is our further will that, as far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge.
>
> "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

I make bold to say this Proclamation has not been adequately carried out yet, and unreasonable obstacles have been put in the way of the Natives entering into the higher Services. For instance, entrance to the Covenanted Civil Service was formerly open to youths up to 22 years of age, and several Natives of India, at great cost to themselves, came over to this country and successfully competed with the flower of our youth at the entrance examination; but, as I think, unjustly and unwisely, the age was reduced to 19, and this has effectually stopped the entrance of Indian youths into the Covenanted Civil Service. India now produces a large class of well-educated men, and it is as impolitic as it is unjust to exclude them from a full share in the Service of the Crown. They contend most reasonably that if this extraordinary drain for salaries and pensions is to be lessened, it must be by employing cheaper Native agency whose incomes will be spent in India. But the fundamental change which the Indian people demand is a voice in the government of their own country. I must impress on the House the urgent necessity of dealing with this question. The time is past when we can govern India as a nation of children. We have given them education; we have familiarized them with our own political maxims; and we cannot complain if they try to act up to the lessons we have taught them. It is vain to think that we can impart the great political literature of England, with its lofty traditions of human freedom, without begetting the desire, and even the fitness, to receive this freedom for themselves. The ills under which India suffers can never be remedied by a purely foreign government. The real wants and desires of its people can never be fully understood by strangers, and we must be prepared gradually and prudently to introduce representative institutions. Of course, that can only be done very gradually and cautiously; but I wish to call the attention of the House to a remarkable development of political life that is now occurring in India. Three National Congresses have been held, attended by delegates from all parts of India. One of them was held at Madras last year, and another at Calcutta the year before, attended by 500 or 600 delegates from all parts of India. The proceedings were conducted in English, and the speeches were as able as they were loyal and moderate in tone. There is not the slightest wish among these intelligent Indians to overthrow British supremacy; but there is a striking agreement on the lines of reform that are required. Their main contention is that Native Members should be elected to the Legislative Councils of India, in place of being nominated as at present. This is a most reasonable request, and I hope the Government of India will concede it. Then they demand that the Budget shall be discussed and voted upon annually, which also seems a most reasonable request; and they also ask that a Standing Committee of Parliament should be formed to supervize Indian affairs, to which they could carry their complaints. But perhaps the most practical resolution of all is the demand for an inquiry to be held into the Government of India on the lines announced by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), when he held the Office of Secretary for India two years ago. I do most earnestly urge this demand on Her Majesty's Government. The Natives of India have been most eagerly expecting this inquiry, since it had a place in the Speech from the Throne two years ago. The present Government was then in power, and it placed these words in Her Majesty's mouth—

> "The time which has elapsed since I assumed the direct government of India renders it desirable that the operation of the statutes by which the change was effected should be carefully investigated. I commend this important matter to your earnest attention."

That statement was commented upon by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) as follows:—

> "I am of opinion that Her Majesty's Government are eminently right in asking the House to appoint the Committee. I trust that it will be a carefully selected Committee, and that it will be efficient in proportion to the greatness of the subject; and that it will devote itself to

that subject with a zeal and diligence such as we have known in former years and former generations."

I now call upon them to redeem this pledge; it has awakened hopes which it would be dangerous to disappoint. I expect the hearty support of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, who so ably advocated the inquiry two years ago. I verily believe that the safety and welfare of our Indian Empire demand such an inquiry; grave discontent is arising among the Indian population at the neglect of their interests; this country and this House are too much occupied with home affairs to do justice to India. A full, complete, and impartial inquiry is necessary. Let me add that no inquiry at all would be better than one which was not both searching and impartial. It is absolutely necessary, in my opinion, that a Royal Commission should be appointed, containing eminent men outside Parliament and the official class, that some leading Natives of India should be on the Commission, and that it should visit India in the cold season, and take evidence on the spot. Untold advantage would flow from such a course. It would give a new lease of life to our Indian Empire; it would appease Native discontent, and nobly vindicate the Royal Proclamation on the assumption of the Sovereignty of India by the Crown. I will close this speech in the noble words of Macaulay, uttered as long ago as 1833 in this House, which are as true to-day as when they were spoken, and which are far nearer their fulfilment—

> "The destinies of our Indian Empire are covered with thick darkness. It is difficult to form any conjectures as to the fate reserved for a State which resembles no other in history, and which forms by itself a separate class of political phenomena; the laws which regulate its growth and its decay are still unknown to us. It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown the system; that, by good government we can educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that having become instructed in European knowledge they may in some future age demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or to retard it. Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history. To have found a great people sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition, to have so ruled them as to make them desirous and capable of all the privileges of citizens, would indeed be a title to glory all our own. The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverses. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay. These triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism. That empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws."

MR. SLAGG (Burnley), in seconding the Amendment, said, that when a non-official Member ventured to address the House on Indian subjects it was sometimes asked—"What can you, a non-official, non-resident in India, possibly know of the complex subjects affecting that great and distant country?" Well, for his own part, he claimed no special personal knowledge of Indian affairs. He claimed only to know and to discuss those matters which were presented to them by officials themselves, and to criticize the evident results of their acts and policy; and it appeared to him that no apology was needed on the part of any hon. Member in the House who ventured to think that he might be permitted to take part in Indian debates by reason of the great responsibility which rested upon them in respect of all Indian affairs. It could not be denied that they in England, whether they knew anything of Indian matters or not, were responsible for everything that was done in their name respecting the Government of India. They were under great responsibilities, political, financial, and commercial. Politically, he thought it would be agreed that India drew them into close connection—he might say into dangerous connection—with everything which took place in Europe, with every political phase of affairs in the whole of Europe. With regard to finance, although we did not pretend formally to guarantee the financial affairs of India, it could not be disputed that we were responsible for them, and that the Debt of India was as much an obligation on this country—[An hon. MEMBER: No, no!]—yes, as much an obligation on this country as though it were added to our own Budget every year. An hon. Member said "No," but he should like to see an Indian official rise to-night and tell them that they were not so responsible. India we had got and India we must hold, and for India in every respect and degree we were responsible, and certainly from a financial point of view. Commercially, also, it could not be disputed that we leaned upon the consuming power of our Indian fellow-subjects for a vast portion of our trade. He was one of several Members who represented manufacturing constituencies whose very existence rested on their trade with that great country, and which, if that trade were withdrawn, would be at once deprived of all employment. Well, he thought it would be very pleasant for him and for all of them to accept the smooth and pleasing official declarations which they were accustomed to hear in the House respecting the prosperity of India, the soundness of Her finances and the well-being of everything connected with her. He, for one, should be very glad if he could take that roseate view of her affairs, but the bitter lessons of experience taught us that we could not so readily accept those assurances. Official blunders of a grave nature had been made in the past. It was not too much to predict that they would be made in the future, and it was open to question whether, even at the present moment, the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to India was not open to very grave objection and mistrust. It would be within the memory of every hon. Gentleman here to-night, that when our troops entered Burmah we were assured that we were going to have a very easy walk over—in fact, that the inhabitants of that country were positively pining for us to take possession of it, and that we had only to present ourselves there in order to be received with open arms by every class of the population. Well, we knew what had happened. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) had told us that for several years past this Expedition, which was to cost us nothing at all, really cost us a considerable sum—£1,000,000, or—his hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire (Mr. Samuel Smith) said—£2,000,000 annually. It occupied some 20,000 of our troops, and, he believed, a very large number of police as well. But it was in regard to the Indian Budget that he thought the mistakes and miscalculations of their official friends showed in their most exaggerated and extraordinary form, for every year they were assured that they were going to have a surplus, and yet, year after year, a mistake was discovered, and they were presented with a deficit, until this deficit in the financial accounts had become almost as regular as the procession of the Equinox. And now they were confronted with the problem of additional taxation to fill up this chronic deficit in our Indian finance. As they heard this deficit was to be made up by an addition to the Salt Tax, and they were assured—as they had been assured before on similar occasions—in the name, he supposed, of the Indian people, that this addition to the Salt Tax would not be felt. Well, he begged to differ from that opinion, and to state that, on the contrary, this addition to the Salt Tax would be felt, and felt very severely, by these 40,000,000 of inhabitants whom his hon. Friend had alluded to as living perpetually on the very brink of starvation. But that question whether an increase of the Salt Tax would be an evil or not was completely thrashed out at the time when Lord Ripon reduced it; and he remembered well, in the course of that discussion, a missionary of very great experience in India describing a little incident which showed how those matters were felt by the people of India. He saw in a bazaar a man half-clothed and shivering in the keen air of a winter evening squat down and begin to bargain for his evening meal. He wished to buy rice, salt, and chilis, but if he took the two condiments he could not get more than half enough rice for a full meal; and it was pitiable to see the poor wretch trying so to adjust the account as to get a little salt with his rice and chilis. There were many scores of millions of people in India who would have to make this pathetic computation, and ask themselves whether they would be able to get a little salt to season their rice and chilis. But it was in the North-West Provinces that the weight of this Salt Tax would be felt most severely, for there there was already a rise in the price of grain. There were signs of an impending scarcity of food. In Burmah, he was sure, it was not too much to say that this increase of duty—which would amount, he supposed, to about half a rupee per maund of 80 pounds—would be very strongly resented by the people; and we need not be surprised if we found an outbreak there such as took place in Orissa when we did a like thing. The Salt Tax showed something much more ominous, much more threatening, than anything that related even to the feelings and resentment of the people. It showed with perfect distinctness that the financiers of our Indian Empire had come pretty nearly to the end of their resources, for it did not appear to him that they would have adopted an expedient so offensive, and he might say so sad, if by any process of financial ingenuity they could have levied a tax which would have produced a similar amount. In short, the Indian Government confessed by that act that they were at the end of their resources, and yet the limit of their expenditure was very far from having been reached. Now, one of the chief causes of the excess of expenditure which had produced this call upon the very poorest of the population was, of course, the very large sum of money that had been expended on frontier operations, which, as they were told the other day, had already cost an enormous sum; and he supposed the whole system of railway works in connection with the frontier defence had cost two or three times more than was originally anticipated, and yet millions of money were still needed to fit those vast preparations for anything useful in the way of a military defence. Now, in the Queen's Most Gracious Speech, we were assured that what was called the settlement of our boundary difficulty as between Afghanistan and Russia was a matter of very great satisfaction to the Government, and we were supposed to be relieved by this act of very grave sources of anxiety, but he would remind the House that a frontier line, however scientific and however complete it might be, was not by any means a frontier defence; and it appeared to him that by those preparations and that boundary settlement, and the extraordinary importance which we attached to all those defensive operations on our North-West Frontier, we did little more than disclose to Russia our most vulnerable point. Our frontier could only be said to be safe so long as we were at peace with Russia in Europe. Now, it would be remembered how, when Lord Beaconsfield made his great *coup* by sending 5,000 Native troops to Malta in order to eat up Skobeloff and his 25,000 troops, Russia responded by a simple act. She sent three men out to Cabul, and this simple act landed us in such turmoil that we had eventually to undertake the war in Afghanistan with what consequences we were familiar. What did those facts disclose? That Russia could always paralyze our action in Europe by simply threatening us with difficulties in Afghanistan. There could be no doubt that a very influential Party in that House would drag us now into an alliance with Austria and Italy, and was it unreasonable to suppose that if that were done Russia would at once respond by occupying the Dependencies of Afghanistan, or was it doubted on the part of anyone that she would be hailed with delight by the population there as a welcome deliverer? Unless, therefore, we could act harmoniously with Russia our new boundary seemed only to have thrown us more into her path. What followed? It seemed to him that the millions that had been spent on those frontier preparations were simply and solely preparations for further expenses, and it was not an unreasonable apprehension, he was perfectly sure that when the present frontier operations and the railways were completed it would be discovered that we had not gone quite far enough, and that it was absolutely necessary, in order to complete our military preparations and make everything quite secure, to continue our line to Candahar. We now stood certainly committed to the Ameer to defend Afghanistan and all its Dependencies, but he ventured to say we were utterly unable to do anything of the sort. We had undertaken what we could not perform, and, in the absence of roads or any means of communication, it was absurd to imagine it was practicable or possible to keep any such engagement. Now, just a few words on the Revenue Question. It seemed to him that an endless vista of growing expenditure was stretching out before us in India, and he wanted to ask hon. Members—who, he hoped, would give them some comfort later on when speaking from the other side—where the money was to come from? We could not go on increasing the Salt Tax; it was unreasonable to think that the population could stand another application of the screw in relation to a necessity like salt. His hon. Friend had pointed out that the Opium Revenue was steadily declining and there was no doubt whatever that it would decline very much more. Revenue from an Income Tax was wholly out of the question for it had already been discarded as an impracticable expedient, which could only produce annoyance and irritation. He ventured to describe this as a desperate condition of Indian finance, and he heartily joined with his hon. Friend in asking for this inquiry into our Government in India. He would most gladly accept the dogma of official infallibility if one could possibly do so. They knew very well the official picture presented to them in glowing and pleasant colours, but what they wished to know was the Native opinion. They wished to know from their own lips how they regarded our Government, and how they felt and saw our acts and our legislation. In asking for a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the working of the Acts relating to the Government of India they on that side of the House were asking for nothing new. His hon. Friend referred to the consensus of opinion which existed on both sides of the House with relation to the desirableness of this Commission, but the hon. Member neglected to remind the House of the fact that in having recourse to this inquiry they were only reverting to a very ancient and wholesome practice. The House would remember that during the time of the East India Company's Charter every 20 years a similar inquiry was made, and he (Mr. Slagg) was sure no one would deny that those inquiries were useful and beneficial to the Government and the people of India. Before he sat down he might allude to the enormous changes that had taken place since the last inquiry was made—changes of so fundamental a nature that it seemed impossible to resist such a review of our relations with the many races of India. He thought it was not too much to allege that within the last 30 years education upon an extensive and general scale had only sprung into existence in India, or, at any rate, that was so from a Western point of view. We knew how a large class had betaken themselves with a sort of passion to the study of Western ideas and forms of Government, and had acquired a complete mastery of our own language. He must refer with the same satisfaction expressed by his hon. Friend to the Reports of the Congress at Madras. We had there 700 delegates from all parts of India speaking in the name of vast masses of the people, and no one could, he was sure, peruse the Report of that Congress without being struck by the extreme moderation of the resolutions and the thoroughly practical spirit which animated the whole of their proceedings. Not one word of disloyalty; not one scintilla of suspicion was shown as to the doings of the Government; but, on the other hand, favourable comments as to our rule; but, underlying all, an intense and burning desire to share, to some reasonable extent at least, in the Government of their own country, and to take part and lot in the heritage which we had professed so long to be holding only in their name. Now he (Mr. Slagg) did not, for one moment propose to tell the House or profess to think himself that these delegates at the Congress of Madras represented in our conception of the word their fellow-countrymen, but we might be certain of this: that the time was not far distant when they would so represent them, and when the spirit that animated those highly-educated Natives in such a thorough and practical manner would be transmitted to the masses of the people. Thus it was not only a matter of wisdom, but a matter of prudence, for us to take up this question in time. He felt perfectly certain that we should be amply rewarded for a step so judicious. At any rate, it was inconceivable that it would do harm. If such an inquiry produced evidence to show that our acts, our administration, and our system of government, were all that could be desired why then we should be fortified in going on in the same way. If, on the other hand, we discovered that in many respects our system of administration and taxation, our laws and enactments bore heavily on the masses of the people, we should be able by the evidence which such an inquiry afforded us to apply at once those wise and timely reforms which would do more than anything else to produce a spirit of confidence in the country—a spirit which would lie deeper even than the sentiment of loyalty which already existed. He was sure that we should thereby give universal satisfaction to all classes of the population and produce in them an esteem for our rule and a feeling of security as to our intentions which would afford the most impregnable frontier for our territory, and provide the surest resistance to the assaults of our enemies.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Address, to add the words,—"But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that another deficit is threatened in the Indian Budget, and that it has been deemed necessary to raise the Salt Tax in order to meet the same;

"That it views with anxiety these recurring deficits in the Indian Revenue Accounts, and urges greater economy in the Administration;

"That it calls upon the Government of India to meet the wishes of the Native population, both in respect of finance and administration, so far as it can do so consistently with prudence and sound policy, and that it urges Her Majesty's Government to redeem the promise made in the Queen's Speech two years ago, that an inquiry should be made into the Government of India by the appointment of a Royal Commission for that purpose."—(*Mr. Samuel Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) said, that the speeches of the Proposer and Seconder of the Amendment, although nominally supposed to have reference to the Salt Tax, in reality were speeches *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. To reply to them concisely was, therefore, next to impossible. As to the Mover of the Amendment, he felt sure that the Natives of India, whatever they might think of his facts and arguments, would recognize gratefully the charitable and sympathetic spirit in which he had dealt with the subject. His hon. Friend, however, was a philanthropic pessimist, and a political Jeremiah. His hon. Friend chose to wear dark green spectacles through which to view the condition of the people of India, and therefore the picture which he saw was, of course, very dark. If any man chose to put on the same kind of spectacles, he might make out a very touching story regarding the unfortunate condition of any people under the sun. The hon. Member had been to India to see for himself, and that was laudable, for his subsequent as compared to his previous knowledge must be as light compared with darkness. Still, his knowledge of India had been acquired in a winter's tour, and, having returned home, he now treated the House to "a winter's tale." Might he remind the hon. Member that a tour of such short duration could not make a man omniscient in regard to so vast an Empire and population? The hon. Member, no doubt, had met a certain number of highly educated Natives who could speak to him in the English language; but there were some 20 different tongues spoken in India, and with those who spoke them the hon. Member had, of course, been unable to converse. Who were the educated Natives whom he had met? They were men who only spoke for themselves and not for their countrymen collectively, and who had but two objects in view, one of which was to obtain for themselves a larger share in the management of the country, through representative institutions; and, in the second place, to secure for themselves also some of the loaves and fishes distributed among Europeans. These men, in order to make out a case in furtherance of their objects, painted India black, exaggerated everything, and strove to make all facts and arguments point to the conclusion which they desired. With both the objects above referred to he sympathized. He quite admitted their title to consideration at our hands, and he acknowledged their many virtues; but he must say he thought the hon. Member pretended to utter the universal opinion of the Natives of India when, as a matter of fact, he only repeated the sentiments of a limited class. Indeed, their claim to represent the people would be repudiated by the Natives generally. They were a class of political agitators who would be swept into the sea if the protection of England were withdrawn from them. When that was considered they appeared rather ungrateful, for they were constantly vilifying their protectors. Their own evidence might be turned against them, for, as the House knew, there had, as just mentioned by his hon. Friend, been large conferences at Calcutta and other capitals, at which strong loyalty had been expressed, and even laudation of the British Government. These really responsible utterances ought to be set against such irresponsible conversations as his hon. Friend had held with Natives in trains, railway stations, and other public places of resort. To prove his contention that the people of India were excessively poor, his hon. Friend contrasted the statistics relating to their condition with English statistics. But poor and rich were comparatively relative terms, and his hon. Friend had overlooked the fact that an Englishman was five times as strong as a Native of India, did five times as much work, and had a vastly greater number of artificial wants. Besides that, he possessed vast mechanical resources which were wanting to the Native. The Indian, it was true, earned comparatively little, but his wants were few and he could supply them without difficulty. There was, therefore, less of real grinding poverty in India, and fewer people suffered from the extreme pinch of the *res angusta domi.* Would the House be surprised to hear that the people whose poverty was so feelingly, even so pathetically, described by his hon. Friend, were a people whose numbers were increasing annually, whose cultivation was continually extending, whose internal transactions were multiplying, and whose surplus of wheat enabled them to flood British markets for several years—and now to begin flooding the markets of Southern Europe, as we learned from the newspapers of this very day? It should also be noted that they absorbed vast quantities of the precious metals. Much had been made of the evidence of Lord Lawrence as to the existence of poverty and misery, and he yielded to no one in respect for Lord Lawrence's memory. But it was a mistake to suppose that his words had exclusive application to India. They were, unfortunately, applicable to every nation under the sun. Statistics showed that the Natives of India were probably the most lightly taxed people on the face of the earth, for it had long been our policy to reduce the rate of taxation, limit its incidence, and abolish the imposts which were exacted under Native rule. As to the Land Tax, he would not enter upon the hon. Member's discussion as to whether this was rent or revenue. It mattered little to those who paid the tax whether the name of rent or revenue were used. His hon. Friend said, on the authority of certain Natives with whom he had conversed, that the tax amounted to 25 per cent of the gross produce; but according to the most competent administrators and statisticians, who had examined the figures closely, it only amounted to between 7 and 10 per cent. Would the House consider that casual conversations with the most unstatistical people in the world were to be set against official and responsible *dicta* founded upon careful inquiry? The old subject of opium had been referred to. If the hon. Member wished in the course of the Session to initiate an opium debate, questions could be raised and answered then; but there was one point which he (Sir Richard Temple) wished to impress upon the House. The hon. Member had said that we intercepted the profits of the opium culture, which would go to the people of India if it were not for us. Nothing of the kind; if our opium revenue were abolished tomorrow, the people of India would not get the profit, but the Chinese Government would get it; and it was a question whether the Indian Government should get it, in whose country the article was grown, or whether they should let the Chinese take it. With regard to the question of Excise, in a miscellaneous speech such as he (Sir Richard Temple) was obliged in the circumstances to make, he would only give this general assurance—that the policy and effect of our Excise revenue in India was to tax drugs and spirits, and so to guard against intemperance by making their consumption expensive and difficult. When accidentally rein was in some degree given to intemperance, the Government stepped in and applied an effectual remedy. The Government of India was plainly determined to repress intemperance, and, in his opinion, subject to occasional shortcomings and failures, it had done its duty well in that respect. With regard to the statement that the people of India continuously lived upon the verge of famine, and that any failure of the crops brought them into immediate danger of starvation, he ventured to assure the House from his own experience that the very reverse was the case. It had been his lot to command in the field the largest operations of famine relief ever undertaken in India. He consequently knew that the people of that country always had a considerable reserve of food, generally lying buried in the dry earth beneath the floors of their dwellings. If the crops were destroyed, the wages of the people ceased, and their employment was subverted. Nevertheless, it would take three or four months after the commencement of famine before these stores were exhausted or any stage approaching starvation was reached. He doubted whether the working classes of England, with their many artificial needs, could hold out as long, were a similar calamity to overtake them. He appealed to hon. Members who knew the condition of our working classes whether in this respect the comparison was not in favour of the people of India, with their few and simple needs? With regard to finance, the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment had made out a seemingly strong case against the Government by dexterously handling figures taken at comparative periods suiting his argument. But if they took the period from the last Russo-Turkish War they would see that since that time the Government of India, acting on behalf of the people of India, had succeeded in paying out of current revenue a very large sum for famine relief and almost all their share of the last Afghan War, and after that war was over had enjoyed several years of surplus which had been beneficently expended on the construction of railways and canals to safeguard against famine. After this cycle of successful years the Government of India had, he admitted, fallen into an unfavourable position financially, which, however, he hoped, was but a passing cloud. The causes of that had been in part explained by the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment. The troubles in Burmah and the frontier defences had been mentioned; but he (Sir Richard Temple) thought that there were two other reasons for these difficulties which had not been alluded to. One consisted in this—that a certain trouble had arisen from the Cheefoo Convention, by which the Chinese were able to levy import duties on the opium, whereby about £1,000,000 of revenue was lost to India. The second reason was the peculiar loss which arose from the fact that, owing to the very low price of wheat prevalent in England, the exportation from India had been considerably diminished, thus bringing a loss upon the traffic receipts of the State railways. But all these losses would have been but a feather's-weight for India had it not been for the loss by exchange, a grave circumstance, wholly beyond the control of the Government. The hon. Seconder of the Amendment (Mr. Slagg) said that the Afghans were sighing for a release from their yoke by the intervention of the Russians; but that he (Sir Richard Temple) did not regard as at all likely, because the Ameer was an Afghan of the Afghans, and if the people prayed to be delivered from his yoke, they were praying to be delivered from their own yoke. And naturally the Afghans preferred their own dominion to that of any Foreign Power. He could assure the House that the people of India had no wish to exchange British for Russian rule, and an evidence of the spirit that animated the country was recently afforded by the loyal offer of the Native Princes of funds for the defence of the frontier. They said—We give you our money now, but in the day of danger you may count upon our sword. The hon. Seconder alluded to our obligations to defend Afghanistan against Russia, and seemingly regarded this obligation as impossible of fulfilment. He (Sir Richard Temple) would not, in the absence of official Papers, like to say whether we did precisely incur any such obligation; but if we had incurred it morally, he quite agreed that it would be very unwise for England to attempt to meet Russia in arms upon the Central Asian frontier. England would appoint her own battle-field; she would fight where she chose, and would not let her enemy select the site he pleased. Russia would be struck in the Baltic, the Black Sea, and perhaps in the China Seas; thus, heavily wounded and stricken, Russia would have to relax her grip on the frontiers of Afghanistan. As regarded the Salt Tax—which was the proper subject of this Amendment, though the Mover and Seconder had strayed widely from it, and he had been obliged to follow them—he must remind the House that the words "raising this tax," as set forth in the Amendment, were somewhat misleading. Five years ago the Salt Tax was lowered very considerably. Of course, the well-wishers of India were very thankful to see it lowered, if the Government could afford it. But many long-headed men shook their heads at the time, and now it turned out that they had to go back to the standard from which they departed some years ago.

He was positive that if inquiries were made in the markets of India it would be found that even this addition of one-fifth—[Mr. S. SMITH: One-fourth.]—he would correct himself, one-fourth—would still leave the price of salt cheaper than it was 10 years ago. The Salt Tax was, of course, a tax on the poor; but if the labouring poor were protected by the arm of British power from plunder and devastation, and to be secured in reaping the fruits of their labour, they must pay something to their protectors. And what else did they pay, or could they pay, but the Salt Tax? They smoked indeed; but there was no tobacco tax. They paid nothing to the Excise, for they did not drink. According to calculations of totals of revenue and of population, the Salt Tax was now only 1*s.* per head per annum to an adult. The very poorest peasant, of whom one of his hon. Friends had spoken as being able to support himself, his wife, and family on 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, represented an extreme case. A peasant and his wife would probably earn about 120*s.* a-year, and the Salt Tax upon them would come to 2*s.* per annum. If the tax were raised it would amount to 2*s.* 6*d.* per annum; and, although he would deprecate the raising of the tax as much as the hon. Member, still he would remind him that it would not be very sensibly felt. He found by statistics that when the tax was lowered five years ago there was no considerable increase in the consumption of that article, as would probably have been the case had the tax been oppressive. Therefore, if it were raised, the people of India would probably not lessen their consumption. It had been said that the Salt Tax was the sole remaining resource of taxation for the country. That was not so, as there remained the Income Tax, which was now only 2½ per cent, or 6*d.* in the pound, as a further resource. Then it had been proposed that, instead of raising the Salt Tax, they should revive the old import duties and tax the British manufactures imported into India. This proposal ought to be exposed, as being one simply for transferring a part of the Indian burden from the Indian peasant to the British working man. To that course he could not assent, believing the British Empire to be for British industry. With respect to the hon. Mover's proposal for some Parliamentary inquiry, he would submit that any inquiry ought to be strictly limited in its scope, or otherwise the field would be too wide for any practical result to be arrived at. He remembered an inquiry into Indian finance by a Committee of that House some years ago, which sat for more than one Session, which ranged over a vast variety of subjects and never made a Report. A Commission of Inquiry embracing all the subjects dealt with in the speeches of the hon. Mover and Seconder would occupy the time of several Sessions of Parliament. If it were granted, he should recommend that its scope should be closely confined to some three points, otherwise its duties would never be completed, owing to the immense range of the subjects which would inevitably present themselves. Those points should be—first, the general question as to whether any money could be saved in the administration of the government of India—and he believed economy could be effected; secondly, whether any representative institutions could be devised for the country—and he, for one, said certainly they could; and, thirdly, the question of substituting, in some degree, Native for European agency. On the last-named measure, he would say let that be done so far as was consistent with the safety of the Empire. It was our duty to make the Natives fit to manage their own affairs, to make them feel the responsibilities of action, and teach them how to hold the highest offices. These were the ultimate objects of truly national education. To this grand goal we should make gentle and gradual approaches; but in all the offices in which absolute firmness and energy, and all the higher attributes of human nature were required, the position should be held by officials of British nationality. If we arranged otherwise we should drift into peril. He recollected hearing an hon. Member opposite—the hon. Member for Cardiff—descanting last Session on the ability of British iron-clads to enter hostile harbours and fight under severe conditions. That which an iron-clad was above all other ships, a British officer was above all other men in Eastern countries. His armour-plating was courage, his barbette was firmness, his turret was tenacity, and his cannon was enterprize.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) said, he wished to advert to one or two points touched on by his hon. Friend who had spoken on the subject of the reduction of the Salt Tax (Mr. Slagg). He did not think it was quite fair to the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment to the Address (Mr. S. Smith) that the hon. Member had not explained accurately the present position of the Salt Duty. The hon. Gentleman seemed to put forward the fact that the Salt Duty had been reduced as the argument against raising it now; but their complaint was not that it was reduced in former years, but that it was now to be increased. He (Sir William Plowden) had been one of the officers of the Legislative Council when the Salt Duty was reduced, and he was aware that the Viceroy expressed his opinion that we should in future look to that tax as a possible resource in financial difficulties, and that we might raise it again; but the question was whether they should raise it now, and there he thought he might join issue with the hon. Gentleman. They considered that the part of the hon. Member's Amendment referring to economical administration was a matter which they should have before them as a means of dealing with the practical difficulties which surrounded them in India. It was admitted that we could economize, and to his mind there could be no doubt about the matter. Then, with regard to meeting the wishes of the country, it was certain that we must go forward in that direction, and meet the desires of the Natives to be more closely associated with us in the administration of their own affairs. He was surprised, with the long experience of the hon. Gentleman opposite, that he should feel able to express himself as he had on our relying entirely upon British valour and intellect. Those who, like himself, had been associated in the troublous times of 1857 with the Natives, could not share entirely the view put forward by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Evesham Division of Worcester (Sir Richard Temple). He had been associated with the people of India when their lives had been in great danger, and when there were no Europeans with him; and he felt that it was owing to the good faith and gallantry of his Native friends that he was able to encounter the difficulty in which he was placed. In his opinion, they could rely on the good faith, loyalty, and courage of our Native fellow-subjects quite as much as upon that of our own people. We had had proof of the good feeling which animated the Native Princes; and he had been greatly gratified with the terms in which the hon. Gentleman had referred to the manner in which they had shown their loyalty. With regard to the economy of their administration, when the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) came to deal with that Amendment, he might, perhaps, turn his attention to the question of economy of our Indian administration; but, taking the Revenue and Expenditure of our great Indian Empire, he found that they were now in receipt of £77,000,000, and an expenditure of the same amount. That great Revenue was made up of six main heads, and the charges were likewise made up under four or five main heads. He would turn briefly to two points, on which they had recently had an expression of opinion from men who were quite capable of giving good advice. With regard, first, to the Army Service; the Army Charges for the last year of which they had the figures before them amounted to over £20,000,000, while the Civil charges amounted to £21,000,000. A very able Committee sat in 1878 or 1879 under the Presidency of a Gentleman who held high Office in India—whose death they had since to deplore—assisted among others by the present Commander-in-Chief (Sir Frederick Roberts), and that Committee, sitting with every possible means of information before them, came to very definite conclusions as to the manner in which the Army administration might be largely economized; and he would ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India, with reference to the opinions expressed in their Report, whether up to the present time they had been acted upon? There were undoubtedly several definite methods by which economy in the Army Service might be effected. Then in the Civil administration there was plenty of room for large reductions and economies; while with regard to the Local Governments of Madras and Bombay, he asked why they should not be upon the same footing as the Local Government of Bengal? There seemed to him to be no reason why these economies should not be effected. He would not refer to the second portion of the Amendment;

but he sincerely trusted that some active measures would be taken in the direction of the view of the hon. Member.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, he thought it was to be regretted that the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) should have thought it necessary to include within the terms of his Amendment a specific condemnation of the increase of the Salt Tax as the means adopted by the Government of India for meeting the existing deficit; and it was also to be regretted that the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment should have introduced into their speeches references to such controverted topics as the Burmah Annexation and the Afghan War; because if that condemnation of the Salt Tax had been omitted, he felt very certain that the hon. Member would have obtained a far larger amount of support for the really substantial part of his Amendment, not only from his own side of the House, but from those Benches, than he was aware of. For his own part, he entirely agreed with the remainder of the Amendment. He was altogether of opinion that the recurring deficits of which the hon. Member spoke, perhaps in too sombre terms, were to be regarded by that House and the country with very serious anxiety. He did not think that the hon. Member was merely a philanthropic pessimist, as had been suggested, but he did believe there was great reason for anxiety with regard to the finances of India. He thought also that the Government ought to be urged to study wiser and more intelligent economy in their administration, and endeavour to meet Native public opinion both in matters of finance and administration, so far as prudence and sound policy permitted; and he would add that prudence and sound policy would permit and demand that the Government should go a great deal farther than it had gone in that direction. Above all, he thought that the pledges of the Government should be fairly, fully, and honourably carried out, and that a real inquiry should be instituted into the administration of Indian affairs generally, and not a sham inquiry such as they had seen hitherto generally proposed. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Amendment in objecting to the increase of the Salt Tax; but he must say that he considered that if they were to have an increase of taxation, there was no other tax that could be imposed which would be so little oppressive to the people of India, or that would so closely meet their own wishes on the subject. The hon. Member had mentioned another tax, which he (Sir Roper Lethbridge) admitted would be preferred by the great majority of the people of India; but, whatever might be their own private opinion as to the desirability of re-imposing the duty on cotton goods imported from England, he thought that as practical men hon. Members would not consider the proposal of the hon. Member as feasible. He believed it was absolutely impossible that public opinion in this country would sanction any return to the Protectionist theories which formerly dominated the taxation of India. He did not think it would be possible for the Government of India to re-impose those duties, seeing that they were not only opposed to the sacred principles of Free Trade, but also to the just and legitimate interests of the English and Scotch cotton manufacturers. He objected to the Salt Tax being raised; but he agreed with the hon. Baronet the Member for the Evesham Division of Worcester (Sir Richard Temple) that its incidence was infinitesimal, and the only alternative would be, in his opinion, direct taxation. But every person who had a knowledge of the wants and habits of the Native people would, he thought, agree with him in saying that direct taxation was utterly unsuitable to them, for the obvious reason that for every rupee raised by direct taxation that reached the Treasury, two, five, or even 10 rupees would stick to the fingers and fall into the pockets of the underling extortioners who had to collect them. He would suggest to the hon. Member (Mr. S. Smith) that he should withdraw that portion of his Amendment which referred to the Salt Tax, in order that he might emphasize his resistance to the increase of taxation at all—in order to insist on what really was the true alternative—namely, retrenchment in the expenditure of the Government. It was no use for the hon. Member to demand retrenchment by the old-fashioned method of Departmental inquiries. The hon. Member evidently appreciated that fact when he asked for a Royal Commission. A Committee of officials, they all knew, would recommend a ruthless cutting down of the salaries of messengers and doorkeepers and such small deer as that. They would abolish a few offices here and there, giving to the incumbents of those offices pensions, and increasing the pay of the survivors. But what happened with the next swing of the pendulum. The abolished offices came back, but the special pensions and increased pay continued, and the result was a larger expenditure than before. To be real, an attempt at retrenchment must be carried out by the inquiries of a Royal Commission, or some such independent body, which would inquire on the spot in the full light of publicity and without fear or favour. And so, too, in the matter of meeting the wishes of the Native population. He asked those hon. Members who were acquainted with the circumstances of the appointment of the Public Service Commission of last year to say whether there could be any greater sham than that Commission, which was intended to meet the desire of the educated Natives for increased admission to the Civil Service? He was quite sure, and the House would appreciate the fact, that Lord Dufferin was anxious that that inquiry should be a full and impartial one. He believed that Lord Dufferin's advisers nominated the Members of that Committee with the view of making it a Committee for full and impartial inquiry; but the Committee sat, inquired into a certain number of details of administration, and the result, so far as he could learn, was simply *nil.* The same thing had happened with regard to the Committees of Inquiry here in England, in full light of English public opinion. Of all the Indian Secretaries of State within his memory, the one who had enjoyed the greatest amount of popularity with all classes in India, European as well as Native, official as well as non-official, was undoubtedly the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). Now, why was that? It was very largely due to the fact that the noble Lord stood forward boldly as the exponent of a policy of full and thorough inquiry. Unfortunately, as he (Sir Roper Lethbridge), and as many others, especially in India, thought, the noble Lord's tenure of Office was a short-lived one, and since his retirement from the India Office both Parties had had a spell of power. Both of the Front Benches had seemed to him to enter into a sort of conspiracy to shirk an inquiry altogether. Of course, he did not accuse right hon. Gentlemen of anything approaching a criminal conspiracy in the matter, but he could not help thinking that, in the interest of India, the agreement of the two Front Benches in the matter of an inquiry was much to be regretted. When the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington left the India Office and the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) came into power, what did they do in regard to this matter? They proposed to return to the old state of things. They proposed a Parliamentary Committee which was to sit upstairs in the dim religious light of one of the Committee Rooms. It was to consist mostly of present or past officials—Gentlemen of whom he would not speak except in terms of the highest respect—but he could not but remember that those Gentlemen would, to a large extent, be reviewing their own proceedings. Surely it was not likely that they would ask many awkward or inconvenient questions with regard to their own achievements. At that time he felt it his duty, as an independent Member of the House, to block the proposal of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian by an Amendment, declaring that no inquiry would be satisfactory to the people of India that did not provide for a full and impartial investigation on the spot by an independent authority. And if he felt bound to urge those views on the Government of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, he felt doubly bound to urge them upon the present Government. He knew he should be told that Parliamentary inquiries were of great efficacy in the olden times of the India Company, when the House of Commons used to overhaul the administration of the Company for 20 years, on the occasion of the renewal of the Charter. Quite true, these inquiries did bring about an immense amount of good in the way of reform, but it should never be forgotten that in those days both the Ministry and Parliament were exceedingly jealous of the extraordinary privileges and immunities of the Company, and they narrowly scanned the administration of the

Company. The examination of Parliament was very often not very just. It certainly was often not very intelligible, but it was, at any rate, rigorous. At the present time, under the circumstances he had detailed to the House, the examination by a Parliamentary Committee of the kind that was intended would certainly be anything but rigorous. The official Gentlemen certainly would, in reviewing their own achievements, be likely to be to their faults a little blind, and be to their virtues very kind. The fatal objection, in his opinion, to a Parliamentary inquiry here in England was that there was no possibility of getting any Native evidence that was worth having. Notwithstanding the recent revolt against old prejudices in India, which had spread to a considerable extent, it was perfectly true that at the present moment nearly all that was most worthy and that was most reputable in Indian society absolutely refused to cross the black water and to come to England or elsewhere. They objected to come here on social and religious grounds, and he appealed to the House to say—frankly to say—what moral value could attach to an inquiry from which all reputable Native evidence was absolutely and necessarily excluded? He maintained, notwithstanding the disclaimer of his hon. Friend the Member for the Evesham Division of Worcester, that there was great and urgent need of full and impartial inquiry not only in the interest of India, but for our own credit, for the credit of our own administration, and for the honour of England. He believed that the more the administration of India by Englishmen was fully and impartially inquired into, the more favourably would that administration be judged by the whole world. Ever since the Crown had taken over the administration of India from the Company there could be no doubt that charges had been accumulating against the Government that we ought for our own credit to have investigated and inquired into. Grievances — many of them, he believed, exaggerated, but some doubtless true—had accumulated, and those, too, should be looked into. Why, there was not a community in India—English, European, or Native, official or non-official—that had not its own special grievances, and many of them of a specially damaging character to the Government. Now, of those grievances many had found no tongue in England. They found their way into the Press of India; and those who, like himself, followed that Press from week to week, could understand what the grievances were. But otherwise they were not heard unless they affected what he called—although he did not use the phrase in an offensive sense—the ruling clique of India. When a grievance affected that clique it was very quickly redressed, but that clique usually sat up aloft in the Himalayan heights, like the Olympian gods of old, far removed from all sublunary cares; and even when that clique retired from India and came home to England it was to obtain a further apotheosis in the venerable Council of the Secretary of State. With rare exceptions those gentlemen who followed this official career were the enemies of these reforms. In perfect good faith, and in the full belief that reforms were not needed, they considered that ex-Lieutenant Governors and ex-Chief Commissioners should be above the captious criticisms of Committees or Royal Commissions; and so for 30 years they had succeeded in averting this inquiry, and the House of Commons had consented to this burking of the inquiry. Year after year the House of Commons consented to allow the Government not only to shirk the inquiry for which the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) had pleaded this evening, but also to burke anything that was more than a mere sham and simulated debate on Indian affairs. What could be more unreal than the debate on the Indian Budget, which came on usually at the end of the dog-days in August or September, when a few hon. Members, jaded with a long Session, came to listen to a few speeches on matters which concerned the highest interests of 200,000,000 of Her Majesty's subjects? He contended that the dismissal of the debate on Indian affairs to such a period of the Session not only hid all knowledge of contemporaneous Indian events from the House of Commons, but was really a disgrace to the Government and the House of Commons. It is true that the enterprize of *The Times* newspaper on every Monday morning, in the singularly able and interesting telegrams that were received from their Calcutta correspondent, put before the public an account of current Indian history, and of the wants and aspirations of the Indian peoples. But, he asked, who amongst the English people, who even amongst hon. Members of the House, recognized when he read these telegrams that they were the record of a vast Continent occupied by something like 100 different races? But did he realize when he was told of this movement in Bengal, or of that movement in the North-West Provinces, that just two or three lines were obliged to suffice as a description of a popular movement that might be convulsing a population as large as that of France or Germany, and nearly as highly organized? The echoes of all these things reached us through the columns of *The Times*, but they reached us in a condition that was altogether faint and insufficient. The cry of those people went up to Heaven that they were unheard in this House—that they were unheard in England at all to any practical extent. If he (Sir Roper Lethbridge) were not wearying the House, he would like to mention without comment one or two cries raised by the people of India. He did not wish to attempt to comment upon them, but he would say that these cries deserved the attention of the House of Commons. He did not know—he could not know—whether they were true, but he said this, that the Government ought to enable him, and ought to enable every Member of the House of Commons, to say that the cries were not founded upon real grievances. First, there was a cry that was almost universal as to the Home charges. That cry was referred to by the hon. Gentleman the Mover, and also by the hon. Gentleman the Seconder, of the Amendment, but he found that only in the present week the leader of the independent Members of the Viceroy's Council (Mr. Evans) had drawn the attention of India and the world to this point of the Home charges. These were charges, of course, for the cost of the India Office, for stores, for troops, for the interest on debt, and so forth. Now there was hardly one item of these charges that was not impugned in some way not only by the Native Press in India, and by the less reputable of the English Press, but by some of the leading papers and by some men of the highest authority in India. This very week he had been much impressed by an article in *The Calcutta Englishman* which was undoubtedly the first newspaper in India. The article was upon the Hindoo and European Telegraphic Department, and in it it was asked—

> "How many persons in India know that the head-quarters of a purely Indian Department are fixed permanently in England, and that a considerable staff are employed there in assisting the Director in Chief to delay the publication of the annual report until it has lost all human interest? All the office work of the Department is done at Kurrachee, and a report is drawn up there every year, a report which is afterwards sent home to the Director in Chief to be returned to the Government of India at Simla, to be again sent to the Secretary of State in London, and again finally to be sent out to India to be immortalized in the pages of the Official Gazette. Anything more absurd it would be impossible to imagine. It is circumlocution run mad. It is not only circumlocution that is the gravamen of the charge. It is unjust to the staff, who are exposed to the rigours of a fierce climate in the Persian Gulf to keep a nest of drones in London on high pay."

Then there was the outcry—which he thought was universal in the Native Press—against the temper and even sometimes against the honesty of our relations with the Native States, against the gentlemen who, as Residents or as Political Agents, were bound to control those Native States. There was one State that had been treated, it seemed to him, with considerable harshness—having its Native ruling family set aside during the minority of its Princes and subordinated to an English official placed in charge there. He believed the facts were undisputed, and when he asked for information in the House he understood that the Indian Office had heard nothing of the transaction. Then we unhappily snubbed or treated with something like indignity those Maharajahs and great Nobles who happened to belong to our own territories and to be subjects of the Queen, who was Empress of India, and this merely because they were subjects of the Queen as distinguished from petty Chiefs who had their dominions in what was called Feudatory India. We did not allow to the greatest of those Maharajahs even the small civility of a salute which was a privilege enjoyed by the petty Chiefs in other parts of India. The classes to whom we imparted our English education and Western civilization, and of whom my hon. Friend the Member for the Evesham Division of Worcester spoke just now had their demands to make, and he (Sir Roper Lethbridge) thought that many of them were just demands. They demanded, for instance, to have representation in the Legislative Councils of the various Provinces, and he thought many of them were admirably qualified for seats on those Councils. They demanded increased employment in the Civil Service generally; and the Government, in replying to this demand, simply appointed such a Commission as the Public Service Commission, of which he had already spoken. Turning to the European communities in India, he found that all the various Uncovenanted Departments of the Civil Service, those Departments which dealt with the scientific and technical affairs of the Government and so forth, were absolutely excluded from the Olympian clique at Simla. These Departments were only kept from almost open revolt by a most stringent system of rules against combination. No two men were allowed to sign the same Petition, and no Petition could be sent to England except through the Government of India, a prohibition with regard to Petitions to this House which he regarded as somewhat unconstitutional. Those of the Education Department of the North-West Provinces and of the Postal Department of the Punjaub declared that they were grossly ill-treated by the Government of India in regard to the headships of their Departments, and with regard to promotion being taken away by the imposition over their heads of members of the Covenanted Services. Then, with regard to their furlough, pay, and pensions when they retired to England, they complained that their pay and pensions were not only calculated on a scale 50 per cent less favourable than that which was given to the Covenanted Civil servant, but that, in addition, these pensions were calculated in rupees in a fluctuating standard. The House would appreciate what that meant when he mentioned that an officer who 10 years ago retired on a pension of £200 per annum—which he thought at the time would be a bare subsistence for himself and his family—had, owing to the depreciation of the rupee since then, received in lieu of that pension a pension of £135 per annum on which he and his family had to starve. Then he (Sir Roper Lethbridge) turned to the Army—English and Native. He found that those officers who were on what was termed the General List complained in a very recent number of *The Civil and Military Gazette*, a first-class English paper published at Lahore, of grievances that were quite as hard as those of Uncovenanted civilians. He also found it stated that the whole Native Army was in a ferment at a trick which they considered had been played upon them by the Government, and this in direct opposition to the expressed wish of their distinguished Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederick Roberts. It was said that an amnesty was offered to all deserters on account of the Jubilee, and that afterwards all the deserters who came in and confessed were actually punished. Such a thing seemed incredible; but the authority of *The Civil and Military Gazette* was a very high one. Then the whole unofficial community protested against the annual retirement of the Government to Simla in the Hills; and the Native community almost universally protested against our Excise policy by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Evesham Division (Sir Richard Temple). The Natives complained that it increased the liquor traffic; and he was very glad to see—though he expressed no opinion upon it, for he thought that at present they were in want of further information—that the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine) intended to raise the question upon a subsequent occasion. Again, the planters complained that the Government had set up experimental farms and such like institutions, and then turned round and competed with private enterprize by making a profit out of the sale of cinchona. There was a complaint that the Government would not extend railways. In fact, there was not a single corner of the administration that was not the subject of some complaint or other. He did not say, for one moment, that all, or anything like all, of these charges could be sustained. On the contrary, he hoped and believed that a thorough inquiry would show that none of them could be sustained in the odious sense in which they were often brought; but he held that the English administration in India should be, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion; and he thought that the mere fact that these charges were made and were reiterated so often was amply sufficient ground for demanding a full and searching inquiry. In conclusion, he implored the House to remember that in neglecting the interests of India, and in ignoring the just wants and aspirations of her people, we were not only neglecting our duty to the teeming millions of India, but we were also wronging the working classes of this country. It had been well pointed out that a very large percentage of the English working classes depended entirely for their subsistence on the trade with India; and he (Sir Roper Lethbridge) was very certain that the whole of the working classes of this country would receive a very great injury alike to their work and wages by any injury done to our connection with India.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, he did not think that the hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) would consider it disrespectful of him if he declined at that extremely late period of the evening to follow him into the many topics which he had submitted to the consideration of the House. No doubt, many of the subjects which he had enumerated might be very advantageously discussed in the House at a convenient season. He was rejoiced to find that there was a healthy public opinion springing up in India on those subjects, and that the Government of India was subjected to a full and efficient criticism of its administration of that Empire. On the whole, however, it might be best if the Government were to reserve its opinion on these matters until they were formally and properly brought under the consideration of the House, when some action on the part of the Government might become necessary. He would, therefore, confine himself in the remarks he intended to make almost exclusively to the case made out by the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment. They were entitled to an official answer to the allegations made, and though he must endeavour to make that official answer as brief and as concise as he could, he would, at the same time, endeavour to meet fully the various statements made. He understood the complaints of the Mover of the Amendment against the administration of India to be practically three—(1) the deficit in the Revenues of India; (2) the particular mode in which the Government of India were going to meet that deficit; and (3) a general complaint of a want of regard for the wishes of what the hon. Member called the people of India, and a demand for the fulfilment of the pledges which had been given by the Government for a Parliamentary inquiry. In regard to the deficit, he wished to call the attention of the House to this extremely important fact—that the deficit was caused by a concurrence of circumstances over which the present Government had had no control whatever, and most of which had been entirely independent of any action on the part of any Government that had preceded the present one. If it had not been for a combination of those financial misfortunes which had fallen upon the Government of India, there would be no deficit of which to complain. The first cause of the deficit was, no doubt, the expenditure in Upper Burmah. He would not attempt to defend the policy of the annexation of Upper Burmah. It was a policy for which the present Government were not responsible; but it was a policy which had been approved by the two preceding Governments, and on more than one occasion by more than one House of Commons. One fact connected with the annexation of Upper Burmah he had frankly admitted, and that was that a very insufficient estimate was originally made of the expenditure which this annexation would, in the course of the next few years, cause. But the present Government, after a review of the whole policy of that annexation, was strongly of opinion that it was prudent and necessary, and that, even if the full cost which would be incurred during this and the next few years had been known to those by whom that policy was initiated, they would have been justified in the annexation. Though he frankly admitted that the charges in the last two years and in the present year were much greater than was expected, he must not be understood to be giving up the estimate which the Government of India had made of the ultimate results of that annexation. There was no reason to doubt that ultimately the Revenue of Upper Burmah would repay all that had been spent on that country, and that, so far from being a burden, it might become one of the most valuable Provinces of our Indian Empire. The next cause which had produced the present deficit was the increased Army charges. For those increased charges the present Government was not responsible. They were the result of a policy which had been long pursued by successive Governments of this country and by successive Viceroys of India. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Sir William Plowden) had found fault with the administration of India because economies had not been made in the Army expenditure. But he would remind the hon. Gentleman that economies had been made in the Army expenditure and administration of India. If it had not been for those economies the increase of Army expenditure would have been much greater than it actually was. The expenditure had increased, as a whole, in consequence of the additions which it had been thought necessary to make to the numerical strength of the Army, and in consequence of certain improvements which had been effected in the Native regiments. The increase shown in Sir Auckland Colvin's estimate was in 1886-7 Rx.1,126,900, whereas, owing to the economies, a reduction was made in other parts of that expenditure, so that the actual increase of expenditure in 1886-7 was only Rx.465,200, showing that a very considerable saving would have been effected in the total military expenditure had it not been for the necessary increase of the Army. He did not understand that the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), or the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, or any of those who complained of the increased expenditure, would challenge the policy which led to that increased expenditure. Would they say that it was not the duty of the Government of India to make the people of India secure from the danger and disaster of foreign invasion? He thought that at a time when the independent Chiefs of India were coming forward and voluntarily offering to subscribe to the defence of the North-West Frontier, it certainly would be inopportune if the British Government were either to reduce their military expenditure or to abandon a policy which was deliberately adopted by previous Governments, not for the purpose of aggression, but for the purpose of making the North-West Frontier secure against invasion. Then a third cause which had co-operated in producing this deficit was the falling-off in the opium revenue. That was a cause which the Government of India was absolutely impotent to prevent. It had been the result of the general Imperial policy of this country. It had been pointed out by the hon. Baronet the Member for Evesham (Sir Richard Temple) that it was the direct result of the Chefoo Convention with China. In the last few years the price of Indian opium had fallen considerably, and the loss thereby occasioned —which fell exclusively upon the Indian Revenue—had amounted to about Rx.1,500,000. The next reason was the falling-off in the amount of the railway receipts, which, although showing a great increase over those of three years ago, had fallen below the Budget Estimate by, in round numbers, Rx.550,000. There need, however, be no real apprehension about the future receipts of Indian railways, or their profitable working. But all the various financial misfortunes which had befallen India would have been powerless to produce the present result, had it not been for the fall in exchange. Neither the present nor any Government could be blamed for the fall in exchange. The fall in the value of silver was a phenomenon which no one had ever expected would occur. Since 1883-4, when there was a surplus, the exchange had become worse year by year. In 1885 the charge was greater than in 1883-4 by Rx.1,840,000; in 1886, by Rx.2,197,000; in 1887, by Rx.2,289,000; and in 1889 the estimated increase was Rx.2,989,000, or, in round numbers, Rx.3,000,000. That was a dead loss for which the Government was not responsible, and which alone would amply account for the present unfortunate position of Indian finance. He hoped he had said enough to convince the House that the present Government—he would go as far as to say the Government which preceded them—was not responsible for the deficit of which the hon. Member complained. To put the position of the Government clearly before the House, he must point out that these recurring deficits which were complained of were not really any cause of anxiety with reference to the finances of India. He did not wish, however, to disguise the fact that in the present financial year their position was not very satistory. After the observations which had been made as to the customary optimism of officials at that Table, he would state the facts about this matter that hon. Members might judge them for themselves. During the last 13 years there had been six years of surplus, showing altogether a surplus of Rx.10,123,118. During the same period there had been seven years of deficit, showing a total deficit of Rx.18,993,675. So that during the last 13 years the deficits had amounted to Rx.8,870,557, or a little more than the figures given by the hon. Member. But in considering that deficit it should be remembered what exceptional charges had been paid by the Indian Government out of revenue during that period. In the first place, Rx.15,338,960 had been paid out of revenue for military operations. Then they had paid for famine relief and famine insurance no less a sum than Rx.16,589,055. Of that sum Rx.8,664,463 had been spent in actual relief of famine, and Rx.4,259,747 in construction of protective works, and Rx.3,664,845 in reduction of debt. It was not correct, therefore, to say that during the period of prosperity no provision had been made by the Government of India against famine. Provision had been made by the Government in the shape of insurance against famine, so long as it did not involve additional taxation to do so. It was only last year that the Government found it impossible to make such insurance without laying additional taxation on the people—an expedient they would not have recourse to. The Government had constructed out of revenue further railways to the amount of Rx. 6,582,744. On special defence works they had spent Rx.1,045,200. They had also spent a sum of Rx.1,140,000 in converting the Four per Cent India Stock into Three-and-aHalf per Cent—an operation performed last year under the authority of the House, and the effect of which would be a great and permanent saving to the Revenue of India. The total sum which they had thus spent was Rx.40,695,959; and but for this exceptional expenditure made out of revenue, the 13 years, instead of showing a deficit, would have shown a surplus of Rx.31,825,402. That was a very good account. But that was not all. If it had not been for the alteration in the rate of exchange these figures would have been enormously increased. In 1875-6, before the fall in the value of the rupee began to take place, the net charge for exchange on expenditure in England was Rx.1,434,486. In 1887-8 it was estimated at Rx.5,779,400. If the exchange had remained at the same rate as it was in 1875-6, the charge on the revenue during the remaining 12 years would have been less by Rx.23,301,608, and the net deficit of Rx.8,870,557 would have been converted into a net surplus of Rx.14,431,051. Then, again, if they reckoned the normal expenditure and excluded the extraordinary fall in exchange and the exceptional expenditure of Rx.40,695,959, the surplus of the 13 years would have been Rx.55,127,010. These were hard figures, and he thought that the consideration of them showed that we had no right to complain of our financial position in India. There was one thing more which he wished to refer to, and that was the debt. During the 13 years of which so much complaint had been made, the ordinary debt of the Government of India had been enormously reduced. He said the ordinary debt, because the debt might be divided into two parts—one, the debt for military expenditure, famine, and the other purposes for which all civilized Governments incurred debt; the other, the productive debt, which was incurred for railways and public works, which was not, properly speaking, a burden to the State at all, but which was invested at a profit so as to assist the revenue. Although the whole debt of India had increased enormously, that part which was not profitably invested had greatly decreased. In 1875-6 the ordinary debt was Rx.102,224,000, and the productive debt was Rx.16,223,000. In 1887 the ordinary debt had fallen to Rx.74,888,000, and the public works debt had increased to Rx.102,061,000, so that the reduction of the ordinary debt for the 13 years was Rx.27,336,000. The cause of the burden of debt to a country was the interest it had to pay. For her ordinary debt India used to pay Rx.4,442,300 in 1875-6; in 1887-8 she paid Rx.4,025,100, making a reduction of Rx.417,200 for the charge of the ordinary debt. For public works in 1875-6 the charge was Rx.973,100; in 1887-8 it grew to Rx.4,343,300, or an increase in the charge for the productive debt of Rx.3,370,200. The result of the investment of this large sum in public works was that for the railways the net charge in 1875-6 was Rx.1,558,760, and in 1887-8 it was Rx.1,589,400, showing an increase of Rx.30,640. But had it not been for exchange, on which there was an increase of Rx.1,485,800, the railway account would have shown an improvement of Rx.1,455,200. For irrigation the net charge in 1875-6 was Rx.1,147,000; in 1887-8 it was Rx.753,300, showing an improvement of Rx.393,700. Thus, interest on ordinary debt gave an improvement of Rx.417,200, the result of irrigation gave Rx.393,700—total, Rx.810,900, against which were to be set railways worse by Rx.30,600, leaving a net improvement of Rx.780,300. It appeared, then, that there was a relief in the burden of the debt of India of Rx.3,000,000 if exchange was omitted. Therefore, though there was an unhappy deficit in the revenue of the present year, the gloomy views of the hon. Member for Flintshire were not borne out by the facts of the case. It was said that one of the expedients of the Government for meeting the deficit was the exhaustion of the Famine Fund. As the House knew, it was determined some years ago that out of the Revenue of India the Government should set aside £1,500,000 as a kind of insurance fund against famine. But railways were calculated to prevent famine and pay off the debt. The provision made for the Famine Fund was an extremely wise one; but would the hon. Member go so far as to say that the Government of India should raise this £1,500,000 by putting on additional taxation? The hon. Member found fault with the Salt Tax, and he said the only alternative to that tax would be an import duty on manufactured goods. He doubted whether the House would be disposed to agree to an import duty on manufactured goods. That would certainly be an expedient which could only be resorted to in the last extremity, and one which he did not anticipate that the state of the Revenues of India would ever render necessary. The Salt Tax had been the subject of a good deal of what he might term ignorant opposition. It was to be noted that the Vernacular Press, which the hon. Gentleman who had brought forward this subject regarded as expressing the voice of the people of India, was, on the whole, in favour of this proposal to raise the Salt Tax. It had struck him that possibly an explanation of this might be found in the fact that the editors and proprietors of the Vernacular Press belonged to the educated class, who recognized that the only alternative to the increase of the Salt Tax was an increase in the Income Tax. It should be borne in mind that the present proposal was only to restore the tax to the figure which existed prior to March, 1882, when it was two and a-half rupees throughout India, having in some Provinces been higher than that previously. It was reduced to two rupees in March, 1882, and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, who was a Member of Council when that was done, had given an explanation of the circumstances under which that reduction took place. Sir Evelyn Baring, in his Financial Statement in 1882, gave the following important explanation, which he should like to read to the House. He said—

"In answering, therefore, the question of how far we may safely take off taxes in reliance on the opium revenue, a great deal depends on the nature of the tax we take off. If we abandon a source of revenue which involves a permanent and absolute loss of money, and which, moreover, from whatsoever reason, it would be difficult, in the event of the opium revenue failing, to restore to its former position, then the course would be open to great objection. If, on the other hand, we reduce a duty with a fair hope that the reduction will increase consumption, and thus, after a while, recoup us for any loss, and if, moreover, the duty can, without any great fiscal disturbance, be re-imposed in the event of the opium revenue falling off, then the reduction of taxation would be unobjectionable. The Salt Duty falls within the latter of these two categories. I have said that, by reducing the Salt Duty, the general financial position will be strengthened. We hope that we shall be able to maintain the duty at two rupees a maund, and we have at present no reason to suppose that we shall be unable to do so. By a return to a higher rate we should, of course, to some extent at all events, sacrifice the main object we have in view—namely, to afford some relief from taxation to the poorest classes. At the same time, I should observe that if any unforeseen circumstance, such as a heavy fall in the value of silver, takes place, and if, at the same time, the reduction in the Salt Duty does not result in any considerable increase in the consumption of salt, it would be open to us to return temporarily to a higher rate. This is an expedient to which the Government would have recourse with great reluctance. I allude, however, to the possibility of its adoption, for it is clear that, should an emergency arise of a nature to diminish our other sources of revenue or to increase our expenditure, we shall be in a better position to meet it if the Salt Duty is two rupees a maund than if it were levied at a higher rate."

It was clear, therefore, that had Sir Evelyn Baring foreseen that there would be not only a heavy fall in silver, but also that the opium revenue, in reliance upon which the Salt Tax had been diminished, would itself fall off, he would have agreed in the expediency of a temporary rise in the Salt Tax. It must not be supposed that he (Sir John Gorst) appeared as an enthusiastic defender of the Salt Tax. That tax had been increased by the Government of India as the only expedient to meet the difficulties of the moment, with the assent of the Secretary of State, and on the unanimous advice of his Council. At the same time, it had been increased with the greatest reluctance. The Secretary of State was fully conscious of the necessity of strengthening the position and powers of the Finance Department, and long before it was decided to increase the tax on salt steps had been taken to bring the whole subject under the consideration of the Government of India with a view to strengthening the control over the finances. It was right, he thought, that an exaggerated view of this increase of taxation should not be allowed to get current, and it should not be supposed that a tax had been imposed that would grind the inhabitants of India to the dust. The increase in the tax was equal to about one-eighth of 1*d.* per lb., and as the average consumption per head was about 10lb. in the year, it really came to a tax of about 1½*d.* per head in the year. It might be a tax one would gladly abolish; but it was one that could safely be adopted as a temporary expedient without being condemned in the strong language which some of those who were little acquainted with the difficulties of the Government of India made use of. There remained only one other point, and that was the question of an inquiry into the Administration of India. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment, in describing what he wanted, seemed to him to describe almost exactly the Public Service Commission of last year. The hon. Member for North Kensington was pleased to find great fault with that Commission. That Commission consisted of six Covenanted servants, one Uncovenanted, six Natives, of whom one was a Judge of the High Court, and three independent persons. That seemed to him a Commission which really answered the description which the hon. Member for Flintshire gave of what he required. That Commission sat in all the principal parts of India and heard evidence, and their Report had just been presented and would be immediately considered by the Secretary of State in Council. In these circumstances he, of course, could not as yet express any opinion upon the contents of the Report. Whether it would be expedient to have any inquiry in this country was a matter for consideration. Instead of neglecting the wishes of India, the Government had been taking the best steps to arrive at a knowledge of the wishes of the people. The Mover of the Amendment appeared to think that in the Speech from the Throne two years ago a promise was made to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the condition of India. This, however, was an error on the hon. Member's part, for the Speech contained no such promise. It was true that the late Government proposed to appoint a Committee, and when they came into Office the present Government would have been quite willing to carry the proposal into execution. But just before the late Government left Office they ordered the appointment of the Public Service Commission, and the present Secretary of State felt that while a Commission of that kind was sitting it would be idle to ask a Royal Commission or a Committee in this country to inquire simultaneously into Indian affairs. He trusted that the hon. Member for Flintshire would not press his Amendment to a Division. Even if the Amendment were carried the interests of the people of India would not in any way be furthered, and the vote would not be a Vote of Censure upon the present Government, but upon the last and last but one.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said, hon. Members need not be afraid that at that late hour of the night (1 o'clock) he should trouble them with many observations. But one or two points had been raised in the course of the debate in respect to which he felt bound to say a word or two. Perhaps, he might in the first place, be allowed to say that he thought the House felt thankful to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) for the spirit in which he had addressed himself to the subject of his Amendment. He sympathized strongly with the spirit which animated the hon. Gentleman's speech, and he was sure many Members of the House would feel that it was well for the future of India that the grievances and complaints of certain sections of the Native population of India should find kindly and sympathetic expression from such Members of the House as the late Mr. Fawcett, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg). The House would always listen with attention to such advocates of the feelings of any section of the Native population of India. After the debate of that night it must be quite evident to the millions of our fellow-subjects in India that there was no fear that that House or this country would ever regard India merely as a mine of wealth, or merely as a source of trade and profit to England. He might also congratulate his hon. Friend on the interesting statement he had elicited from the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst); but he hoped that after the debate and after the statement of the hon. Gentleman his hon. Friend would not think it necessary to divide the House. He (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) did not intend to dwell long upon the question of the deficit and the Salt Tax. The House would have observed that the Under Secretary guarded very carefully what he said about the Salt Tax. He had told them that the Government did not regard the Salt Tax with enthusiasm. He (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) was not surprised at that statement. But he doubted whether the Government were yet in possession of all the views of the Government of India for raising the Salt Tax, or of the views of the Natives on the subject. When the time came for the introduction of the Indian Budget they would have very much fuller information, and it would be much more useful to take a discussion on the question at that time. At the present moment, in the absence of full information, it would not be proper for the House to agree to an Amendment to the Address which might be read in India as a condemnation of the policy of the present Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. Lord Dufferin had great claims upon the consideration of the House—every Viceroy had such claims; but he (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) urged the special claims of Lord Dufferin as an able and popular Viceroy of India, and one who had served his country with great distinction in various parts of the world. He would not go through the various causes of the deficit which had been stated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Evesham Division of Worcestershire (Sir Richard Temple); but there was one point which was referred to by the Under Secretary for India (Sir John Gorst) to which he must allude. Amongst the causes of the deficits, the hon. Gentleman mentioned the increase of the Army charges, and said that successive Governments were responsible. He was not quite sure that that was a fair statement; because he did not understand that the late Government, whose views it might be supposed that he (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) in some measure represented, were in any degree responsible for the large increase in the Army charges. The late Secretary of State for India (Lord Kimberley) more than doubted the expediency of the action of his Predecessor in augmenting the European Forces in India to the large number of 70,000 men; therefore, he must utter one word of protest against any attempt to make all Governments responsible for the increase in the Army charges. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) was mainly, perhaps wholly, responsible for the increase of the Army charges. He would pass on to say one word about the Salt Tax. As a matter of fact, the *onus probandi* of justifying any increase of the Salt Tax rested with the Government of India. He said this, for the reason that it had always been the recognized policy of the Government of India to regard the increase of the Salt Tax as a reserve for great emergencies. The hon. Gentleman opposite had quoted the words of Sir Evelyn Baring, which pointed to the possibility of recourse to the Salt Tax in case of a diminution of the opium revenue, and in case of a largely increased charge in respect of exchange; but he (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) reminded the House that it had been held by the Government of India in times past that besides an increase of the Salt Tax there was no other financial recourse for great emergencies except loans. It was a very serious step, in times of peace, to have recourse to an increase of the Salt Tax, which had always been regarded as a reserve to which the Government might have recourse in case of great emergency—in case of war or famine. Therefore, he joined in the regret expressed by his hon. Friend (Mr. S. Smith) in respect to the increase of the Salt Tax, although he would not go so far as to vote for the Amendment, which seemed to condemn, without full information, a step taken by the Government of Lord Dufferin. In regard to the proposal to institute an inquiry, he noticed that the hon. Gentleman (Sir John Gorst), although he had before him the Report of the Public Service Commission—and there he had an advantage over the House generally—guarded himself from promising on behalf of the present Government to have an inquiry like that which was proposed by the late Government and its predecessor. He did not know that he was called upon at that moment to express any opinion upon that hesitation on the part of the present Government; but he would say that if there was to be an inquiry, he sympathized with the objections which were urged against a Commission as compared with a Parliamentary inquiry. All the precedents were in favour of a Parliamentary inquiry. All the inquiries which had been held at the successive epochs, when the Charter to the East India Company was renewed, were Parliamentary inquiries. It was a question, not of inquiry into the Civil Service, which had already been inquired into by the Commission to which reference had been made, but an inquiry into other large parts of the subject. It was a question of inquiry into the machinery of government. That was a Parliamentary question, and it did seem to him that such an inquiry should be held here in Parliament. He observed that the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) condemned the proposals which had been submitted to the House in the past—he supposed the proposal he (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) had to submit two years ago was included in the condemnation—as proposals for inquiries by present and past officials only. [SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: Chiefly.] That was a very different allegation, but he was not quite sure that the hon. Gentleman was correct even there, because he had before him the Notice which he gave in the House. From that Notice he found that the part of the Joint Committee nominated by the House of Commons was to consist of 16 Members, seven or eight of whom were not official Members, eight of whom never held office in India, and seven of whom never held office at all. Therefore the hon. Gentleman's statement was misleading, so far as the proposal he (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) had intended to make if he had had an opportunity. He could assure his hon. Friend (Mr. S. Smith) that he and many of those who had responsibilities in the late Government sympathized with the general spirit of the Amendment, but they could not support it, because it might appear to reflect upon the present Viceroy of India, and upon the Government of India, and might be taken to condemn the policy of the Viceroy and his Government. He hoped, therefore, the hon. Gentleman would not divide the House, but be content with the interesting debate he had raised, and the interesting statement he had elicited from the Under Secretary of State for India.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, that while sympathizing with the object the hon. Gentleman (Mr. S. Smith) had in view he could not support the Amendment, for the reasons which had been already mentioned. It seemed to him that the Amendment, as it stood on the Paper, would be regarded as a censure upon that illustrious man, Lord Dufferin, a man to whom, as the right hon. Baronet (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) had said, this country was very deeply indebted. He rose simply to express the earnest hope that though the Government of India found it necessary to raise the tax on salt, the next Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, and his Government, would take the earliest opportunity of reducing the impost. The Salt Tax was a tax on the food of the people. It was a tax which weighed heavily on the poorer classes of the population. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India (Sir John Gorst) said that the extra tax only amounted to 1½*d.* per head; but 1½*d.* was a large amount for some of the people to pay. He therefore hoped the Government would take the earliest opportunity of reducing the tax to its former level of two rupees.

MR. S. SMITH said, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment, and must express his gratification at the debate. He also begged to thank the Under Secretary for India (Sir John Gorst) for the courtesy of his reply, though he wished the hon. Gentleman had gone a little further and had granted a Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Dr. Cameron,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877, so far as relates to certain Judges, and to the office of the Accountant General; and for other purposes connected therewith."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland should make some statement in connection with this measure. In his opinion, if this was the measure of last year, it would fall entirely short of what was required. He submitted to the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), who, he knew, understood the matter, that some of the Judges might well be employed in settling law points in connection with land cases. They had three and sometimes four Judges sitting on motions; but if a man was going to be tried for his life there was only one Judge. It was easy to state a case in which, under present circumstances, the settlement of a law point was delayed for years. There were four Judges each receiving £3,500 a-year, sitting, as he had said, on motions. He submitted that where they had a great run of land cases the Government ought to divert some of the strength of the Judicial Bench to enable law points to be decided summarily. While he was in favour, to some extent, of some of the reform which he gathered was to be effected by the Bill, he considered there was sufficient judicial work in connection with land cases at the present time—it might only be of a temporary character—to employ the Judges, if the strength of the Bench was properly divided. The Irish Land Commission sat in Dublin only two days a-week, sometimes only two days a fortnight, and then they went off to the counties. At such times there were no means of having law points in land cases decided, because the Commissioners were away in the country. When they had a large judicial staff it might be so arranged that some of the Judges should be employed in deciding preliminary law points. Of course, the Judges knew no more about the value of land than the majority of people, but law points could be referred to them, and thus a Land Court could always be sitting. Under the circumstances, he trusted the Government would be able to see their way to provide some machinery to effect this object. He submitted that some little time should be given for the consideration of the point he had raised.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, that any observations from the hon. and learned Gentleman upon legal points well deserved the consideration of the Government, but he was very unwilling to extend unnecessarily the scope of the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman complained of a block in the Land Court. He was perfectly aware there had been a delay in the fixing of judicial rents; but he was not aware of any block in respect to the settlement of legal points. If that was so, there was clearly nothing to be gained by extending the legal part of the Land Court. But if the hon. and learned Gentleman would communicate further with him, either by putting down Amendments to the Bill or otherwise, he would be glad.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, his experience was that on Tuesdays and Fridays there were lists of 40 cases, many of which cases were never reached. Undoubtedly there was a block in the Land Court in respect to legal points.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Colonel King-Harman.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 131.]

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases." — (*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the hon. and learned Attorney General if he intends to apply this Bill to Ireland?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Yes.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In spite of the pledge of last year?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: There was no pledge given last year.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, and Mr. Solicitor General.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. King, Bill to amend " The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. King, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. White, Sir John Puleston, Lord Claud Hamilton, Admiral Field, and Mr. Bond.

Bill *presented,*and read the first time. [Bill 133.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER (INDIA) BILL.

On Motion of Sir William Plowden, Bill to alter and amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister in British India, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir William Plowden, Dr. Farquharson, and Viscount Baring.

Bill *presented,*and read the first time, [Bill 134.]

PAUPER LUNATICS' ASYLUMS (IRELAND) (OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Johnston, Bill to amend the Law relating to the superannuation of officers and servants of Pauper Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Johnston and Mr. Chance.

Bill *presented,*and read the first time. [Bill 135.]

LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINANTS.

Return *ordered,* " of Correspondence on the subject of Lighthouse Illuminants (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 282, of Session 1887.—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

House adjourned at half after One o'clock,

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 21st February, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SAT FIRST IN PARLIAMENT—The Earl Russell, after the death of his grandfather.

PUBLIC BILL—*Referred to Select Committee*—Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services (3).

TRURO CATHEDRAL FABRIC AND SERVICES BILL.—(No. 3.)

(*The Lord Steward.*)

SELECT COMMITTEE.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*The Lord Steward.*)

EARL STANHOPE said, that if the Motion were agreed to he should move—

> " That it be an instruction to the Committee to consider the best means for providing for the maintenance and for the services of the Cathedral Church of Truro."

He desired to warn the promoters of the Bill of the inexpediency of requiring the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to contribute out of their funds £3,000 a-year towards the maintenance of the Cathedral. The whole matter should be fully considered by the Committee, as this was the first Bill presented to Parliament for such a purpose. If the Commissioners were compelled to pay this large sum annually, it would be impossible for them to continue to augment small livings, of which they had augmented upwards of 5,500 since 1840. He trusted that the Committee would find that a portion of the sums which were now in the hands of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter could be made available for the maintenance of Truro Cathedral. It seemed but fair that the new diocese, which took one-third from Exeter Diocese, should be subsidized by the mother diocese.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON (Dr. TEMPLE) said, that the Bill was read a second time without the great body of the Bishops having had an opportunity of examining its provisions; he, therefore, hoped that the noble Earl's suggestions would be fully considered. He might point out that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners not only applied their funds to the purpose of augmenting small livings, but also provided for the endowment of new parishes. In London and other parts of the country there was a constant formation of new parishes, and it was with very great effort that the money was raised to build churches for them. This was very often accomplished at the cost of large personal sacrifices by the clergy in the faith that when the church was erected and a congregation collected the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would be prepared to give an endowment for the clergymen. To interfere with work of that kind would be a very serious matter; and the proposal contained in the Bill would, he feared, have that effect. He trusted, therefore, that the Select Committee would be empowered to consider whether the object which the promoters of the Bill had in view could not be attained without making any large demand upon the fund of the Commissioners. This was the first time that Parliament had been asked to compel the Commissioners to grant moneys out of the funds under their control for this purpose. To dip into their funds for the endowment of new Cathedrals would amount to a reversal of the policy which had hitherto been pursued.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY (Dr. BENSON) said, he should support the Motion of the Lord Steward. The matter was one of the utmost importance, and should be fully considered. The Committee, he held, ought to inquire whether there were not other sums besides the Commissioners' fund which could be made available for the maintenance of Truro Cathedral. The county of Cornwall contained large estates given solely for Cathedral purposes, but the main portion of the revenue arising from those estates was not now expended in Cornwall at all, but went out of the county. Those revenues would probably increase. The Bishop of Exeter had parted with income in favour of the Bishop of Truro, and the example thus set might, as was suggested, be followed by the Dean and Chapter of Exeter in favour of the Cathedral services and fabric, if it were shown fairly that Exeter had been largely endowed with a view to Cornwall. They had, however, already given one canonry to Truro. It should be remembered that at Truro everything had to be done when the new See was established, for there was neither cathedral nor endowment. The case of Truro was undoubtedly unique. It was urged that other new Dioceses might make similar claims. But, of those Dioceses, one had no Cathedral or Chapter at all. Another started with a magnificent Church, which was sufficient for a Cathedral. The great Minster of another had been actually restored by the Commissioners without any charge to the Diocese. Truro alone had absolutely nothing to begin with; but it had raised £113,000 from many thousands of contributors. In another, which, it was said, did very well without a Dean or Chapter, there was a certain noble neighbour who annually expended a vast sum on the fabric, and was himself *instar omnium.* Truro, therefore, stood alone. And it did seem as if there was in this case as good a claim to help as existed in the case of parish churches erected by the people at a cost involving much sacrifice.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *referred* to a Select Committee accordingly.

Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Committee to consider the best means for providing for the maintenance and for the services of the Cathedral Church of Truro."—(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, he might point out that the Motion was unnecessary, as the Committee would have power without it of taking into consideration the matters to which the proposed Instruction referred. Besides, it was against the Orders of the House to instruct a Select Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that the Instruction was outside the scope of the Bill, and was irregular.

EARL STANHOPE said, that under those circumstances he should withdraw the Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

THEATRES—BURNING OF THE EXETER THEATRE—REPORT OF CAPTAIN SHAW.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they would lay on the Table the Report of Captain Shaw, Chief of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, relative to the calamitous fire which took place at Exeter Theatre last autumn? said, that on a former occasion, when a Report by Captain Shaw was asked for, the answer was that the Report was obsolete, and on another occasion the answer to a similar request made by himself was that it was made too soon. He hoped that this time he was neither too soon nor too late, for he had striven to discover the *juste milieu.* It was very desirable that the Report relative to the Exeter fire should be made public, both in view of promised legislation and as a warning to the proprietors and managers of Metropolitan theatres. The public, he thought, did not share the confidence expressed the other day by the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Lord Magheramorne), who told their Lordships that the safety of London theatres had been vastly increased of late. The statement that Captain Shaw's Report on the London theatres was of an alarming character, and that its publication would be likely to cause something like a panic, was not reassuring; and the fact that the improvements said to have been effected had been made under the inspection of a gentleman with regard to whose method of conducting the business of his department such startling revelations had recently been made did not tend to strengthen public confidence. It was true the noble Lord the Chairman of the Board said that he had personally visited the theatres; but the noble Lord had no special qualification as a fireman or an expert on these matters, and therefore the public could not attach to his inspection the same importance they would attach to a Report by a man of such great experience as Captain Shaw. The best thing to do now would be to ask Captain Shaw to revise the Report and bring it down to date, and then the publication of it could have only a reassuring and useful effect on the public mind, if, as stated by the noble Lord, the causes of danger which had been pointed out had since been removed. He presumed, however, that Captain Shaw's Report upon the Exeter Theatre could be produced without inconvenience or objection.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): The Government will be happy to lay the Report asked for by the noble Earl on the Table of the House.

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
till Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 21st February, 1888.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Deptford Borough, *v.* William John Evelyn, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

NEW MEMBER SWORN—Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, *for* Edinburgh Burgh (West Division).

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading* — London City Tithes (St. Botolph Without, Aldgate).*

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Intermediate Education (Wales) (No. 2) * [136]; Steam Engines and Boilers * [137]; Municipal Franchise (Belfast) [138]; Wages (Ireland) [139]; Solicitors (Ireland) * [140].

QUESTIONS.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS — SUBWAY BETWEEN GREENWICH AND BLACKWALL.

MR. BOORD (Greenwich) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether any step has yet been taken by the Metropolitan Board of Works, under the powers conferred upon them by their Act of last Session, towards commencing the subway between Greenwich and Blackwall; and, whether notices have been given to the owners and occupiers of the lands required for the works?

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that negotiations had been commenced with the owners of the largest properties, and notices had been served on the owners and occupiers of other property. The negotiations had now assumed a favourable turn, and it was to be expected that the work would begin shortly.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — ROYAL HOLLOWAY COLLEGE.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the hon. Member for Penrith, Whether he is aware that the deed of foundation of the Royal Holloway College expressly provides that no arrangement shall be made which would identify the College in any way with any particular sect or denomination of Christians; whether the Charity Commissioners have, notwithstanding such provision, appointed, as the first Governors of the College, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Dean of Windsor, the Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester, and nine others, who are all members of the Church of England; whether the deed of foundation further provides that the lady principal's age at the time of her appointment must not exceed 40 years; whether the Charity Commissioners have, nevertheless, authorized the Governors, with the consent of the Comsioners, to appoint any person lady principal, or a resident female Professor or teacher, notwithstanding that her age may exceed 40; and whether a lady principal above that age has been appointed; and, whether the Commissioners will lay before Parliament such Papers as will show what were the proceedings which led to such action on their part, as well as the grounds on which they so acted?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The statement contained in the first paragraph is substantially correct. The Charity Commissioners have appointed the gentlemen mentioned in the second paragraph; but they are not aware of the religious views of the nine gentlemen specially referred to. Seven out of the nine Governors mentioned were originally suggested by the Founder himself. The whole number were selected by the Trustees of the Founder, and were appointed by the Charity Commissioners on their application. The two Trustees appointed by the Founder are members of his family, and were also the executors of his will, and were presumably well qualified to carry out his wishes. Public notice was duly given of the names of the Governing Body proposed to be appointed, and no objection was taken to any of them. Among those appointed were Earl Granville, Lord Thring, and the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). The statement contained in the third paragraph is correct. After considerable investigation, the Governors applied to the Commissioners for an order for a scheme modifying the restriction as to age. After obtaining the approval of the Founder's representatives, the Commissioners agreed to make the Order, and public notice of their proposed Order was given. Subsequently the Order amending the scheme was made, and public notice was given that the Order had been made. The Governors thereupon appointed a lady above the age referred to as principal of the College; and, after public notice had been given by the Commissioners of their proposed approval to the appointment, and no objections having been made, the appointment was confirmed. I regret that I am unable to comply with the request of the hon. Member contained in the last paragraph; but I shall be glad to furnish him with any further information on the subject that he may desire either publicly or privately.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, that he was the eighth Governor, and had been appointed in succession to the late Mr. Samuel Morley, who had been nominated by the Founder. He had often been solicited, when Vice President of the Committee of Council, during the Founder's lifetime, but was unable to serve.

ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC—RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN TONGA.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Chief Commissioner of the Pacific Islands is satisfied that the persecution of the Wesleyans in Tonga has ceased; whether the engagements of the Native Government are being fulfilled; and, whether he will lay further Papers upon the Table?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): In the last despatch, which was received from Sir Charles Mitchell on the 10th of January, he stated—

> "I see no reason to doubt that Mr. Baker is—as far as in him lies—using his influence with the King to make him fulfil the letter—if not entirely the spirit—of the promises made in April last."

I trust, therefore, that the persecution has ceased, and that the Native Government will fulfil its engagements. As regards the return of the deported Wesleyans, Sir Charles Mitchell, in June last, reported that, if applied to for advice by these people, he would unhesitatingly recommend them not to return to Tonga until sufficient time had elapsed to allow of recent political and religious excitement to subside; but I have pressed upon Sir John Thurston, the new High Commissioner, the expediency of accelerating their return to Tonga. Sir Charles Mitchell will be in England in April; and Her Majesty's Government will then be able to determine, with his assistance, what course it may be most for the advantage of the Wesleyans to take. There are at present no further Papers which could usefully be given.

POST OFFICE—SUBSIDIES TO STEAM SHIPPING COMPANIES.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Postmaster General, Whether Post Office subsidies are given to Steam Shipping Companies without stipulating that the vessels and their engines shall be entirely British built, British manned, and British commanded; and whether all other great nations carefully insert such stipulations before granting mail contracts or subsidies?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It has not been the practice of the Post Office, in making ocean mail contracts, to impose conditions such as those indicated by my hon. Friend, nor do I think that they are generally imposed by Foreign Governments in making similar contracts. On the contrary, I have reason to believe that some of the finest foreign mail steamers are British built. Our practice is to require contractors to provide good, substantial, and efficient steam vessels of adequate power and speed. In regard to the equipment and manning of contract mail ships, the conditions are such as those demanded by the Acts for regulating the Merchant Service.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT — COTTAGES—THE RATHDRUM BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that two years ago the Rathdrum Board of Guardians appointed a solicitor under the Labourers' Act at a remuneration of £160 a-year, determinable at three months' notice; how many cottages have been sanctioned by the Guardians, how many have been erected, and how much money has been paid to the solicitor for his services; whether, in consequence of the persistent delay and negligence of the solicitor so appointed, he was dismissed by the Board on the 1st day of February; whether advertisements were then issued by the Guardians, inviting other solicitors to send in proposals for the vacant office; whether, although a number of highly-qualified solicitors sent in proposals to the meeting of the Guardians on the 15th instant, the solicitor so previously dismissed for gross negligence was, by the votes of the *ex officio* Guardians, as against an equal number of the elected Guardians, retained to conduct the proceedings under the Labourers' Act; whether the Local Government Board (Ireland) will sanction the retention of this official; and, whether he is aware that during the same period the Wexford Union has completed 190 cottages?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It appears from the Report of the Clerk to the Rathdrum Union that the facts are substantially as stated in the first, third, fourth, and seventh paragraphs of the Question, except that the rate of salary was £165 a-year, and the date of removal from office the 20th of January last. The solicitor, however, alleged that his delay was caused by a failure of one of the Guardians' officers to furnish him with certain necessary information; 85 cottages have been sanctioned, 10 erected, and two are in course of erection. The amount of salary payable for the period to the solicitor was £316 5*s*. Seven solicitors, including the former holder of the office, applied for the vacancy in response to an advertisement; and on the 15th of February the latter was re-elected by a majority of one vote, apparently on the ground that his terms were the lowest, and that it would be undesirable to change solicitors during proceedings still pending; 20 Guardians voted for him, six of whom were elected Guardians. The Guardians' Minutes relative to this re-election did not reach the Local Government Board until Saturday last. They will give the matter their careful consideration.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SCHEDULES OF PRICES.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state the date on which the Inspectors appointed by the Land Commission under "The Irish Land Act, 1887," were directed to have their Schedules of prices of produce in their respective districts returned to the Land Commission, and what were the different articles of produce mentioned in the Schedules; and, whether he will give a Return to the House of the particulars of the different Schedules furnished by these Inspectors?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: With regard to the subject of this Question generally, I would beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply to a somewhat similar Question asked on the 16th February. I may add, however, that from a special Report made by the Land Commissioners to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, which has been sent forward for presentation, and will probably be laid before the House this day, I find that the investigations of the scrutineers of prices were continued into December, so that, as far as possible, the prices of the entire year of 1887 might be taken into account; and also that an apparently comprehensive Schedule of articles was brought before the scrutineers, with instructions that any of the articles mentioned and not produced to a reasonable extent might be omitted, prominence being given to the articles chiefly produced in each district.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—EXTRA CAPITATION GRANT—CAMP ALLOWANCE.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) (for Sir John Kennaway) (Devon, Honiton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, seeing that the time has arrived for Commanding Officers of Volunteers to send in applications for leave to form camps, he can now state if extra payment out of the Capitation Grant to men for camp allowance will be sanctioned under the new Regulations?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I may say generally that I am prepared to withdraw the objection which was stated last year to extra payments out of the Capitation Grant to men for camp allowance; but the exact terms of the new Regulations are not yet settled.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTS.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a reply from the Lord Chancellor relative to the defective arrangements connected with the holding of County Courts in Suffolk; and, whether he has any further information to give?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir. The Lord Chancellor has forwarded to me a letter from the Judge of the County Court in question. The Judge states that he is not aware of any dissatisfaction having been caused in Suffolk by the fixing of inconvenient dates, and that the Courts are fixed as nearly as possible for the same days in each month at times most suitable for the convenience of the public and of the Profession. The duty of posting notices rests with the Registrar; and the Judge has received no complaint that the law has not been complied with in this respect. The Judge denies that the rule as to giving three months' notice has been habitually disregarded; as a rule, the dates are fixed three months beforehand, and communicated to the Registrar of the principal Court at Ipswich for distribution among the other Courts. The Judge also states that there is no foundation for the statement that the Court is sometimes kept waiting several hours for the appearance of the Judge. Only once does he remember any delay during the seven years that he has been at the Court, and that was due to a delay on the railway.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT) — THE NEW GUNS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the new 9·2 and 10-inch guns, which have failed under proof, are paid for in full by Government, as if the guns had proved to be sound ones?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Certainly not.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) asked, Whether it was not the case that a number of those guns were manufactured at the Royal Artillery Factory at Woolwich; whether some of those guns failed on proof, and had to be sent away; whether, also, a grave mistake had not been committed in ordering a gun from one maker and the carriage from another, and that the gun had turned out to be five tons too heavy for the carriage; and, also, whether a Return of the cost would be made to the House?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The House will at once see that Notice should be given of a Question of such magnitude, involving so many details. As far as I am concerned, there is very little, if any, truth in the statements contained in the Question.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) inquired Whether, if the guns were not paid for in full, any payment at all was made for them?

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that when contracts extended over one year and part of the work was done, advances were made to the contractors upon the work performed, the balance being paid on completion of the work; but there was an undertaking from the contractor that if the gun failed under proof a new one would be provided.

ARMY (INDIA)—COIR FIBRE BEDS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether coir fibre beds are used for the Indian Army, and for how long they have been so used; whether the use of coir fibre for beds instead of straw is less costly; and, whether the authorities and men are alike satisfied?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State is aware that coir fibre is used for beds in the Indian Army. Its use is a matter of local administration, within the discretion of the Government of India; and the Secretary of State has no official information as to its advantages.

POST OFFICE — ADDRESSES — "AND CO."

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, If he has inquired into the claim set up by the Department to refuse to deliver letters at the addressee's actual residence when the words "and Co." form part of the direction, unless the name of the firm is painted or shown upon the premises?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have now seen the case to which the hon. Member refers. It is not one of re-direction, but one in which the address of the letters appeared hardly to correspond with the place at which the business could be carried on; and it was under these circumstances that some indication of the business was required to be exhibited. No letters were, however, withheld from delivery. The hon. Member will, I think, agree that it is the duty of the Post Office to exercise special precautions for the protection of the public in any cases where there appeared to be such a doubt.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, Whether it was not the case that these particular letters had been detained for more than two days.

MR. RAIKES said, that they had been detained while inquiry was going on. It was necessary to make some such inquiry, to prevent the public from being deceived.

ARMY—THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON WARLIKE STORES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to adopt all or any of the principal recommendations of the recent Royal Commission on Warlike Stores—

namely, the appointment of a Commission to lay down a standard as to the amount of stores which shall be kept in hand for the Public Service; the publication of Annual Tables, showing how the existing stores stand in relation to that standard; and the publication by the Chief of the Ordnance Department of an annual statement, showing what stores he considers necessary for the Public Service during the current year?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Government have considered the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Warlike Stores to which my hon. Friend refers, and do not intend to propose the adoption of them. No Government in this country, or indeed in any other country, has ever published to the world the particulars of the stores which it has in hand; and we do not think it would be for the public interest to adopt that practice. The Commission recommended the revival of the office of Master General of the Ordnance. My hon. Friend must be aware that in the re-organization which has taken place at the War Office that recommendation has not been acted upon.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): inquired, Whether it was not a fact that a great proportion of the stores were obsolete and useless; and whether the Government had got a record of them, and were getting rid of such stores?

MR. E. STANHOPE: Yes, Sir; that is being gradually done. I know myself that the obsolete stores are being gradually got rid of.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Eviction Returns for the quarter ending September 30 and December 31, 1887, laid upon the Table of the House last week, include—those persons who have been reduced from the position of tenants to that of caretakers, by the substitution of a written notice for the execution of an ejectment, as provided by section 7 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887;" those persons who have been ejected or removed from possession as caretakers, whether they were caretakers created under section 7 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," or re-admitted as caretakers after eviction; and, if not, whether he will give the number of tenants reduced to the position of caretakers under the operation of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," and also the number of caretakers evicted during these two quarters?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Eviction Returns referred to do not include the cases mentioned arising out of the Act of last Session. A special Return, however, was presented to the House on the 9th of February (Parliamentary Paper No. 29) as to the number of eviction notices filed, which applies to the case of tenants reduced to the position of caretakers. With regard to the eviction of such caretakers, the Government are at present considering the means and the most convenient form in which reliable records can be made.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—TENANTS OF EVICTED FARMS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, in granting the Return of evicted farms in Ireland before and since the passing of the Criminal Law and Procedure Amendment (Ireland) Act, he will exclude (or show) those which have been re-let to the evicted tenants themselves or with their goodwill; and, would there be any difficulty in exhibiting in the Return, where re-lettings to anybody have been effected, the former and present rentals to which the respective occupiers were and are liable, or any differences in the old and new tenures, such as the granting of leases, statutory terms, &c., or exemption from rates, &c.?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I think that the hon. and learned Gentleman is labouring under a misconception on account of an interruption which I made during the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) on Friday. I believe that the right hon. Gentleman himself is also labouring under the same misunderstanding, and I have written to him privately. I do not think that the information asked for can be given in the form of a Return; but if the hon.

and learned Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper, I will give him, in the form of an answer, such information as I possess.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Did not the right hon. Gentleman state, at the time he answered a question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that he would give a Return showing the number of evicted farms at the time of the passing of the Coercion Act and subsequently? My point is that any such Return would be misleading, unless it shows how many of the evicted farms have been re-taken by the tenants themselves. Will the right hon. Gentleman state in what form it is proposed to enlighten the House on this point, which it is admitted is one of the material points in the working of the Coercion Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Information has been collected during the time of Earl Spencer, and since, giving a few of the derelict farms in Ireland; but I cannot hold out any hope of supplying the additional information asked for in the Question. If the hon. and learned Member will put down a Question I will give him an answer.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: May I ask whether, in case I put down a Motion for such a Return, the right hon. Gentleman will undertake that the Government Whip will not block it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I should be obliged to resist such a Motion as that, because I do not deem it a proper subject for a Return.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1870—COMPENSATION.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, would there be any difficulty in granting a Return, in a simpler form than that of 8th May, 1877 (No. 194), giving particulars of the amount of compensation awarded under the Land Act, 1870, for disturbance and for improvements annually to 1888, showing each county and province separately, and the total acreage affected?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The greater part of the information asked for will be found in the Annual Reports on Judicial Statistics which are presented to the House. If the hon. and learned Member will be so good as to communicate to me in writing any suggestions he may wish to make with regard to simplification of the forms of Return, I should be happy to confer with those concerned in the matter. It would not be practicable to give the acreage.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—CLERKS OF THE LOWER DIVISION — SALARY OF WRITERS PROMOTED.

MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the commencing salary of Civil Service Writers, promoted to be Clerks of the Lower Division under the terms of the Treasury Minute of the 22nd December, 1886, will be calculated on their average earnings for the three years previous to their promotion, similar averages having been allowed to writers promoted to the Lower Division under the Order in Council of the 12th February, 1876?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Civil Service copyists promoted to the Lower Division under the Treasury Minute of 1886 will enter it at the minimum salary of the Lower Division, and not on their average earnings for the last three years. The Committee of Public Accounts has expressed the opinion that it is not within the discretion of the Treasury to appoint men to the Lower Division at salaries higher than the minimum fixed by Order in Council.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—PRESS PROSECUTIONS.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statements in the Press are true that there will be no more Press prosecutions under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; whether, if so, the Government will order the immediate release of Mr. Corcoran, foreman printer of *The Cork Examiner,* imprisoned under the said Act, on a charge of publishing reports of speeches and meetings of proclaimed branches of the National League; and, whether, in future, working compositors will be exempted from prosecutions of this nature?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN)

(Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: There is no truth in the statement alluded to in the first paragraph of the Question. Mr. Corcoran was proceeded against, not as a working compositor, but as the registered printer and publisher of the newspaper that violated the law.

SCOTLAND—THE MAGISTRACY—THE SHERIFF OF SUTHERLAND.

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government are about to change the residence of the Sheriff Substitute of Sutherland from Tain to Golspie, and the Sheriff Court from Dornoch to Golspie; and, if so, whether he is aware that there is a strong feeling on the part of the people of Dornoch and district against the change?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, this matter had not yet been disposed of, but was receiving careful consideration. A Memorial against the proposal had been received from the people of Dornoch, and Memorials from other quarters in its favour.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSION FOR CO. DONEGAL.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state at what time there will be a sitting of the Sub-Commission for County Donegal to hear the fair rent applications entered from the union of Stranorlar; and, whether he is aware that a large number of tenants residing in this union had their originating notices served on the Land Commission before the gale day at November last, and, although entitled to the benefit of the judicial rent from the gale day next previous to the passing of "The Irish Land Act, 1887," they will be obliged to pay the old rent up to the date of the decision of the Commissioners?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: A Sub-Commission has been sitting in County Donegal since the 10th of January, and will continue there up to the end of April. I am making further inquiry in regard to the Stranorlar cases.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—CLERKS OF THE LOWER DIVISION.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Lords of the Treasury have lately sanctioned the promotion of about 50 Civil Service copyists in the various London offices to the Lower Division, under the Treasury Minute of December, 1886; whether it is intended to extend this privilege, at an early date, to copyists employed at the outposts, who may have been specially recommended to the Treasury at the same time; and, whether the 50 persons in London had a prior claim on account of seniority?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The Treasury has sanctioned promotion to the Lower Division of a certain number of copyists on the general register of the Civil Service Commissioners. The promotions were made with no reference to the place of employment of the copyists, whether in London or elsewhere. Some such copyists, employed under the Board of Customs at the outports, have been recommended to the Treasury; but in connection with this recommendation a general question as to the employment of copyists at the outports has arisen, and the two questions are still under consideration.

INDIA—THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Despatch of the Secretary of State, with reference to the block in promotion and other grievances of the Telegraph Department in India; whether any officers of the Department have as yet accepted the offer for retirement made in that Despatch; whether, under the system of grading instituted by that Despatch, and the abolition of the privilege hitherto in favour of officiating promotions being from grade to grade, many officers are mulcted of a large percentage of their emoluments, while the Government saves a very large sum; on what grounds permanent promotions are fixed by the Despatch to be made only twice a-year, on the 1st April and 1st October, and whether he is aware of any precedent for such a provision in any other service of the Crown; whether the fixing of the 31st March as the latest date for the submission of retirements has practically operated to take away the inducements for retirement in nearly all the cases, if not in every case, where retirement under the regulations of the Despatch would have offered any advantage; and, whether, in the circumstances, the Government will re-consider its proposals?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1) Yes; if the hon. Member will move for it, I will lay it on the Table. (2) None. (3) No officers are damaged, as the rights of all existing officers are safe-guarded. (4) No such provision is made in the Despatch. It was introduced by the Government of India; but no reasons for it have been communicated to the Secretary of State. (5) The date, the 31st of March, was fixed to give every officer ample time for consideration. The Secretary of State is not aware that the inducement to retire has been taken away thereby. (6) The Secretary of State will wait till the 31st of March before further considering the matter.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND)—KILLALOE.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in consequence of the vast numbers of salmon that have spawned in the River Shannon at Killaloe during the present season, prompt instructions will be given to the Board of Works in Ireland not to allow the flood gates at Killaloe to be too suddenly lowered, nor all at the same time, in order to save the ova and fry from the destruction committed last spring from this cause; and, whether the officer of the Board of Works at Killaloe will, before lowering the sluices, apprise the local elected Conservator of his intention to do so?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Member not having given Notice of this Question, I am unable to say more in reply to it than that his suggestion shall be conveyed to the Board of Works, who, I feel confident, will do all in their power to guard against any risks such as appear to be apprehended.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—CHECKWEIGHMEN.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is now in a position to state why John Churchill was removed from his position as checkweighman at Northwood Colliery, Staffordshire; and, whether such removal was in accordance with the spirit of the Mines Act of last Session?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have seen a newspaper report of this case, from which I gather that the stipendiary was satisfied that the checkweighman in question had at the mine, to the detriment of the owners, acted in matters beyond his functions as checkweighman, and accordingly removed him. I have no power to interfere with this decision. So far as I am informed, it was within the jurisdiction of the stipendiary magistrate to make the order under section 13, (4) and (5), of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887. The spirit of that Act was to give the checkweighman full powers and facilities for the performance of his proper functions, and to confine him to those functions.

MR. FENWICK asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether he was aware that the checkweigher at this colliery had had for several years full liberty from the employers to post up notices calling meetings of the workmen together?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; I am not informed to that effect.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ORDINANCES IN CROWN COLONIES.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has any further Correspondence or information to communicate to the House with respect to the steps taken for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Ordinances in the Crown Colonies?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): The Colonies in which repealing Ordinances have not yet been introduced in accordance with the Correspondence laid before Parliament last September are Malta, Ceylon, Straits Settlements, and

Hong Kong. As regards Malta, the new Council have not yet met, so that no legislation has been possible. Further Correspondence with the Governors of Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and Hong Kong have taken place on the subject, and I have not altered my decision in the case of any of those Colonies; but have sent the additional instruction to the Governor of Ceylon that, pending the introduction of the repealing Ordinance, if such should not be introduced in the current Session, the operation of the existing Ordinance should be suspended. A similar instruction had already been sent to the Governors of Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements. I should prefer not to present any further Correspondence until the remaining Ordinances, which are being prepared, are passed.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—THE DEPTFORD ELECTION.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) (for Mr. Gedge) (Stockport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Mr. Francis, the Hon. Secretary to Mr. Blunt's Election Committee, is the cashier at the Deptford Victualling Yard, and who has charge of the payment of the wages to the workmen at that establishment; if so, whether there is any similar regulation in the Admiralty Service to that which prevails in the Post Office Department prohibiting the active interference of its officials in political contests?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): I am informed that Mr. Andrews, and not Mr. Francis, is the Hon. Secretary to Mr. Blunt's Election Committee; and also that he is cash clerk in the Deptford Victualling Yard. The Dockyard Regulations forbid canvassing within the yard, or the exercise of any influence, direct or indirect, on the workmen employed in the establishment; and any official who takes such a part in a political contest as in any way infringes this Order would be liable to punishment.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Will that Regulation apply to Tory canvassers and agents as well as Liberals?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Of course. Whatever rules are laid down in connection with the Dockyard apply to all persons, no matter what their political opinions may be.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Is the noble Lord aware that in the recent contest at Winchester Tory canvassers were allowed to enter the barracks and canvass the soldiers, and Liberal canvassers were forbidden to go in?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The Question which the hon. Gentleman has put has nothing whatever to do with the Question on the Paper, and which I have answered.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: Am I to understand it is the fact that the Hon. Secretary of Mr. Blunt's Committee is the cashier?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: He is the cash clerk of Deptford Victualling Yard.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: Does he pay the men?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I believe so.

CITY OF LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES—THE RETURN.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can inform the House when the Report of the Commissioners under the City of London Parochial Charities Act (46 & 47 *Vict.* c. 36) will be issued; and what is the amount of money to be dealt with under the heads (a) and (b) respectively of Clause 13 of that Act?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) (who replied) said, the Report would be presented to Her Majesty in the usual course very shortly. If the hon. Member referred to the statements to be published by the Charity Commissioners under the said Act, he had to say that the last of the statements relating to parishes in the first Schedule was published on the 13th of May, 1887, and that the statements relating to parishes in the second Schedule were published on the 1st of October, 1887. He was unable to give the hon. Member information as to the amount of money to be dealt with under Clauses 13 and 14 of the Act, as many questions were still pending relating to the amount of the compensation to be given and temporary provisions to be made under the Act, which made it impossible to determine the total amount available for each parish under section 13 of the Act.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—THE CHIEF USIBEPU.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is able to confirm or deny a statement which appears in *The Cape Mercury* of 17th January, to the effect that the lately restored Zulu Chief Usibepu had attacked and driven away the people in a kraal of Dinizulu's; and, whether he will give the House the latest information from Zululand?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I have not yet seen the paper referred to, nor have I any reason to suppose that the report is correct. I am aware that a certain amount of friction has taken place between Usibepu and his followers on the one hand, and those Usutus who had settled down in Usibepu's territory since 1884; and I have taken steps to safeguard any legitimate interests which may have grown up during Usibepu's absence from his country. I may add that by a telegram of the 8th instant I learn that the followers of Dinizulu and Usibepu are dispersing, and that affairs generally are quieting down.

LIMITED LIABILITY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL—HOLDERS OF STOCK IN COMPANIES.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the opinions expressed by certain Lords Justices on Appeal, Her Majesty's Government will consider as to the desirability of introducing a clause into the Limited Liability Amendment Bill, releasing the holders of Stock in Companies, issued at a discount, from further liability beyond the price of issue, in all cases where registered contracts have been duly filed?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The matter referred to by the hon. Member is under the consideration of the Member of the Government in charge of the Limited Liability Amendment Bill; but I am unable to state what clauses will or will not be in a Bill which has not yet been introduced.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH PUBLIC WORKS — RAILWAY MISMANAGEMENT.

MR. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the Second Report of the Royal Commission upon Irish Public Works, where, amongst many illustrations given of defective railway management, the following paragraph appeared (page 50):—

> "In the County (Kilkenny) is a district which, in the opinion of professional and practical men, contains a large store of coal. . . . . . This coalfield is already worked to an appreciable extent for local purposes, but, though within 10 to 20 miles of three lines of railway, has never been opened up by a branch line; and it is remarkable that a Company which occupies such a strong financial and general position as the Great Southern and Western Railway should never have made an attempt to develop this industry, nor have they assisted the local efforts which have been made to provide railway communication with that coalfield;"

and, whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared forthwith to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commissions in regard to railway re-organization and to tramway extensions, by an amendment and consolidation of the Tramways Acts, so that their financial proposals, without involving any baronial guarantee, may be carried out, under which, amongst other schemes projected in other counties, a local Company are prepared to undertake the construction of a tram line in the above locality, and have all the estimates, surveys, plans, and specifications necessary, long since completed, and ready to submit to any Government engineering supervision as in the Report suggested?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Report to which the hon. Member calls attention is now under the consideration of the Government. It deals with very large questions, and has been before the Government for too short a time for me to be able to specify what recommendations of the Royal Commissioners the Government are prepared to accept.

THE PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS—SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCES.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If any system exists in the Public Departments, by reserve, or deduction of pay, or in any other manner, to provide for superannuation allowances; and, if not, whether some scheme can be devised to save such charges upon the annual Estimates; and, whether, in the case of compulsory retirement of clerks in the prime of life and capable of duty, such persons can be transferred to other Departments as vacancies occur or opportunity offers, and thus, by their services being retained in some other sphere, such superannuation allowances be saved to the country?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): In 1857 the House of Commons carried against the Government of the day a Bill repealing the provisions of a previous Act under which an abatement on account of pension was made from the salaries of Civil servants of the Crown, and since that time no abatement on account of pension has been, or could be, made from the salaries of Civil servants. The question of pensions is, I believe, at present under the consideration of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments. It is, of course, desirable that clerks in the prime of life, who, through the reorganization of their Departments, have become redundant, should be re-employed; but, as a matter of practice, such re-employment is found exceedingly difficult. A man in the prime of life can hardly be placed at the bottom of his new Department; but if he is placed higher up the juniors in the Office are deprived of the promotion which they might reasonably expect. As a rule, Heads of Departments select for retirement their most inefficient men; and it is, of course, most difficult to persuade the Head of another Department to recruit his staff from such a source; but the Government will lose no opportunity of exercising their proper influence to secure re-employment wherever it can be arranged without detriment to the Public Service.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, if there was a single instance in which any substantial efforts had been made to effect the re-employment of clerks compulsorily retired?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; I am aware, from my own knowledge, that there are cases in which substantial efforts have been made by past Governments, as well as by this Government, to secure this object; but there are extreme difficulties in the way, for the reasons I have stated.

THE SUGAR BOUNTIES CONFERENCE —THE PAPERS.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Papers relating to the Conference on the Sugar Bounties and other matters relating to the Sugar Question will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): All the Correspondence up to the assembling of the Conference will be presented and distributed in a few days. The proceedings of the Conference will be presented when its labours have been concluded.

THE BLIND—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Report of the Royal Commission on the Blind may be expected?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have been in communication with the Chairman of the Commission with a view to expediting the presentation of their Report; but it is unlikely that the Report will be presented before the autumn.

HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH—THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Can the First Lord of the Treasury tell the House when we are likely to get through the Debate on the Address, and begin Public Business?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am without information on the subject. But I hope the House of Commons will conclude the discussion on the Address either this evening or to-morrow.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY AND MR. BRADLAUGH.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I ask for the indulgence of the House while I make a personal explanation with reference to a statement which I made on the first day of the Session. I may recall the recollection of the House to the fact that on the Monday following that statement the First Lord of the Treasury declined to grant a Select Committee, and stated that he was fortified in his refusal by information which had reached him to the effect that the issue between the Junior Member for Northampton and the Marquess of Salisbury would be dealt with in legal proceedings then pending. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman I stated that, in my view, there were no legal proceedings pending that could so raise the issue, but that if the Marquess of Salisbury admitted the legal responsibility of the letter signed "R. T. Gunton," dated the 5th of December, and published on the 7th December, in which a charge of wilful perjury was brought against me, I would take care that the issue was at once submitted to a Court of Law. On the 15th of February the First Lord of the Treasury wrote me a letter to the following effect:—

> "Lord Salisbury states that his solicitor, Sir R. Nicholson, 23, Parliament Street, has been instructed to deal with any communication you may wish to make."

On the same day I wrote to Sir R. Nicholson in precisely the same terms as my Question to the First Lord of the Treasury, to ask if he was instructed to admit the legal responsibility of the letter signed "R. T. Gunton," dated the 5th of December, and published on the 7th of December, in which a charge of wilful perjury was brought against me. This morning I received from Sir R. Nicholson, as Lord Salisbury's solicitor, a letter which concludes—

> "I received your letter this morning. I beg to say, in answer to your letter of the 25th inst., that Mr. Gunton's letter was not published by Lord Salisbury, or with his authority; and I am not instructed to admit his Lordship's legal responsibility for the publication of the letter."

I should not have deemed myself justified in obtruding a personal matter on the House, if it did not involve a charge of deliberate falsehood in relation to a matter which I had stated to the House in the course of debate. I think the House will feel satisfied, a Select Committee having been refused me and a Court of Law denied me, that no further responsibility rests upon me in the matter.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day, and To-morrow of the other Orders of the Day.—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [NINTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February].—[See page 64.]

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

SCOTLAND—DISTRESS IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

RESOLUTION.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College), in rising to move the following Amendment to the Address:—

> "Humbly to express to Your Majesty our regret that no reference is made in Your Most Gracious Speech to the acute distress which prevails in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, to the disturbances which have arisen out of that distress, or to any projected remedial legislation intended to put an end to the critical state of matters which at present exists in the North of Scotland;"

said, that if the Queen's Speech had contained no allusion to Scotland whatever he should have explained the fact to himself by recollecting that there was no Representative of Scotland in the Cabinet at present. But he saw from the Speech that Her Majesty's Government had not altogether forgotten that Scotland existed, and they had consulted someone who had framed a paragraph for the Speech for Scotland. But they might have consulted someone who knew Scotland better, as although the paragraph consisted of hardly four lines, it showed that the party who drew it up did not know how to spell the word "burgh" according to the Scotch fashion and usage. The paragraph mentioned two or three proposed Bills, concerning which he had not heard one word during the Recess. On the other hand, the matters of which he complained in his Amendment had attracted the most widespread attention in Scotland, and they could not possibly have been unknown to the Government, although the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland (the Marquess of Lothian) had not a place in the Cabinet. Not only had the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland knowledge of them, but the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) had as intimate a knowledge, for they had been the cause of the greatest naval demonstration that had take place on the part of this country since the bombardment of Alexandria. They had five ships of war threatening the shores of the Island of Lewis—the *Belleisle*, the *Seahorse*, the *Jackal*, the *Amelia*, and the *Forester*. With them co-operated on land a detachment of the Royal Scots. Not only was this the case, but the troopship *Assistance*, with 200 Marines, had been ordered to take part in the demonstration, and the *Ajax* would have been present at it too if that vessel, being built on approved Amiralty principles, had not, on the voyage to Stornoway, broken down and been only saved from foundering by the skilful seamanship of its commander and crew. The cause of this expedition was the Park Forest deer raid, which was not marked by any violence except on the part of one man, whom the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) did not prosecute. The raid was an incident about which the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland—after having a fortnight to study the facts of the case—deliberately and publicly stated that he had no doubt that although the men had broken the law they had not broken it from any bad motive whatever. In assuming a breach of the law had been committed to justify the sending of the expedition, the noble Marquess seemed to speak without the book, because, notwithstanding the fact of the unrivalled criminal experience of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, and notwithstanding that last year he obtained an Act from the House to render the drawing of indictments more easy — notwithstanding all that, he failed to prove any relevant indictment against these men; and the only result of the trial—disadvantageously conducted for the prisoners as it was—was to prove that these men—who undoubtedly took part in the deer raid—were not guilty of the crime libelled; and that apparently the crime under which they were libelled was the only one under which it was competent to libel them. Now, as to the origin of this raid. It arose out of the extreme destitution of the 27,000 inhabitants of the Island of Lewis. In the commencement of November the destitution began to be bitterly felt, and the result was—as might naturally be expected in an Island where such a quantity of land was devoted to game—that poaching largely increased. On one day nine men were tried for poaching. The tale of misery told by these men moved the heart of the Sheriff, and it was with the greatest reluctance that he was compelled to impose the penalty that the law required. Some of the men were fined 20*s.*, and so much sympathy had the Sheriff for them in their distress that he allowed them a fortnight to try and scrape up the fine, so that they might be able to avoid going to prison. As a matter of fact, even in the case of a man who had not been able to pay the fine, imprisonment was not enforced, for when he (Dr. Cameron) sent the fine to the goal in order to have the man released, he made the discovery that he was not there. In this miserable condition the crofters saw 140 square acres of the Island, on which they might live comfortably, devoted to deer. They saw, too, in that deer forest the sites of many old crofts that their forefathers had cultivated. They believed that if they only could get the land that had been cultivated by their forefathers they might live in comparative comfort, but they also knew that their frequent applications for some of that land had been persistently refused, or no notice taken of them by the proprietor. On the 12th November the inhabitants had a meeting. There were present on that occasion a large number of cottars who had neither land nor stock to fall back upon, and in their poverty and starvation they resolved to make a raid on the deer forest and provide themselves with a few good meals of venison. Having concluded their arrangements for the 23rd of the month, they invited the Sheriff—the proprietor and the lessee of the shooting—to visit their homes and see for himself what was their condition. The Sheriff at first consented to go, and a deputation was appointed to receive him, but on the 18th November he wrote stating that the object of his visit to them might be misconstrued. He subsequently, however, saw Mr. Donald Macrae, of Ballallan—a schoolmaster, of Ballallan—who was afterwards arraigned as the ringleader of the raid—and endeavoured to get that gentleman to stop the projected deer raid. Mr. Macrae told him that he could not undertake to do that unless the starving people were supplied with meal, and as the Sheriff had no authority to give the assistance required the raid took place. There was no secrecy about the affair. It was conducted quite openly, and in a most orderly manner. They went to the forests, carrying with them old sails and poles for camping purposes, in the open day, and attended, like an army, by quite an array of newspaper correspondents. Having slain a certain number of deer, they had a repast, and one of the elders offered up an eloquent and appropriate benediction. There was no act of violence committed except in one single instance, where a man named Donald MacKinnon, a member of the Constitutional Party, and an ornament to the Primrose League on the Island, threatened to shoot the Inspector of Police who threatened to arrest him. The raiders in returning home were met by the Sheriff, who read the Riot Act, and they, out of respect for Her Majesty and the law, fired their guns in the air and dispersed. It was part of the programme that any man who was wanted afterwards by the police should give himself up; and that the authorities recognized that that was a *bonâ fide* arrangement was shown by the fact that one policeman was sent many miles into the Island with a list of the men required by the authorities. The crofters entertained the policeman to the best of their ability, and sent word to the men whose names appeared in the list. The men afterwards walked a distance of between 15 and 20 miles to Stornoway and gave themselves up. This incident was followed by raids on sheep farms. In Lewis, Ross, and Sutherlandshire, mobs assembled, fences were destroyed, and there were a couple of conflicts with the police, but no one received any serious injury. Well, he thought these proceedings were deserving of some notice in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech. Undoubtedly the cause of the destitution was the failure of the fishing, and it was greatly aggravated by an unprecedentedly severe epidemic of measles—unprecedented in severity and violence for the last half-century—which broke out in the Island a few months ago. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, in answer to a Question yesterday, said it was a mild epidemic——

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, what he had stated was that the disease was of a mild type.

DR. CAMERON said, the Lord Advocate would find from reliable reports from the officers that the epidemic was the most severe that had visited the Island for half-a-century. The men were starving on an insufficient diet of potatoes. Many of them were obliged to eat seed potatoes, which they had put away for the coming year. Some had been obliged to live for weeks on rotten potatoes which they gathered from the fields. In the condition the crofters were in it was not to be expected that they had great faith in the eternal justice and infallibility of the doctrines of political economy. They had heard a doctrine preached by its great apostle — the "land for the people," and that seemed to them to be a doctrine much more suited to their cause. They saw land unstintedly devoted to sheep, deer, and game, and they believed if they could get that land they might be able to live. If not, they must go on starving. Prison had no terror for them. In many instances the crofters offered themselves to the police to be arrested. And now fresh raids were threatened. Hitherto the crofters had published their plans. When they saw that these tactics did not work well, they would adopt the tactics of secrecy, and then, it was as clear as daylight, recourse to force must be useless—as useless as force had been found to capture the modern "Rob Roy" Kerr, against whom three expeditions had been sent, or to suppress that illicit distillation which, in consequence of the prevailing poverty, had again become very prevalent in the Highlands. What steps did the Government take in this state of matters? What steps did they intend taking? He should have liked more information on the latter point in Her Majesty's Speech. Hitherto the Government had relied on gunboats and martial law — upon a vigorous enforcement of the law, as it was called. Latterly the Government instituted an inquiry. The gunboats were sent on the first rumour of anything being wrong, but the inquiry was not instituted till after many weeks of delay. The enforcement of the law was vigorous, but it was partial and one-sided in the extreme. The inquiry was quite right. Its results had confirmed what was known weeks and months ago. He (Dr. Cameron) only complained that the inquiry was not instituted sooner, and that it was not carried out in a less obviously whitewashing spirit; and he complained further that no indication was given in Her Majesty's Speech of any steps based on the result of that inquiry. As for the gunboats, he protested against their employment when they were employed. He thought it was a disgrace to the Government that a country like Scotland could not be ruled without our having every year a fresh naval expedition sent against the crofters. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was Home Secretary he was repeatedly asked to send gunboats and military to Skye, and he laid down in a State Paper the principles which should guide a Government in interfering with military force in local affairs In a document written by the then Lord Advocate under his direction, he said—

> "The duty of preserving the peace and exercising the law in a county rests upon the county authorities who are by statute authorized to maintain a police force for that purpose. The number of the force must necessarily depend upon the state of the county and nature of the service; but recourse should not be had to military aid unless in case of sudden riot and extraordinary emergency, to deal with which police cannot be obtained, and soldiers should not be employed upon police duty which is likely to be of a continuous character."

He (Dr. Cameron) maintained that not a single one of those principles laid down by the right hon. Gentleman had been recognized in the present case. There was no resistance whatever even to a single policeman for weeks after the naval force had been lying off Lewis. The despatch of that force contravened every principle laid down by the Liberal Home Secretary. It was especially obnoxious, because it was sent in the interest of deer preserving, and because it afterwards turned out that it was sent in consequence of an action which had proved to be not an indictable offence under the law of Scotland. This policy of gunboats and marines was a useless policy if intended to be permanent, because the moment the crofters resorted to tactics of secrecy gunboats and marines could do nothing. It was a foolish policy if it was intended to be only temporary, because it prevented the Local Authorities relying upon their own resources and exercising the powers which Parliament had conferred upon them. As to the enforcement of the law by the Government, he complained that it had been vindictive and one-sided, and calculated to destroy respect for the fairness of the law and for the law itself, and that its effect had been to raise up throughout Scotland a feeling of sympathy adverse to the law and its administrators, and sympathetic with those who were ranged against the law. He could go into numerous cases; but, taking the case of the deer raid, he would point out that that raid was dealt with by means of gunboats. The Riot Act was called into requisition, the law put in motion by a Public Prosecutor to whom they had repeatedly objected, because he was the law agent of the proprietor of the Island, and also of the tenant of the deer forest. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, not content with trying the men locally, dragged them to Edinburgh for trial. He must needs change the venue. The men were all poor, and it was impossible for them to bring witnesses to Edinburgh. They asked for assistance to bring witnesses. They wished to bring the Sheriff and some other persons of high and undoubted position in the Island. But the Government refused any such assistance. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate himself brought witnesses. He brought that ruffian MacKinnon, who, of all the raiders, had been guilty of violence, who was proved to be the ringleader; and he put him in the witness-box in order that he might criminate his less guilty associates. These unfortunate men had against them the eloquence of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson), and could bring no witnesses in their defence. But in this case the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his Department received a slap in the face. They only elicited a decision and judgment to the effect that, according to the Common Law of Scotland, it was no crime to trespass—that trespass constituted a proper ground under Common Law for an action for damages, but that it was only a crime in specific instances, where it had been constituted a crime by Act of Parliament—as in the case of trespass in pursuit of game. It elicited from the Judge the dictum that deer were not game, and not property; and from the jury the decision that trespass was not mobbing and rioting—all of which decisions were to those who, like himself, thought it a crying scandal that 3,000 square miles in the Highlands of Scotland should be monopolised by deer forests, afforded ample compensation for the inconvenience which the crofters had been put to. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate knew well the impossibility of these men bringing proper evidence before an Edinburgh jury. They had no funds. The right hon. and learned Gentleman knew how similar proceedings last year had miscarried, and how injustice had been done. He knew how in 1886 a notorious idiot —a man in receipt of parochial relief as an imbecile—had been led by his idiot curiosity into a riotous mob in whose proceedings he took no part; how that he, having been brought to trial at Edinburgh, and having no witnesses to testify that he was imbecile, was sent with the rest for months to prison. Again, this year, he could give an instance where a miscarriage of justice had obviously occurred. Here was another case. He held in his hand a letter from a gentleman known to many hon. Members of the House—the Rev. Norman Mackay, minister of Lochinver—who wrote that a meeting had been called near Clashmore to protest against the sentences and to try to get Hugh Matheson out of prison. Mr. Mackay, and the minister of the people there, met with the Clashmore men, and he wrote—

> "I am quite satisfied—from evidence that can be produced—that Matheson was not in the row, and that he is as innocent of it as anyone can be. He only met the crowd after the work was over and they had dispersed. Nine men who were onlookers can bear witness to this, three who were with him in a house can certify it, and all those who were blackened, if secured against prosecution, will bear witness that Matheson was not there."

But Hugh Matheson—in spite of the recommendation of the jury to mercy—was now undergoing sentence of twelve months' imprisonment. He complained not only that the crofters had been persecuted by the Government, but that the law had been strained against them in a manner deserving the reprobation of everybody who regarded the Constitutional liberties of our country. They—the authorities—did not bother themselves about warrants in the Highlands. The other day he read in the Scottish correspondence of *The Times* a statement that an Excise officer in the Highlands had expected to make some important seizure of apparatus used in illicit distillation. When he went to a house he was asked to produce his warrant, but having no warrant he had no alternative but to go away for one. Even an Irish Member arrested under the Coercion Act had a right to demand a warrant. But the police did not stand on ceremony in the Highlands. If they were asked for a warrant during the recent occurrences they threatened men for obstructing them in the discharge of their duties, or if they vouchsafed any explanation, it was that the man was wanted for cross-examination, and on with the handcuffs and off to the *Seahorse.* Let the House contrast such cases with eases where landlords were concerned. Let them contrast the action of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate in cases where landlords and not crofters were concerned. Last year a Sheriff's officer burned down a crofter's hut. [Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD dissented.] Why, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had him reprimanded. He was a namesake of his own—Macdonald. They tried to get proceedings taken against him for incendiarism, which was an unbailable offence under the law of Scotland; but the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate said he could see no case for action. The other day a man was charged with setting fire to his own house in Dundee —but this was a non-agrarian offence—and, although the defence was set up that he did no harm to the property of his neighbours, the Judge ridiculed the plea, and the man was now in prison, illustrating the state of the Scottish law. Men had been sent to prison for 12 months for pulling down the walls round a sheep farm. Well, the other day the proprietor of an estate at Aberlour—a Deputy Lieutenant of his county and a Justice of the Peace—pulled down a crofter's hut without giving the tenant any warning or notice to quit. The case was brought before the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate by another Justice of the Peace, but the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate absolutely refused to take any cognizance of the matter. He would not say that the landlord was actuated by any criminal motive. His eyes were simply blinded to the real state of the law by an extravagant idea of his landlords' rights, just as he said the crofters were blinded to the state of the law by their theory of the people's right to the land. But in each case equally a breach of the law was committed. In the one case the men were crofters, in the other it was a landlord and a Deputy Lieutenant. In the one case, accordingly, the Fleet was called into requisition; in the other the bandage was simply drawn a little tighter round the eyes of Justice, and the Lord Advocate declared there was no case. But, to come to the inquiry instituted by the Government. He (Dr. Cameron) asked why was it not instituted a little earlier? On 12th December Lord Lothian, in replying to a deputation, begged the members that "if anything came to their knowledge that there was such great destitution as to cause occurrences such as had lately taken place, they would be so kind as to come and tell him before, and not after such occurrences had taken place; for it seemed to his Lordship's mind that one of the difficulties in dealing with a question of this kind was that those who agitated got something, and those who had not agitated got nothing." Well, a good many years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) used an expression about the Clerkenwell outrage which his opponents construed into an encouragement to outrage. But what plainer encouragement to outrage and to agitation could they have than that conveyed in that speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland? No wonder after that that the agitation became brisker, and took the form of raids upon sheep farms and diverting of salmon rivers. Did not the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland know of the destitution that created this state of things? Early in November Sheriff Fraser knew all about it. What were the Parochial Boards for but to let him know? They were under the Board of Supervision; and if the Board did not do its duty, why did not the noble Marquess himself see into what was a matter of notoriety? Of what use was the Scottish Secretary if he could not see that the administrative machinery of the country was working smoothly? He must have known that something was going on, or he would not have sent the gunboats. He might have guessed that it was not for the mere sake of fun that the crofters abandoned the attitude which they had so long maintained in connection with those deer forests. If he knew anything of the modern history of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, he must have guessed very shrewdly that the disturbances arose out of some exacerbation of the chronic want which prevailed. If he had instituted an inquiry a little sooner, it appeared to him (Dr. Cameron) that the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland might have devised some cheaper and more satisfactory remedy than a Naval squadron. If he had inquired he would have learned that the Poor Law machinery of the Island of Lewis was a mere mockery, that the Parochial Boards never met, and that the proprietor was practically the Board. He would have learned that the elected members were elected at hole-and-corner meetings, and that in some cases these members did not know that they had been elected until they were summoned for a meeting of the Board by the gentleman sent to inquire into the state of Lewis a few weeks ago. If he had asked the medical officers he would have learned that—

> "An epidemic of measles had appeared more searching and universal than any known for the last half-century; that the epidemic broke out before the crofters had had time to convert their grain crops into meal, and that the cottars were prevented not only by want of means to buy food, but also by the sickness of their families from going out to the fishing."

Hundreds of sick were lying on straw, and those who were well deprived themselves of clothes in order to cover the sick. He might have learned, as he (Dr. Cameron) learned, from the deputation, that in many cases where poultices were ordered for the sick there was not enough meal in the house to make them. A large proportion of the paupers, who have not even the alternative of a poor-house, are expected to live on less than 1*d*. a-day, and half of the paupers on the Island did not receive a 1*s*. a-week. The families of those who died got 4*s*. to buy a box and dig a grave to consign them to the earth. Although the Parochial Authorities were also the Sanitary Authorities in that district, not a thing had been done in the matter of sanitation. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate talked of segregation, but there was not a single hospital, hut, or tent put up in the Island, and as for provision being made for the sick let him look at the Blue Book and see if he could repeat that assertion. And as to the provision made for the sick, while in the whole Island there were 900 sick in the last three months of 1887, the entire amount expended by all the Parochial Boards in the Island during the entire year was only £24. In the parish of Lochs there were 300 sick, and 16 deaths occurred during the last three months of 1887, and the entire amount expended on nutritious diet for the whole year was £4 13*s*. 10½*d*. In Barvas, where there were also during these three months some 300 sick, the entire amount spent in the year was £2 19*s*. 4*d*. He might have learned, if he had read the report of Mr. M'Neill, that even the inspectors of poor—who were not reputed to be a tender-hearted set of men—denounced the provision as absolutely inadequate, and came, some of them, begging to the administrators of charitable funds for God's sake not to forget their poor regiment of paupers. Under these circumstances, it was not to him strange that, while the women and children were starving, the men cast their longing eyes towards the deer forests and ground occupied by game. As it was, the noble Marquess must have had some idea of the matter, for he said, in reply to a deputation—

> "I feel very strongly in regard to a great many in these Islands who are living in a desperate state of misery."

In discussing the remedies with the deputation, he said something might be done in the way of reforming the Land Laws, but he could not express himself upon that point before he had consulted Lord Salisbury. He (Dr. Cameron) would like to know what the result of that consultation had been. There was no indication of the result of his consultation with Lord Salisbury in Her Majesty's Speech. Again, in referring to the cases of the cottars—for whose benefit various suggestions had been made by a Royal Commission which a few years ago investigated the whole subject—the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland could also make no definite proposal until he had consulted Lord Salisbury. He (Dr. Cameron) asked if he had consulted Lord Salisbury. Was he going to do nothing for those cottars? If there was one subject on which the noble Marquess had a mind of his own, it was the subject of emigration. He had no doubt about that; the evil was due to overcrowding, and emigration was the obvious remedy. But it appeared to him (Dr. Cameron) that if the 250 square miles—constituting about half the area of the Island—and which were now used principally as deer forests and game, and in which large districts were available for the feeding of stock—were handed over to the crofters, the Island would be considerably less over populated. As to emigration, it always struck him (Dr. Cameron) that however strong a Minister might be upon political economy, when other remedies were suggested, all ideas of political economy fled from him in connection with emigration. When public works were suggested, the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland said, he could not justify the giving of relief to the crofters because there was as much distress in London and Liverpool, and how would they justify giving relief from Imperial funds to the Highlands if they refused it to London and Liverpool? But the noble Marquess altogether failed to see that there were people in London and Liverpool who would like to emigrate, and to go out and get rich in Canada. What was the result of the deliberations with Lord Salisbury in regard to emigration? The Government must not be too confident about emigration. The report of Mr. M'Neill was a special plea for emigration from beginning to end, but that report he (Dr. Cameron) contended was based on arguments which would not hold water for a minute. Great stress was in that report laid on the evidence of Mr. Clark, of Ulva. He happened to be an intimate friend of that gentleman's only son, the late Sheriff Clark, and that gentleman had again and again told him there never was a greater economic mistake than the clearance of Ulva. Emigration had been tried in Lewis. Sir James Matheson had spent upwards of £12,000 on it, and between 1867 and 1873 2,300 persons had been emigrated, while from the Highlands of Scotland hundreds of thousands of people were emigrated to Canada, but the Highlands were no better. Millions of people emigrated from Ireland; yet, was Ireland more prosperous, more contented? If the Government believed prosperity could be restored by reducing the population, they must try some experiment that had not been tried and failed 100 times, and he would suggest to them as a much more likely panacea the plan ironically embodied in his "Modest Proposal" by Dean Swift. It was absurd to rely on emigration—in the case of the Highlands—as a remedy, for the very simple reason that the people would not emigrate. Why? Because traditions lived among them, and there had been some cruel instances of clearances within a generation. Hardly more than 30 years ago a ship sailed from Stornoway with 450 men, women, and children cleared from the neighbouring Islands. A letter was sent back, signed by 70 of them, when they arrived in Canada, which told how the islanders had attempted to escape this voluntary emigration; how a number had gone to the hills; how they were pursued by the police and ground officers, and 20 of them brought back by force and handcuffed; how families were separated, succeeded in hiding, some members managing to conceal themselves and others being forced off to Canada; how on reaching Canada, instead of, as they had been told, everything being prepared for their comfort, they might have starved but for the good offices of some benevolent Scotchmen whom they found there. These traditions lived, and the people did not believe everything said in favour of emigration to Canada. It was the business of the Government to decide as to the primary and heroic remedies—the alterations of the land laws, the provisions for the cotters, and the schemes of emigration on which they proposed to rely for the remedy of the state of things which existed in the Highlands. But he might suggest one or two small remedies that might otherwise escape notice. So far as Lewis was concerned the Crofters Act might never have been passed, for the Commissioners never sat there. It would sit there shortly, because, as the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland said, those who agitated got something. If these men had not agitated themselves into the dock at Edinburgh, the Commission would not in all probability have sat in Lewis for Heaven knew how long. If the Commission sat in Lewis it would be precluded from sitting somewhere else. It seemed to him that it would be very proper to increase the strength of that Commission, for which they paid £10,000 a-year. Let them appoint a Sub-Commission in order that the Highlands might get what good was to be got out of the Act with the least possible delay. As to the advances to fishermen. Years ago Parliament, in order to assist the fisheries, had sanctioned grants to the fishermen, but the Treasury had contrived to draw up rules under which it was utterly impossible for any of the fishermen to get a shilling. The noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland had informed the deputations that he had been in communication with the Treasury on the subject, and since the notice of his (Dr. Cameron's) Amendment had appeared, he saw that it had been announced that new regulations had been drawn up. He did not know whether these regulations would work, but if not, he would suggest that half a dozen or a dozen of the clerks in the Treasury and the Scottish Office—for whose benefit all this circumlocutionary correspondence was kept on—be discharged, and that the head of the Scotch Office and some responsible gentleman in the Treasury should meet and settle the matter in half-an-hour. There was another matter which he would mention. They were constantly told that the land would not suffice to support the crofter population, and that they must reap their harvest from the sea. But how were they to utilize the sea in Lewis when they were cut off by the proprietor of the Island owning the foreshore? Sir James Matheson in 1844 bought the Island, and subsequently obtained the right to the foreshores from the Government for £400. In virtue of that right, Sir James Matheson received £15 5*s.* a year as feu-duty from the Harbour Commissioners of Stornoway, which paid a fair interest on the entire sum; and, besides that, he had received, in the shape of rent during the last 20 years, £2,500 for fish-curing stations. Moreover, his successor wished to change the position of the fish-curing stations to some other portion of the foreshore, and the curers said if that were to be persisted in it would be so inconvenient that they would have no alternative but to leave the Island, and the consequence would be that the fishing interest would be strangled altogether. The fact that the proprietor owned the foreshores enabled him to prohibit the crofters from fishing in the lochs, from gathering seaware and bait, except under most stringent regulations. His advice to the Government was to rescind that grant, pay back the £400, and throw open the sea to the crofters. He also advised the Government to give the people in the Lews some little say in the management of their own affairs, especially in regard to Parochial Boards, the management of which had simply been infamous. One matter on which the Crofters' Commission laid some stress was the restriction of deer forests. Thanks to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, the people now knew how to settle that question for themselves. Give them fixity of tenure, and allow them to be possessors of dogs, and, whether the Government took action or not, he thought the deer difficulty would soon remedy itself. He commended to the notice of the Government the proposal of the Commissioners to grant money for the institution of a peasant proprietary, and to enable crofters to purchase stock and build houses, which, under similar conditions, had proved so successful in Harris. He believed that every principle which justified large grants from the Public Exchequer in the case of Ireland would justify them in the case of the Highlands, as recommended by the Crofter Commission. The Government need not think they could avoid spending money in connection with the Highlands. They were spending money now. They lost the gunboat *Lively* and nearly lost the *Ajax* in consequence of the distress in the Highlands. The squadron was not sent to the Island for nothing. The Crofter Commission cost £10,000 a-year, and it was no use trying to blink the question, for it would force itself upon Parliament. They might be certain of one thing—that the Crofter Question would not be settled by any policy of dragooning. It was a matter for statesmanship to settle, and although he did not pretend to believe that there was enough statesmanship in Dover House to settle it, he held the Government bound to make an effort to do so, and therefore he had put down the Amendment which he proposed.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, he rose to second the Amendment. The House would recollect that on a previous occasion he had appealed to the Government to undertake some remedial legislation for the Highlands of Scotland, on the ground that the Highlands had hitherto owed very little to either Party in the State. That appeal was made at a time when his (Mr. Sutherland's) political experience was not so great as it was now, and he was sorry to say that it was made in vain, and Her Majesty's Government continued to act in the same way as their Predecessors in regard to the Highland Question. He remembered upon that occasion that the right hon. Gentleman who was then Secretary for Scotland, and who was now Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), told the House that the crofters, as the people of the Highlands were now called, had legislation passed on their behalf which was better than that adopted for any other tenant farmers in the world. He (Mr. Sutherland) did not pretend to give the *ipsissima verba*; but that was practically what the right hon. Gentleman stated. He granted that there might be an element of truth in the statement; but why, he would ask, was it necessary to pass such exceptional legislation for the people of the Highlands? It was because the landlords there had previously possessed powers which no one of Her Majesty's subjects ought to hold over any other of her subjects, and because those powers had been given through the action of Parliament, that it became necessary for the Government to bring in legislation to counteract what had been done in the past. He maintained that if that was the principle on which the right hon. Gentleman justified legislation for the Highlands, there was still a great deal to be done. He had no desire to go at length into the question of the distress existing in the Highlands. It was a very sad thing to find that so much distress did exist, when all that the people wanted was permission to work and to cultivate the land. All the misery and distress which existed in the Highlands was the direct result of what had happened in the past; nor had the Liberal Party any greater claim for the sympathy of the crofters than the Conservative Party. No doubt, the late Liberal Government passed a remedial Act; but after a year's trial it had been found to be a failure. That was a strong argument in support of the appeal which was now made. The House would recollect that a Royal Commission was appointed in 1883 to inquire into the state of the Highlands. That Commission examined several hundred witnesses, and held 77 sittings, and the Report of the Commissioners was a most valuable one. It touched the real merits of the Highland Question, because it gave the opinion of the people themselves; not of the officials only, nor of the view of other people, but the opinions of the Highland population themselves. He cast no reproach upon Her Majesty's present Government as regarded what was done in consequence of the recommendations of the Commissioners, because the Act was passed by a Liberal Government; but he maintained that the legislation passed by the late Government was as far behind the necessities of the case as the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners were behind the demands of the Highland people. The Commissioners reported that although great complaints were made to them about rack-renting in the Highlands, yet greater complaints were made about the people being denied the land. Yet, strange to say, an Act was passed which made no provision whatever as to the land. Although that Act had been in force for 19 months, not one single square acre had been added to the land of the Highland people. It must have been perfectly clear to Her Majesty's Government that the consequences which had followed must necessarily follow, unless the Government tackled the question of land. It was deeply to be regretted that instead of initiating a repressive policy the Government had not tried remedial measures. It could not be urged that those who were elected to represent Highland constituencies had not given the Government full warning. The Marquess of Lothian, the Secretary for Scotland, in answer to a deputation which waited upon him, complained that he was not informed of what was likely to happen in the Highlands until it actually took place. It was very distinctly in his (Mr. Sutherland's) recollection that both he and several of his Colleagues had pointed out that the state of things in the Highlands was such as to demand the attention of Her Majesty's Government, in order that a remedy might be applied. It was therefore of no avail for Her Majesty's Government to plead that they had no knowledge of what was going to happen in the Highlands. Lord Napier's Commission in 1883 called attention to the rents that were imposed in the Highlands, and the Crofters' Commission appointed under the Act of 1886 had found that there had been gross rack-renting in the Highlands. The people, although they complained in a secondary degree as to the rent, pointed out that the primary grievance had reference to the giving of the land, and yet up to the present moment not a single inch of additional land had been provided for the people under the operation of that Act. Some persons said that the people could not avail themselves of the land when they got it. He could point to a time when the people of the Highlands were deprived of the land they held, and were driven from the good land they were then cultivating on to the bad land, without any provision being made for them in the shape of money to enable them to build houses or reclaim the land. They were driven to the bad land, and had to shift as best they could. Nevertheless, they made that land fertile and built houses upon it as well as they could, and were living upon it now, and therefore it was idle to say that such people would be unable to make use of the land if they now got it. Surely people who managed to get on under circumstances such as those were fairly able to utilize the land if it were allotted to them. Therefore, if Her Majesty's Government were prepared to give £150,000 to send people from the Highlands across the Atlantic, he would recommend that the whole of it, or, at any rate, a portion, should be given to them to enable them to make homes for themselves in their own country. Certainly, the people of the Highlands would not have a single difficulty to encounter in making homes for themselves in the deer forests of their country which they would not have to encounter in the West of Canada. It might easily be pointed out that the loss of a population such as that of the Highlands would be a great loss to this country. He had often heard appeals made by hon. Gentlemen opposite on behalf of those who had served in the Army, and had helped to build up the British Empire. He asked if his own countrymen had not done that? Yet what had been their reward? He maintained that those hon. Members who had made an appeal of this kind were bound to support the appeal which was now being made on behalf of the Highlanders. Although these people were called crofters now by Act of Parliament, they were simply the ancient Highland clansmen to whom the country owed a deep debt of obligation. He therefore claimed the support of hon. Members on the opposite side of the House who made such earnest appeals on behalf of the British soldier. The area of land devoted to deer forests had been constantly increasing, and he contended that it ought to be given back to the people. It had not been withdrawn from habitation directly, but from sheep grazing. The feeling in the Highlands was that it should be given back to the people, but Her Majesty's Government had lost the opportunity and had devoted it to the rearing of vermin. People who came from America said that there could not be found in that country a single acre which was devoted to the rearing of wild animals alone. They had to come to an over-populated country in order to find that. It was said that there was a congestion of population, but who had congested it? The people had not resorted to those places of their own accord, and Her Majesty's Government, in vindication of the honour of that Assembly, were bound, on account of their neglect of the interests of the people in the past, to do something in order to ameliorate their condition in the future. Those who advocated the claims of the Highland people were said to be agitators. He was himself an agitator, and he did not deny it. Indeed, he would not be doing his duty to his own people if that were not so, and he intended to be an agitator so long as the wrongs of the people to whom he belonged were not redressed. It was no reproach to a man that he was an agitator on a question of this kind; therefore, if Her Majesty's Government proposed to use small arguments of that nature, they might altogether spare themselves the trouble. It was the duty of Her Majesty's Ministers, in the agitation which was going on in the Highlands, not to make *ex parte* statements; it was their duty to look after the interests of Her Majesty's subjects, and in this case they should endeavour, in the agitation which was undoubtedly going on in the Highlands, to hold the scales evenly between the people and the landlords, and not to favour one side more than the other. The hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had pointed out cases of maladministration of justice in the Island of Lewis. It was well to view the condition of things in that Island and elsewhere in connection with the surrounding circumstances. The Act passed in the year 1886 would be well within the recollection of the House. It was the intention of that Act that all arrears of rent incurred before the passing of the Crofters' Act should be dealt with by the Commission. That was clearly the intention of the House and of the Lord Advocate of that day (Mr. J. B. Balfour), who was in charge of the measure, and who was afterwards a counsel in a case which was tried in Edinburgh in regard to the meaning of the Act. By the decision of a Judge, given shortly after the Act came into operation, it was found that it was open to the landlords to sue in the ordinary Courts for the recovery of arrears. Now, the Crofters' Commission, when it was appointed, received full power to deal with the question of arrears; but, nevertheless, it was claimed by the Court that the landlords had the right to recover them. Advantage was taken in Sutherland immediately when the defect was found in the Act, and processes were taken out against the people who were in arrears in the parish of Assynt at Clashmore. Writs were sent down and served upon the people, who believed that they were fully sheltered by the Crofters' Commission, and were of opinion that if they accepted service of the processes issued against them, they would be deprived of the rights which it was the wish of the House to bestow upon them. It was then that the disturbances occurred. The people had no desire to infringe the law; but they were afraid that they would be cut out of the benefit of the Act altogether. Many of them had assured him personally that they had no intention of doing anything against the law, but they had no confidence in the local Judge. He admitted that technically they did break the law; but Her Majesty's Government passed an Act last Session to remedy the defects of the Crofters' Act; and therefore it would seem that those people were punished for doing what the Government acknowledged was necessary to be done, and which the House of Commons intended should be done. In one case an act which amounted simply to an assault was distorted into a charge of mobbing and rioting. It ought to have been dealt with by the ordinary magistrates; but these poor people were dragged away from their houses at great expense, and had to travel a long way to the Court in order to answer a charge of mobbing and rioting, which did not even amount to common assault. It was a case which the counsel for the defence in Court aptly described as "a mob composed of such trivial materials as nine women, three stirks (or cattle), and three of Her Majesty's lieges." For the putting down of this trivial affair, however, all the mighty resources of the Government were called into action. In the case of the Clashmore people, not only police constables, but the military, were resorted to for the arrest of the redoubtable Hugh Kerr, who refused to obey the summons of the Court, and had been sought for by the authorities for months past. The police and military were unsuccessful in their expedition; but they arrested Hugh Kerr's wife. It was not at all in his power, nor could he trust himself to speak with moderation of the conduct of the Government authorities in the case of Hugh Kerr. Did Her Majesty's Government imagine that by the treatment they had given to this poor woman, and to others now in prison in Edinburgh, sentenced to nine months' imprisonment, they would put down the agitation in the Highlands? If so, he would tell them plainly that they reckoned without their host. If there was anything calculated to bring the law into contempt it was conduct such as this. He had in his possession a newspaper paragraph describing the arrest of this woman, after the police and military failed to arrest her husband. When she was liberated on bail she looked very careworn, and was in a delicate state of health. She told a most pathetic story of her imprisonment. She had been confined in a gaol without fire or light. She had been compelled to travel in an open carriage, on a cold winter day, from 5 in the morning until 4 in the afternoon, and had been driven for 50 miles in the most inclement weather without any of those considerations which were due to a woman. On her arrival she was confined in a cold and dark cell, with only a rug to cover her, and she was compelled to lie down in her clothes. The next morning she left Dornoch at 6 in the morning for Dingwall by way of Bonar Bridge, a distance of 16 miles, and when she arrived there she was compelled to put on the prison garb. He wished to know from the Lord Advocate if that was a legal and proper thing to do, and whether it was customary to put unconvicted prisoners in prison, to keep them there, and to compel them to don the prison dress? Was it legal and proper that such prisoners should be made to do so? On being liberated on the Thursday, after bail was found for her, her railway fare was paid, but she reached her destination cold and penniless. She attempted to make her way to James M'Kenzie; but she had not calculated her own strength. Fortunately, she met with a commercial traveller, who humanely drove her there, and when she arrived she was hospitably received by Mr. M'Kenzie. He had only alluded to these circumstances to show that these were some of the disadvantages to which people were subjected on being sent to trial at Edinburgh. He thought it was a hardship that they should be compelled to travel that distance at their own expense. To make the matter worse, Her Majesty's Government refused to pay anything towards the expense of bringing witnesses to Edinburgh. Some of the witnesses were unable to speak the English language; they could only speak their own language; and, notwithstanding their protestations to that effect, they were subjected by the Judge, among others, to such an amount of browbeating that he could not remember a parallel to it in any previous case in Scotland. During the examination by the Lord Advocate of Hector M'Kenzie, one of the witnesses, the witness was told to say "yes" or "no" to the questions put to him; but when it became necessary to give an explanation, he found that his knowledge of English was not sufficient to enable him to make one. Lord Craighill said to the witness—

"You must answer the questions in English."

But the witness said—

"I have some English; but I am not able to answer the questions."

Lord Craighill said—

"You must try to answer the questions in English in some way or other, or I will commit you to prison."

"Did you know M'Kenzie?" — "Yes." "Was he in the house?"—"Yes." "Was he seen there?"

The witness answered in Gaelic. The Judge thereupon said—

"I do not understand Gaelic. You must answer in English."

Nevertheless, the learned Judge declined to permit the witness's want of English to justify him in answering in his own language. He said—

"You must answer 'yes.'"

The prisoners were taken up and tried in batches. He wished to know why that was so? Probably the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate would be able to state to the House why the prisoners were tried in that way. He (Mr. Sutherland) had his own ideas as to why it was, and the only reason he could conceive for the adoption of such a course was this—namely, that if some of the prisoners were acquitted, as the deer raiders of the parish of Lochs were, another jury was to be empanelled. Although the prisoners were recommended to the leniency of the Court, he was unable to find any leniency in the sentences passed upon them, ranging, as they did in the case of the Lewis people, from six to nine, 12, and 15 months' imprisonment. The Clashmore prisoners got 12 months, and two poor women nine months each. Hon. Members from Ireland complained of the great hardship of being sentenced to two months' imprisonment; but in Scotland it did not seem necessary to rig the Bench from stem to stern in order to find prisoners guilty; but Judges were found ready to sentence people for the crime of "mobbing and rioting, composed of such trivial material as that he had before mentioned—namely, nine women, three stirks, and three of Her Majesty's lieges." He trusted that Her Majesty's Government, even at that late hour, would do something to alleviate the condition of the people of the Highlands. The destitution of which complaint had been made was traced to its cause. The people were willing to work; but they did not wish to be dependent on the charity of the public or of the Government. They desired to have the land of which they had been deprived in the past given back to them for cultivation. It did not lie in the mouth of Her Majesty's Government to say that the people of the Highlands would not work if they had the opportunity of doing so. Let them only be given the chance, and the people who had survived the difficulties of the past would be able to live comfortably in the Highlands. He made this last appeal to Her Majesty's Government, hoping that they would, even yet at the eleventh hour, extend the operation of the Act so as to give the Commissioners power to give the people land for cultivation in accordance with the recommendations of Lord Napier's Commission. The recommendation of that Commission was that power should be given to form new townships. Hitherto no attention had been paid to it, and the consequence was that it had been decided to agitate the country and make a fresh appeal to the House of Commons to take the question up. It certainly would not have been necessary to take it up if Her Majesty's Government had done their duty in the past. In conclusion, he begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Address, to add the words —"Humbly to express to your Majesty our regret that no reference is made in Your Most Gracious Speech to the acute distress which prevails in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, to the disturbances which have arisen out of that distress, or to any projected remedial legislation intended to put an end to the critical state of matters which at present exists in the North of Scotland."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I certainly feel that if there ever was an occasion on which a public official should endeavour to address himself to this House in moderation, and without being tempted to use any strong or vehement language, this is the occasion. And I think my two hon. Friends who have addressed the House will both agree with me in saying that, if I occasionally avoid the use of strong language, it is not because certain things which have been said by them, and which I am in a position to show are unfounded, are not to a certain extent provocative. I must say at the outset that it is hardly a fair thing that, under the shelter of an Amendment, every word of which points only at an effort to relieve distress in the Highlands of Scotland, and without any Notice whatever being given or without any steps being taken by hon. Members to bring other matters forward in a Constitutional way, we should have had such severe attacks as we have had on the good faith of the Executive Government of Scotland, and also on the good faith of myself as Public Prosecutor, and on the conduct of Her Majesty's Judges. Of the first two attacks I do not complain at all. Only I say this—that I am not going to meet them formally until they are formally made. As regards the last, I think that everyone will agree that if any attack is to be made upon the fairness or propriety of conduct of the Judges of the land, it ought to be made in the most formal and specific manner possible, and with all those safeguards that will prevent being conveyed to the public mind a mere general impression, for which I know it will turn out in this case that there is no foundation whatever. This Amendment is based on the undoubted fact that there is at present a distressing state of things in the Highlands, and it proceeds entirely upon the footing that some new measure and some new operation of the Executive Government, either in the way of legislation or otherwise, are essential for the purpose of meeting and remedying that state of things. Well, I think, at least, Her Majesty's present Government cannot be held to blame if there is any now existing state of things which might have been got rid of by legislation. Our Predecessors had a full opportunity, nearly two years ago, of meeting the difficulties which then presented themselves to the public mind by proposing any necessary amendment of the law. They took a particular course in doing so, and that course we cannot do otherwise than believe was the course which they thought was the best, the most complete, and the most effectual course they could take for disposing of the difficulty. And, with one exception, which was brought forward last year, when the present Government came into Office, nothing has been done since by those who promoted that Act to show that they thought it required any serious change at all. There was a certain phrase used in the Act which was interpreted in a particular way by the Court contrary to what was its intention, and the Government last year brought in a Bill for the purpose of rectifying that, and it was rectified. I shall speak presently of the view that seemed to be taken by the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire (Mr. A. Sutherland) with regard to what took place at Clashmore. Certainly, it is a new doctrine to me that persons should endeavour to resist the law, and should burn the Queen's Writ, because they thought some legislation should be brought in at a future day. It is new to me not only to hear that doctrine stated in private conversation, but it is still more new to me to hear it stated by an hon. Member on his responsibility as a Member of this House.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND: I never made such a statement. I simply said it was a belief of the people, and I urged it in mitigation of any judgment that might be passed by the House.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Well, I understood that the hon. Member considered it a palliation of their conduct. I think it would be more advisable if the hon. Member would point out to those ignorant people that the proper course to be taken is never to burn the Queen's Writ; but that if those Writs are issued under the Act of Parliament which they may not approve, steps should be taken to amend the Act. I think to suggest that the want of something in an Act of Parliament is an excuse for assaulting the officers of the law, burning the Queen's Writ, and resisting the law by violence, is a suggestion that ought not to be made in this House. A great number of matters have been spoken of by hon. Members who have addressed the House. They have pointed out various defects, as they think, in the present state of social life in the Highlands which ought to be remedied. It is a most extraordinary thing, while they found that on the evidence of Reports of Commissions and upon part of the evidence of people who know about the Highlands, from the beginning to the end it is their persistent determination to ignore the one remedy for the state of things which every Commission, which every witness of weight, has in the past invariably put forward as the only possible remedy—namely, emigration. I think the theories put forward, if sound, would lead to the most extraordinary result. According to the theory put forward by hon. Members opposite, no one ought to suggest that people in the Highlands should leave their native land, and go elsewhere, and that the best reason for the Government not attempting to do that is that the people will not go. A very sound argument as far as it goes; but I should like to ask how far are you going to carry it? Could this country of England have sustained itself in prosperity if all the people who were born in this country in the past 200 years had all said they would not go out of this country? Do my hon. Friends doubt for one moment that the population of these places in the Highlands will go on increasing at the same rapid rate as it has done in the past? Do they contemplate that no time shall ever come when it shall be necessary for people to leave these Islands? I think the economic problem to be worked out is an extremely simple one. I perfectly understand the argument that at present there is sufficient land for the people. But an abstract argument against emigration is one which I think ought not to be listened to for a moment. Turning at once to the question which first presents itself in the Amendment, my hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) asks us to say when we first heard of what was happening in certain parts of the Highlands, and what steps were taken. The information which we have received was received early in December, and steps were immediately taken to get a Report on the matter. We received a Report from the Sheriff of the county, which reached us about the 9th December. The Board of Supervision Report was received on the 8th December, and it was deemed advisable to have a special Commission of Inquiry, which was appointed, and has now reported. As regards the state of things and the destitution of the crofters in Lewis at that time, there can be no question of how it has arisen. It has not arisen from anything connected with the crofts which were held by the crofters in Lewis. It is admitted on all hands that last year's crop was one of the best they have had; and the reason why this present destitution has come upon the crofters is not in consequence, as is said, of their not having sufficient land to cultivate, or of anything connected with the crofts which is abnormal, but is entirely in consequence of the absolute failure of the fishing industry. The crofters are in the position, not of farmers who want more land to cultivate, but of those who cultivated a small quantity of land in aid of the income which they derived from their regular business, that of fishermen. One would naturally have expected that, if such destitution was coming to a head, the agitation which might arise among the community would be an agitation which would indicate immediate want. But, as a matter of fact, nothing that has taken place has been of that nature. There is no doubt whatever that there was nothing in what took place to indicate to the authorities any immediate, pressing, actual want on the part of the community. Now, Sir, the deer raid has been referred to. The most remarkable thing in connection with that deer raid, and one absolutely incomprehensible with the theory of actual want, was that, so far as I have been able to trace—though many deer were destroyed in that raid—there is not a solitary instance in which one single particle of the food thereby obtained was brought home by any crofter to his family. There was one case in which a deer was found partly consumed by the gentlemen in the tent by the seashore, but the rest of the deer were found lying dead in various parts of the forest afterwards. Well, then, take the next occasion which happened—the case of Aignish farm. I can perfectly understand these men thinking that they were committing a very small breach of moral and civil law, if they were in a state of starvation, going and stealing a sheep or an ox, and turning it into food. Although the law would not justify anything of that kind, yet the law would certainly look upon people who were in absolute starvation as in a very different position from people stealing for purposes of gain. Although 700 people came to the farm of Aignish for the purpose of agitation—and that was admittedly their purpose—what was their act? They do not seize any cattle or sheep, and take them for the purpose of food; but they proceed to drive them off the farm, and endeavour to drive them into the sea. That was absolutely contrary to any idea of people in actual want endeavouring to provide for themselves. No doubt it was a strong demonstration for the purpose of inducing people to believe that they were compelled to take possession of that farm. But that farm could not supply them with food until it had been in crop. Their whole action was the action of men determined to show those whose duty it was to uphold the law, by the destruction of the property of the farmer, that the law should not prevail in protecting that farm against the action of the people in driving him off with his sheep and cattle. Now, I very much fear that the action which was taken by these raiders was the natural fruit of the agitation which my hon. Friend considers to be so valuable. And it is said that we, in endeavouring to prevent such mobs going to drive cattle and sheep off Aignish farm, are guilty of a policy of gunboats. I think I ought to tell my hon. Friend that this is not a question, so far as I am concerned, and so far as the Executive in Scotland are concerned, of policy at all. In sending a sufficient force to prevent the law being defied we are not fulfilling any policy at all, but simply doing our duty as Executive officers. And I think it necessary to say, from this place, that in so far as power is necessary, whether by gunboats or in any other way, to prevent people from committing the folly that was done at Aignish and Clashmore, that power must and will be put forth. I think it would be a most cruel kindness to these people themselves to lead them to suppose for a moment that if they show sufficient violence to overcome the resistance of other law-abiding people in the thinly populated neighbourhood in which they live, that these people and their property will not be protected. And as regards the case of Aignish, I was very much surprised to notice that while my hon. Friend said a very great deal about the deer raid, he passed over Aignish and Clashmore very lightly. No doubt, he was supplemented as regards Clashmore by the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire, with reference to whose facts I shall have a word or two to say presently. But when my hon. Friend took up the case of the deer raid, and passed over the case of Aignish, he acted with great prudence for the argument which he had to bring forward, because his great point was to make out that there was no relative charge in the case of the deer forest raid. In that my hon. Friend was entirely mistaken; and I am quite certain of this—he will not get any lawyer to back him up in that. It is perfectly true that trespass is not a crime; and it is perfectly true that deer are not property. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; but it is equally true that it is not the law of this country that any mob of people are to be allowed to trespass on any man's land for an unlawful purpose—the purpose of overcoming his right in it, and his right to protect his land—and it does not matter what the purpose is with which they do so, if their purpose is a common purpose. Nobody can doubt for one moment that if a mob of people were to assemble upon any person's land for a purpose which was not in itself a legal purpose, that that mob is guilty of a crime against the law of the land. That is the law, and it was so laid down by the Judge. It seems to be thought by some Gentlemen that it is necessary, in order to constitute crime, when the people assemble against order in a case of this kind, that that mob must be a criminal mob. That is entirely a mistake. If it is merely an illegal purpose, that is perfectly sufficient. Of course, the amount of guilt in the one case or the other depends very much upon what the purpose is. It is just as much an unlawful purpose for a mob of people to assemble in front of a door in order to prevent a man getting into his own premises, as it is for them to assemble for the purpose of committing an assault upon him. If they assemble for the purpose of committing assault they will be severely punished. If they assemble merely for the purpose of preventing him going about his lawful business, they are equally guilty in the eye of the law, but the crime is not so serious. Now, having made that explanation, I wish to say, in reference to this deer raid, that the act which was done was unquestionably an act of mobbing and rioting. It has been distinctly held so by the Bench. My hon. Friend made an entire mistake when he said that I had failed to bring a relevant indictment.

DR. CAMERON: The jury found so.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The jury have no province to find indictments relevant; and my hon. Friend, in saying that, plainly shows his opinion that the jury mistook their duty. I thought it was known even to every layman that it is the duty of the jury to take the Judge's statement of the law in regard to an indictment, and then deal with facts. If they formed an opinion upon the relevancy of an indictment, then they were doing that which their duty did not allow them to do. But the best proof that the indictment was relevant was this—that though the prisoners in that case were well defended, and their case was conducted by as shrewd counsel as we have at the Bar, no objection was taken to the relevancy at all. It went to the jury as a relevant indictment; and though the jury thought proper to find that the parties at the Bar were not guilty "as libelled," if they meant by that that they did not consider the indictment relevant, they went quite out of their province. But I do not think that the raid upon the deer forest was of so great consequence in itself. Its importance was that it indicated a general lawless tendency among the community in the Island of Lewis, indicating, as it did, an express determination on the part of the people there to over-ride the law—a purpose which I believe would not have entered their minds unless it had been brought to them from without. When such things took place, it was absolutely necessary for the Executive to see that measures should be taken to prevent them occurring again. A force was sent to the neighbourhood of Lewis. It was perfectly well known to everyone there; and then what happened? A large number of people assembled at the farm of Aignish, and held a meeting, at which it was resolved that upon a certain day, if the farmer did not submit to the law made by them—their law made at this meeting—their Act of their Parliament—he should be turned out of his farm without any process of law whatever. And the principal speaker at that meeting—one of the men who was afterwards tried—announced at the meeting that when they made their raid the police would come from the one side of the farm and the soldiers from the other, and that he was prepared to shed his blood in order to take possession of that farm. I think that was a pretty plain indication of intention to break the law. Up to that point all was plain sailing. That was merely a threat, and probably in itself did not require any special observation on the part of the Executive, unless they were satisfied that there were other sources of danger, which might lead to something serious resulting. But the Sheriff and the Sheriff Substitute, considering what had taken place at that meeting might not be mere bombastic threat, and considering the state of the public mind, issued a distinct warning in the shape of a Proclamation, which was extensively posted throughout the district, warning all persons who intended to take part in the threatened proceedings that they would be guilty of the crime of mobbing and rioting. [The right hon. and learned Gentleman here read the Proclamation.]

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): In what language was the Proclamation published?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: It was published both in English and in Gaelic; and in proof that it was well observed a very great number of notices were torn down, and a shopkeeper's window in which one had been placed for the information of the inhabitants had a brickbat thrown through it. Here, then, you have a deliberate intention to hold the assembly, a warning by the authorities not to hold it, and yet it is held notwithstanding. Well, the farmer had been told that he was allowed by this assembly a certain time to do what they ordered him to do. They told him that if he did not by the 8th of January clear himself and his stock off the farm they would do it for him. Accordingly, on the morning of the 8th, a force was sent there to prevent this illegal riot.

Seven hundred people appeared upon the scene, and spread themselves out in a sort of military formation like a body of skirmishers across the whole breadth of the farm. The resident Sheriff Substitute, who appears to be a man of great coolness and courage, instead of bringing out at once, as many would have done, his force of Marines and police and Royal Scots, and meeting the crowd force by force, very courageously walked out himself to meet the mass, accompanied only by the Deputy Procurator Fiscal and two constables. A certain number of the people gathered round him, and he endeavoured to get them to give up their proceedings. He called attention to the illegality and criminality of these proceedings, and he produced the Riot Act, and proposed to read it, but was met with jeers and shouts. The people who came round him thereupon moved on and joined the line again, and they went forward, with the result that every single animal on the farm—and there were some 320 sheep and 50 cattle—was driven off the farm. I do not suppose that any Member of this House will say that that was not criminal.

Dr. CAMERON was understood to say that he had not said it was not criminal.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I said I did not suppose any Member would; and I am glad the hon. Member assures me of that. But I go further, and will venture to say that no one will say that it was not highly criminal, or that it was not a state of things most dangerous to the community in which it happened. No one will venture to say that if any Executive had tolerated such a state of things, and did not put it down, they ought to be allowed to remain in office for a single day. I do not want to exaggerate; but I say this, that you could not possibly have a more serious insurrection than that, unless you had an insurrection with actual armed forces. It was a distinct, deliberate, wilful persistence in riot, in defiance of the law, in spite of all that the law could do by reasonable remonstrance to prevent it. And I have not heard from hon. Members who have addressed the House one single word of regret upon their part that that the cause which they have at heart, and which I believe in their case to be an honest and sincere cause, has had that blot of criminality and illegality cast upon it by those proceedings. I have never heard one single real word of discouragement by any of the Leaders of this agitation to the people against doing such things again. On the contrary, as I shall show, every suggestion which has been made to them by those who are their self-constituted Leaders are suggestions which still lead in the same direction; and I want to know if any hon. Member in this House, who has the interest of the crofters at heart, will get up in this House and even now repudiate, on behalf of himself and his friends, the folly of the incitements which are being held out to those people from day to day. It would be an enormous help to Her Majesty's Government and to the Executive in Scotland if we got an honest and straightforward statement, on the part of someone who is a Leader among them, and who is in this House, against the people proceeding to carry out the schemes which they have been urged to by their supposed friends, but who are their most real and dangerous enemies. But that case did not stop there. When at last the Sheriff-Substitute, as he was bound in his duty to do, brought forward the forces at his command—he still kept some of them back—he brought forward about 20 constables, and between 20 and 30 Marines; and having told the constables to arrest those who had been most prominent in the riot as an example to the others, and to vindicate public justice, he was met with such determined resistance that it was necessary to send two miles for another force, which he had purposely kept concealed, lest the larger force should irritate the people. No remonstrance availed; no arguments were listened to; and when certain of the ringleaders had been apprehended the case became so serious that the Royal Scots had to be sent for, and on their arrival the Sheriff-Substitute, after another vain remonstrance with the people, read the Riot Act. When he concluded with the usual words, "God save the Queen," there was a shout from the crowd that "the Queen might go to hell." Well, a number of people having been apprehended, the authorities made up their minds that the best thing for them to do was to take their prisoners to Stornoway. It had become absolutely certain that, without absolute bloodshed, the only lesson they could teach those people was to bring some of them to the bar of public justice. The people followed them, throwing stones and dirt, for two miles; and at last one of the prisoners himself, suffering from the violence he was receiving from his friends, asked to be allowed to address them. He urged them to go home, but was at once met with cries of "traitor" and "coward." In these circumstances, I will say that a more persistent and determined attack upon the law has not been made in the history of this country. But it did not stop there. The mob threatened to march on to Stornoway, and break into the prison, and take out the prisoners. But, finding at last that their efforts could produce no effect upon the authorities, they turned round, and what did they do then? Up to this time all the harm they had done to the farm was to drive the cattle and sheep from the farm. The cattle were met by the Royal Scots, and turned back in the direction of the farm; and now these people, although they had had the warning of the capture of 13 of their number, proceeded to make a deliberate attempt to drive all that valuable stock into the sea. Now, what could justify such an inhuman and wanton action as that? It could do no good to anybody, unless good could be done by a riotous mob indicating to the law that they were determined upon resistance to the last. I think all will agree it was a brutal and cruel act in itself. It could do no good to anybody, but a gross and monstrous injury to the farmer, who had done them no harm, who had lived among them in peace for years, and with whom there had been no dispute. There was one thing, and it was a matter which I do not wonder the hon. Member did not bring up against us—that is, that the Crown had been chary of paying the expenses of bringing witnesses to Edinburgh. I think it would have been difficult for the Crown to pay the expenses of all the witnesses we were asked to bring. They were to be brought—what for? For the purpose of proving that the whole of this assemblage of 700 people—yelling, and swearing, and rioting—was for no other object than to visit the graves of their ancestors in some small, disused graveyard in the vicinity. Why, the Executive would have made itself the laughing-stock of the whole country if they had paid the expenses of all these witnesses. Why, one of the prisoners, when he heard such evidence given in his favour, was so astonished that he went off into a perfect fit of laughter.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND: No.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: But I think I know the facts better than the hon. Member does. I speak of what I myself saw, and I take the opportunity to say that I consider it an extraordinary proceeding to filter all sorts of evidence through this House for the purpose of showing that the decisions of Courts of Justice, given through the juries, are to be set aside for the chatter of people who tell Members of this House things which will not bear examination for one single moment. I now turn to the case of the Mainland, and I will say that there is this difference between the case of Lewis and that of Clashmore. In Lewis the pinch of distress, no doubt, added to the effect of agitation upon the people; but I venture to assert that no one will stand up in this House and say that that is the case in regard to the inhabitants of Clashmore. There is not one single case in that parish in which an application has been made for relief by a single person. What is the case of Clashmore? It is, unfortunately, more disgraceful than that of Aignish. For everything in Aignish was done boldly and above-board, in open defiance of the law, and without any attempt at concealment whatever. But the case of Clashmore was this—that, time after time, a field on a farm which had been in the occupation of a tenant for 15 years——

MR. A. SUTHERLAND: Who had it before?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: My information is that it has been a farm for the last 100 years at least.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND was understood to say that it had been taken from the people to give to the present tenant.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I think my hon. Friend is mistaken. But I shall accept it. That is 15 years ago, and for 15 years it has been in the peaceable possession of a tenant. Yet for weeks and weeks every fence he had was being injured. The locks upon his gates were broken off. He had placed a lock six or seven times on the same gate, and it had been broken off again. [Another inaudible interruption from Mr. SUTHERLAND.] I really wish the hon. Member would allow me to proceed. Ultimately he determined to protect the land which was in his legal possession. A mob of people came—not, as the Aignish people did, with warning beforehand and openly—not, he admitted, a large one, but a mob every one of whom had their faces blackened that they might not be identified. That is a new thing among the Highlanders. And I should be very glad indeed if Members who represent Highland constituencies will kindly give us their views in this House, for the help of those people, that it may not occur again. They are copying the manœuvres of another country—copying ways that will never bring them any credit, and which will only have the effect of making many real and hearty sympathizers of theirs shrink from further efforts in their behalf. It is most unjustly said that it is an infinitely trifling matter; but this blackening of their faces plainly showed that they were conscious of the criminality of their action, and that they knew very well that if their actions were detected they ought to be punished. But it is worse than that. It is bad enough that women should actually in the daytime blacken their faces before going upon a criminal expedition. But what is to be thought of the Highlanders—the men of whom I agree with the hon. Member that they are proud, gallant men—themselves dressing up in women's clothes in the middle of the day, and blackening their faces?

MR. A. SUTHERLAND: Have you got any evidence of that?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Yes, it is proved. It is not creditable. It is pitiable. It is a thing, I am sure, which will not be approved by hon. Members. I am asked about the case of a man convicted for the offence who was innocent. No doubt there are always difficulties in identifying people who blacken their faces. It is alleged that there was a mistake on the part of one of these men. But what are we told? That if the men should get a guarantee of indemnity from punishment, they will come forward and say that the other man did not do it. That is the kind of manliness we have now in the Highlands.

DR. CAMERON was understood to say that various persons who could testify to the man's innocence did not take any part in the offence themselves.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The hon. Member says that men who were not in the riot themselves would come forward; but the men who had the blackened faces are prepared to allow an innocent man to suffer unless they get an indemnity from punishment. Why did not these men come forward and say who this man was mistaken for, if it is really the case that a mistake has been made? These men are not ordinary offenders—I do not say they are; but it is new to me that an Executive Government and a Public Prosecutor are to give an indemnity to people who admit their guilt in coming forward to clear an innocent man. It is no part of the duty of the Executive to interfere. The jury heard the evidence, and found that the man at the bar was guilty. It is not for the Executive lightly to interfere with such a decision, and least of all on the evidence of those who wish to be saved themselves before freeing an innocent man. A great deal has been said about the arrest of Mrs. Hugh Kerr. The hon. Member (Mr. A. Sutherland) said we arrested her because we could not find her husband, but I scarcely think the hon. Member is serious in putting that forward. The expedition was sent to arrest persons who had been going about with blackened faces and committing damage, Mrs. Kerr was known to be one of those, and she was accordingly arrested. Does the hon. Member consider that a woman going with a blackened face to assault people who are going about their own lawful business and protecting their own property, ought not to be dealt with by the severity of the law? As to the charge about Mrs. Kerr being badly treated in prison and being put in a cell without a fire, I do not think that complaints of this kind ought to be made for the first time in this House. If made at the time, such complaints could be inquired into. It is very easy to bring forward in this House charges of inhumanity, but where there is any foundation for them they ought to be made to the Executive Government. I have never heard of it till now, and if any responsible person lays a statement before me to that effect. I will even yet order a full inquiry to be made; but it has nothing whatever to do with the subject of the judicial inquiry. It has been stated that the sentences were very terrible sentences for very slight offences. But the offences were not slight. All that I can say is, that we had several cases during the last two years of riots of this description in the Highlands, and that lighter sentences have been given, varying from one to six months; but these were always accompanied by a distinct warning that these light sentences could not continue to be pronounced for this class of cases, if the community in which they were prevalent indicated their determination not to submit to the law when it treated them leniently, but showed their defiance of it. I deeply regret—and I hope the House will believe it—that such sentences had to be given; but I say I would not venture for one moment to gain the approval of a single Member opposite by saying that I disapproved of them. It is not my duty to say I approve or disapprove of them, because I have no right to express an opinion upon the conduct of the Judge; but I do say that, in my opinion, as far as the sentences in the Aignish and Clashmore cases are concerned, they were absolutely necessary for the purpose of indicating what must be the result of a continuance of such cases. Looking back to the previous history where riots of a similar nature have occurred, I find that the sentences pronounced were very different indeed, much severer sentences having been imposed for less grave offences. But I am glad to think that, with the greater publicity given to sentences in these modern times, happily long sentences are not so absolutely necessary as they may have been in past times. I say that if in districts such as the West Highlands you have, during the last 18 months, sentences of six months for offences not so bad as these two, we ought to be thankful that a lesson is given which may have the effect of preventing people listening to agitators; and I would fain hope it may have some effect upon the agitators themselves. There are too many agitators in this country, and also in another, who go about carrying on an agitation in one district and another, and at the same time taking very good care to keep at the cool end of the poker. They do not themselves run the risk. They carry on their agitation, and allow it to take its evil effect in the action of crime on the part of the population. They have disappeared, but the baneful and evil effect of their cruel conduct on these poor, ignorant people remains behind. I only wish some means could be found by which we could get at those who incite these poor people to acts of violence. I hold them to be infinitely more guilty than the unfortunate people who commit them. But the Executive Government must deal with those it can find who commit the acts. I believe many of the men now in prison are the last to complain of their sentences. They have been put upon their trial and convicted, and know perfectly well that it was absolutely necessary to vindicate the law by a firm and sharp lesson. We all regret the necessity; but so long as it exists, I, for one, will do my utmost in all such cases, and I am not going to be frightened by hon. Members' statements about gunboats or anything else, believing that I am doing the best for the peace of the country. In these outlying districts individuals would be at the mercy of the mob, unless it was understood that the mob would be firmly dealt with. It is not as if these were only isolated acts. They are part of a general system of terrorism which has been promoted by agitators in the North of Scotland. A very curious occurrence took place which shows that is so. The moment the witnesses who had charge of Clashmore Farm left for Edinburgh to give evidence, and there was no one to protect the farm, in the course of the night no less than 700 yards of new stone fencing was levelled to the ground. You had the same thing occurring in Lewis and at Aignish: These are dangerous crimes. They can be committed in the secret of the darkness, and they involve enormous expense to innocent people. They are extremely dangerous, because they are mean crimes, and they sap out all feeling of morality and honesty in the community in which they exist. No doubt, the hon. Member (Dr. Cameron) will say the people have been brought to do these things by provocation; but what provocation did they receive from the tenant of Clashmore?

His conduct was not different from what it had been for 15 years. In what respect has he offended these people? It is ridiculous. Is the law going to allow it? When you talk of the severity of sentences, it is absolutely necessary to take into consideration the circumstances for which the sentences are pronounced. No Judge would be doing his duty, where offences were committed of the nature of raids and mobs, if he did not consider the general state of the neighbourhood, and what is necessary for the purpose of vindicating the law in these places. Will hon. Members go down to these places, or send to the people who are now agitating among them, and tell them distinctly that they can gain nothing by such action? And will they warn them of the danger to their own happiness which comes from introducing among what has hitherto been a peaceable, honest, and kind community, those feelings of malice, hatred, and wanton mischief which are being developed amongst them by agitation? The next question is, what is to be done in the present unfortunate state of circumstances, and I think, if my hon. Friends had addressed themselves to that question, it would have saved a great deal of time, and been a great deal more beneficial to the people of that country. I venture to say again what has been said here before, that as regards what has to be done in the way of remedying the condition of the people, all attempt would be absolutely delusive and futile which does not recognize the fact that the population of Lewis is in excess of what the land will bear. ["No, no!"] That is my opinion, and the opinion of everybody who has examined closely into the question with an unbiassed mind. ["No, no!"] Well, I shall be glad to hear in the course of the debate who is the man of skill who has gone over this matter for the last 100 years who has not come to that conclusion. When the Bill of 1886 was before the House, we said it was a Bill which could have no other result in the near future than to produce—if it did produce, which I greatly doubted—a temporary alleviation of the difficulties of the situation, and would not, in our view, bring about any results which would meet the difficulties. I adhere to that now, and I am sure that the events subsequent to the passing of that Act have fully borne out the view then expressed. All that could be done on the footing of dealing with the population as not being too much for the place in which it lives would be for the State to give additional land. The Crofters' Act went beyond all previous legislation in that direction; but the Crofters' Act could not make land, and still less could it make land which would respond to labour by producing such fruits as would justify cultivation, or would admit of any family cultivating by its own labour obtaining the means of subsistence. I say this—that if all the land in Lewis were given to the crofters, it would not enable them to live by husbandry. I say, in the second place, even if it did, it would not put off the evil day for any substantial period. It is perfectly clear on the face of it, even if at the present moment the land in the Lewis would admit of supporting the present population, that that would not meet the difficulty for any substantial period, for the increase of the population goes on at such a rate that the time must come when even the most sanguine Member who sits opposite will be obliged to give up the idea that there is not a surplus population. I say that period has arrived already, had arrived long ago, and I say so on the authority of all who have examined into the question in the past as well as in the present, and admittedly on the authority of every Royal Commission which has reported. In the case of Lewis it was recognized 100 years ago that it could not bear an increase of population at a time when there were only 8,000 inhabitants, and when we did not hear of places being converted into deer forests and let off to American sportsmen. In the case of Lochs parish, we find that from 1790 to 1797 it is distinctly stated that there were no lands in the parish that could properly be called arable. The population in 1790 was 1,768, and it had more than trebled in 1881, and is now 6,284. In the parish of Stornoway in 1790 there were 2,600 inhabitants, and now there are 10,389. In Uig parish, of which it was declared in the Statistical Account that it never supplies itself with a sufficiency of provisions, there were in 1790 1,898 inhabitants, and in 1881 there were 3,489; and in no season it is declared, as regards Barvas parish, is the produce more than barely sufficient to support the population, which in 1790 was 2,006, and in 1881 was 5,335. So that in point of fact you have a population which has risen from something like from 8,000 to 10,000 up to something over 27,000 at present. The truth is that last year, which was the best for many years, as is admitted on all hands, in the way of successful cultivation, we have had destitution staring us in the face, because the source from which the people derived that which enabled them to tide over one part of the year—namely, the fishing—failed them, illustrating what has been dinned into the ears of people for years; but they will not take it in, that the crofter is a man who ought to have an industry and some land for purposes of cultivation as well. If you attempt to make farmers of people who have no capital—so that they must obtain their subsistence entirely out of the land they cultivate—the attempt must necessarily result in disastrous failure anywhere; but still more in such barren wastes as many parts of the Highlands, and in places where the climatic conditions are unfavourable to successful agriculture. This is what we urged, and urged in vain, on the House in 1886. The crofter is practically, and ought to be, an allotment holder. Sir J. M'Neil reported to that effect in 1851. What I and other hon. Gentlemen urged in vain in 1886 was that the crofter could not be a farmer unless the State was prepared to provide him with capital for the purpose of working the farm. I do not suppose any hon. Gentleman will propose that, or that if it were proposed it will be accepted. If crofters are impressed with the belief that they can subsist on the soil of the Islands it will end in disastrous failure. This is how the problem works out in money. The average rent of a croft in Lewis is £3 and some odd shillings, but a great number of them are under £2 rental. If £2 be too high, upon what economic basis of calculation can it be supposed that a croft will support the crofter? I suppose a fairly economic basis of rent would be a third at the utmost of the produce; but suppose the rent is too high, it is not a third, and therefore it should be less than £2. I think that answers itself. Then, if £2 be too low a rent, what becomes of the attack on the landlords of charging exorbitant rents? So that whichever way you take it, it is perfectly plain that the crofts in Lewis are not, and cannot have been in the past, the means of support to the crofter. What is the state of things now? Two sources of support have disappeared—namely, labour and the kelp industry. You cannot have labour without capital, and you cannot have capital in a place like Lewis if there is no rent being received. Only the fishing remains. I am very thankful to say that the news we have received during the last few days does indicate that there is something to come this season from that source. It seems a Providential interposition that in the present destitution, when assistance must be given by the charitable, that great industry is likely to give the people a stimulus, and put some heart into them, and prevent them from being demoralized by a condition of absolute pauperism. What is the state of things in Sutherlandshire? The proprietor there has consistently made up his mind that he will not allow squatting. What has been the result? The result is that, whatever the Clashmore people complain of, they do not complain of want. ["No, no!"] I am sure if my hon. Friend had seen Mrs. Kerr and her lady companion in the dock at Edinburgh, he would have been very well satisfied they were not in want. In that district there is not a single soul during the past year that has been in want, and has applied for parochial relief. In Sutherlandshire not only was no squatting allowed—and that has had a most salutary effect—but what was done? Money was poured into Sutherlandshire for the purpose of testing whether the land could be made productive—whether it could give a response to labour, however expensive. The Duke of Sutherland selected the best land he could find.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND: The worst.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: He has expended thousands upon thousands of pounds upon experiments. I have heard him say that he was quite willing, if he could make it yield a reasonable return, to put aside altogether the enormous capital he had spent upon experiments, if he could only, after they had been carried out, secure a return for the labour put into the soil. I have seen steam ploughs and other enormous appliances of every description—some of them more like paddle steamers than anything else—employed in these experiments for tearing up the ground, rooting up old trees, and clearing away stones. All that capital could do to produce results having been done, I myself saw a very good crop of oats and a good crop of potatoes grown. But the experiment resulted in failure. Nature and the climatic conditions have been too strong, and the result is that the Duke has been unable to get anybody to take that land off his hands at any rent. Could a man have done more to endeavour to test the productive value of the soil? He expended his money freely under his own personal supervision. He was always there looking after the land. Not only so, but everybody knows that the Duke of Sutherland has done everything in his power to open up the country, and vast sums of money have been spent in wages in the district, which, but for his enterprize and determination, never would have been spent at all. I do not believe that, from first to last, the Duke has ever received any practical money return from his estate there. His great wealth, derived from other estates in the country, and from his other means, has been freely poured out to test the capabilities of the soil. That leads me just to mention what I saw the other day, in a letter written by the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who thought he saw a remedy for the evils of the crofters in his Bill to compel landlords to put all land, particularly waste land, under cultivation. I thought the hon. Member suggested the worst places; because if a man is going to spend a large sum of money in making an experiment, he is surely going to take the most favourable conditions, and the most favourable opportunity of testing the experiment. But everything must be accounted for on the part of those who say the Highlands are sufficient to produce food for the people by, somehow or other, getting rid of the proof. It must be thought that the Duke was a great fool, and was badly advised; but he was advised by a gentleman more clever in these matters than most people—Mr. Kenneth Murray. [Dr. CAMERON dissented.] My hon. Friend need not shake his head. I have been there, and have seen the whole of the operations conducted with the greatest possible skill, and under the best possible advice. In these circumstances, it really comes to be a question whether it is not beating the air for people to say that we have only got to divide the land in order to get prosperity. I should like to read a few words from Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, a man who has taken great interest in the Highlands, who is greatly respected, and who has been a very useful man in his day and generation. Here is what he says, and I want to ask hon. Members if they think the Government of a country is to give no effect whatever to the opinions of men who have lived all their lives in the country, and studied it, and given their attention to the welfare of the community, particularly when we find that these opinions are in accord with opinions expressed in the past by other people, and are fully borne out by experience. Sir Kenneth Mackenzie says—

> "If agriculture is to be a source of living, can the farmer hope to be above want whose farm is not of a size to give him constant employment throughout the year? Opinions may differ as to the minimum size of a farm in Lewis, but no one with a cool head and ordinary powers of calculation can maintain that as an agricultural subject Lewis would be otherwise than over-populated with one-fourth of its present population. Were it divided into farms of £20 rental at the current letting value, it would not accommodate one-sixth of the existing inhabitants. The mass of the people are not farmers at all, but fishermen, and labourers with allotments. They might be converted into farmers if a profitable subject for their labour and means of stocking it were found, just as the unemployed in London might be turned into shopkeepers. It might be worth the country's while in either case to risk the cost of effecting such a conversion where there is a probability that the experiment may be successful; but if the farming capital was found, the land in Lewis would provide for only a select few of its inhabitants, and in these times there would be little prospect of the loaned capital being repaid. It is in these circumstances simply madness, in my view, for those seeking the welfare of the people to say that until the large farms and the forest are repeopled the surplus population is not to consider any proposal for improving their present condition."

There is the opinion of a man who is, at any rate, entitled to some weight, and who cannot be supposed for a moment, from his past history, to be speaking from any evil disposition towards the crofters. He is speaking in the position of a man who feels it his duty to tell them the truth; and it will be a very sad thing, indeed, if these truths do not come home to the people. Some people never tired of asserting that the Report of the Crofters' Commission, which has been sitting under the recent Act, has proved conclusively that the rents in the Highlands are too high. Well, their rents have not been reduced on an average more than rents all over the country, without any Crofters' Commission, have been reduced voluntarily. Even if you take these cases that always will occur in a large tract of country where there has been gross rack renting, you will find that the actual reductions of the Crofters' Commission are no more than the reductions which a number of men have made elsewhere of their own accord, owing to the present distressed state of agriculture. Has the value of stock got anything to do with it? [Dr. CAMERON dissented.] The hon. Member shakes his head. Has the value of produce got anything to do with it? Why, the whole of this House rang for two years with assertions from the Irish Members that it was the depression caused by the low prices of stock and produce that necessitated a reduction of rents. What is the case of Lewis? Stock that formerly sold for £5 a-head you cannot get 30*s.* for now. Is that not a case for the reduction of rent? Therefore, I say it is perfectly clear that the reductions caused by the decisions of the Commission have nearly brought the matter to the same footing as in the rest of the country. Suppose the rent were too high, then you come at once closer to the problem. If the rent be too high, it is plain that the produce of the land is not sufficient for the support of the people; and here again I should like to refer to what was said by me on the subject in 1886 in this House—

> "If, on the contrary, it turned out to be true that the rents were too high, then the result was contrary to the Commissioners' Report, but if that were the result there was an economic corollary that flowed from it, and that was that it was fatal to the idea of this Bill being a real settlement of the question, because, if it were proved that the rents, even as at present, on which all the calculations hitherto had been made as to the capabilities of the land for supporting the population, were too high, that would bring about this result—that it would become more certain than ever that the population could not be supported from the profits of the produce of the soil alone."

But the present crisis in Lewis has nothing whatever to do with the question of rent, for a very simple reason—the rent has not been paid. Therefore, if the people are at present destitute, it is not on account of excessive rents, but because the land has not produced even a bare subsistence for the people. Even in one of the best years they have ever had, in the parish of Lochs, out of a land rental on which one proprietor is assessed at £2,452, the sum actually paid in rent is only £350. That includes all agricultural holdings, but not shootings; so that the proprietor has got only about one-seventh part of his rent. Perhaps somebody will say that one-seventh of the rent is all the landlord should get. But what is the result? There are 6,284 people; and take them at the rate of six to a family, which is a very large estimate, you have 1,047 families residing in the Lochs parish. That makes six shillings and a few odd pence for each family. If it is said that the rent which Lady Matheson is getting is only a seventh, it comes to this, that the people are properly rented on their holdings at a rate which represents six shillings and a few odd pence for every six persons of the population. The thing has only to be stated to show its monstrous absurdity. I say, therefore, that fishing or labour of some other kind is absolutely essential, and as regards labour, that which practically proves its necessity is the fact that these enormous sums have been expended upon labour in the past, and that it is this enormous expenditure that in many cases has kept the wolf from the door. It has been contended that it is not the fact that the population is too large, but it was proved time after time by reports that real famine and an absolute breakdown on the part of the population has only been prevented on more than one occasion by the coming in of something from outside, which enabled them to succeed. They could never have lived before 1851 without the kelp industry, and they could never have lived after 1851 without the fishing industry. It cannot be denied that in Sutherlandshire, Ross-shire, Inverness-shire, and in Lewis it has formerly been possible for a landlord who had large personal property to pour out his money in the making of improvements, and thus giving employment to the Crofters, and it is not contested that vast sums had been thus expended in Lewis and elsewhere. That, however, is not possible now, and it is not contended that these proprietors have got the means of making any more improvements. With regard to the two places in which outbreaks have recently taken place, in both cases the proprietors were people who had spent a great deal of their time among their people. Lady Matheson, notwithstanding some abominable threatening letters which she has received, and which I earnestly trust are hoaxes, has persistently refused to leave Stornoway; and I believe she will remain there as long as she has a shilling left. She has been put to enormous expense, and has received nothing in return. She is a brave lady, and a most generous lady; and I am sure there is not a single Member in the House who sympathizes with the Crofters who will venture to say a single word against her as regards Lewis. It is said, of course, that Sir James Matheson expended this money with the expectation of making some profit out of it. Undoubtedly that is the case, but it is none the less the act of a kindly and right-thinking man. If Sir James could have carried on the works which he instituted in such a manner as to benefit the people with scarcely any return, not to speak of profit, he would have been glad to do so. All this shows the difficulty of struggling against a barren soil and an unpropitious climate. With respect to Lewis, full information has been given as to the enormous sums which had been expended there, and yet there has been no result in prosperity, because nature has been fighting against it. Labour is scarce, proprietors are crippled, and the vast sums that have been expended are bringing in no return. Now, the only thing that has a prospect of success is the fishing, and certainly, if a successful fishing industry could be established on the West Coast of Scotland, you may solve the question of the difficulty of population in the future. You cannot solve it for the immediate present. You may be able to sustain a large number of people if you establish a permanent and successful fishing; and with regard to that I may say Her Majesty's Government have made arrangements by which boats and gearing can be procured by fishermen on very easy terms—one-tenth of the cost to be provided in the case of new boats, and two-tenths in the case of old boats, the Government giving a loan on the footing that the boats will be fully insured for the remainder. I was glad to hear to-day that a gentleman who has, I believe, made a wonderful discovery in fish curing, has in prospect the establishment of a large industry on the West Coast of the Highlands, by which he believes he will be able not only to make a good profit himself, but to give remunerative labour to many people. I hope it will be admitted that the Government have done all that could be reasonably expected of them in the way of stimulating the fishing industry. As regards the destitution, the Government are in direct communication with those who are meeting the present want, and care will be taken that the greatest vigilance is exercised on the spot to prevent any calamitous results. Lastly, we come to the question which I believe lies at the root of this whole matter at the present time, and that is what is to be done in view of the fact—which I consider to be established on incontrovertible testimony—that the population is too heavy to be carried by the district? There is only one way of looking at the fact, and that is, that some part of the population should do, as all the populations of the rest of this country do—namely, go to some other place. Those are the worst enemies of the Highlands who are endeavouring to persuade the people that it is a cruel thing for the Government, or for other people, to endeavour to induce them to go to other countries. Love of country is a very proper sentiment; but if it had been carried out in the way proposed in the Highlands, it would have prevented this country from being the great country it is. Why it should be thought that the manliness and the pluck which are good all over the rest of the country should be bad in the West Highlands, I am utterly unable to conceive. In old days, when to leave their country practically meant expatriation, men have braved it, and we had all over this country monuments of the success of those men in other countries, by which they had shown their love and appreciation of the old country. We know perfectly well that Highlanders have gone forth to all parts of the world, and have distinguished themselves in arms, in Government, and in everything. I think there is a great deal too much of mawkish sentimentality about the question, and it does enormous harm. If these people could be persuaded that they are doing good to themselves and to their neighbours by going abroad, it would be the greatest possible blessing to these districts. How this is to be done is a totally different question. It must be voluntary; but one thing is quite clear, that every obstacle is put in the way of voluntary emigration by the people who try to persuade these unfortunate crofters that they can struggle against economic laws. I know there are people who hold the opinion that there is plenty of land for the crofters to live in comfort; but I hold that that opinion is contrary to the experience of the past. They have only been kept down in numbers by disease and by clan feuds. With regard to the latter, that kind of thing is not allowed now; and with regard to disease, protection is now given; and though with regard to children it is not, perhaps, so efficient as may be wished, still much has been done for the people. If these people could be convinced that it is a good and wise thing to go abroad, as others have done before them, I am sure that it would be of the greatest benefit, both to those who go and to those who are left behind. The Government is willing to entertain any substantial proposals from any number of persons who may desire to emigrate from the congested districts. More than that it would be extremely unwise to say. I invite hon. Members and their Friends to consider whether they are acting wisely in the interests of these people in endeavouring to persuade them to do that which can only be done up to a certain point. It has been proved by conclusive evidence from a vast number of sources that there is a limit to the productiveness of the soil and the number of people who can live upon it, and that that limit has been reached long ago. I have endeavoured, in the course of this speech, which has lasted already too long—[" No, no ! "]—to notice every point brought forward by hon. Gentlemen who have spoken. If I have omitted to notice anything, I should be glad to hear it now. But I think I have pretty well exhausted all that I ought to say. I think that this House, in dealing with the question, ought to realize that it is one which ought to be discussed dispassionately, and without any personal reflections. I have no objection whatever, and no Member of Her Majesty's Government has any objection whatever to any attack upon us in our official capacity for anything we have done. But I am sure every Member of this House must feel that this is a matter which ought to be considered with an earnest desire to find the best solution we can, and that the line of attack and recrimination is one which it is not wise to adopt. That destitution is ahead of us in Lewis at the present moment, there can be no question whatever. I am very glad, indeed, to think and to know that influential means are being taken to meet that destitution. But, after all, the present destitution is but the fringe of the question. We have our view, and some conclusion must be arrived at as to what is to be done in the future; and I hope I have stated clearly and temperately what I mean in giving expression to the view of Her Majesty's Government. I do trust that these views may at least be calmly and carefully considered. We can lend ourselves to no scheme which expresses a belief that, by endeavouring to break up present arrangements of land anywhere in these West Highlands, sufficient can be provided for the people in these districts. We express that opinion with regret; but we have formed it after most careful consideration. But it does not at all prevent the operation of the clauses of the Bill which became law two years ago, under which—if it is convenient to do so, and if it does not interfere with the rights of other people — additions may be made to Crofters' and to existing holdings. Undoubtedly the removal of some people from the congested districts would at once afford relief in respect of the amount of land available; because there is no question that crofts have been divided up until, as they now exist, they are absolutely insufficient to afford substantial means of subsistence. If some of these people could be removed to a place where they have a prospect of success, the land which is vacated would be a great comfort to those who are left; and we would not be favourable to any scheme of emigration upon the footing that crofts already divided up into too small patches are again to be occupied.

Our aim and intention would be that where people remove, the part of the croft divided off in the past should be added to it again, so as to provide a proper size of croft, and afford a reasonable help to the families who are left. We should be glad, indeed, to find in the course of time some people come forward for the purpose of being voluntarily emigrated. And recently, in the many cases which I know of, such a scheme has been eminently successful. Lady Gordon Cathcart succeeded in getting 11 families to emigrate in one year, and the result was that no less than 45 families emigrated in the following year. And I am convinced of this, that, if you could only get 12 or 20 families in Lewis to make the experiment, the whole of your agitation to tell them they ought not to emigrate would be defeated by the news which came from those who had emigrated. I assure the House that this matter has engaged, is engaging, and will engage the most earnest attention of Her Majesty's Government. It is our earnest desire, and I am sure it is the earnest desire of the House, that the best should be done for an interesting population such as we have in these Western Highlands—so different from those who live in other parts of the country. My hope is that the demoralization amongst them, which is at present rapidly spreading, will be checked; that they may come to believe that the Government has a real interest in them; that they and their friends will turn over a new leaf, and will calmly consider the question whether agitation is the mode by which they are to be brought to happiness, or whether happiness is not rather to be found by recognizing the Constitution as it really exists, by devoting their energies really to labour and to industry which may be remunerative, and not by seeking from the Government things which they never can obtain, and which, if they did obtain, it is my firm and confident belief would leave them in a few years' time no better off than they are at present.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) said, that in dealing with the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) he wished to say that a complaint was made that no Notice had been given of some of the subjects which had been alluded to, and that they had been sprung on the Government and on the House. At any rate, Mr. Speaker must have thought that the references which had been made to what occurred in the Highlands could properly be included in the debate, otherwise he would not have allowed hon. Gentlemen to deal with them. He (Dr. R. Macdonald) did not therefore think that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had good ground for grumbling on that score. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had begun with the statement with which he (Dr. R. Macdonald) perfectly agreed, for he had said that whatever the state of matters in the Highlands was now, it was owing to past legislation for which the Government were not responsible. He and other hon. Members from the Highlands had done their best to get the late Government to take the view of the matter which they were taking now that they were in Opposition, and all that could be said against the present Government was that it had helped the late Government in preventing the Crofter Members from getting those improvements in the Crofters' Act which they otherwise would have obtained. The Crofter Members now appealed to the present Government to act in the matter and to improve the legislation of past Sessions. The working of the Crofters' Act had shown the world that the measure would not do what the House and the Government who brought in the Bill expected it to do. It had done nothing of the sort, and they asked the present Government to improve the Act in that respect. They asked the Government why did they not do in the case of the Scotch Highlands what they had done in the case of Ireland? Why did they not break down the leases and allow farmers all over Scotland the same privileges as they had allowed Irish farmers? If the Government would only do that they would find more than one way out of the present difficulty, and it would be shown that there were plenty of farms for the poor crofters to go into, and that it would not be necessary for the word "emigration" to be the beginning and the end of the speech of a Minister of the Government on this question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had told them that nothing else but emigration could be done, and that the Crofter Members were advising these people not to emigrate. Well, certainly the Crofter Members were advising the crofters not to emigrate except on certain conditions. If the Government would give them a scheme of migration as well as emigration, then they would help with all the power they had; but so long as the Government refrained from doing this, and from telling them that the crofters should get additional land which was now used for deer and game, they could not agree with the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate that the people should leave their own country. Was it a good thing for a country that it should be denuded of its population? Were they to depopulate their own country in order to accommodate sportsmen from America who could not find land in their own country for the keeping and shooting of deer? He (Dr. R. Macdonald) would tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that, so long as this or any other Government would not give the Highlanders a scheme of migration, and would not give them land to cultivate from the deer forests and establish farms, they would get no help from the Crofter Members in trying to induce the crofters to emigrate. What was desirable, in the first instance, was that the crofters should thoroughly populate their own country, and that when that was done the surplus population should be sent to other countries. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman had declared that the distress was not owing to the present crofters, and that no matter what was done the people would not get better off. He (Dr. R. Macdonald) frankly allowed that that was the case; but what the Crofter Members had always been asking for in this House—and he thought they knew what the crofters wanted—was more land. They did not ask for reductions of rents, though they were granted. They had stated incidentally that the rents were too high, but they did not make much trouble about that matter. What was really laid stress upon was the necessity of giving the crofters more land, and it was more land that the Government would not give. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said—"If you give these people their land at 10*s.* an acre they will be no better off," and that was, no doubt, very true. The only way to improve their position was to give them more land; that, as a matter of fact, was the only solution of the question. It was entirely beside the question to talk about the present crofter system not having been introduced by the Government, and the Government not being to blame for keeping it on. The right hon. and learned Gentleman then entered upon a phase of his speech which he (Dr. R. Macdonald), as a Highlander, could hardly recognize as very patriotic. He had told them that the Highlanders were wanting in manliness and committed illegal acts. Well, he could tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that all manliness had not departed from the Highlanders, and that the Highlanders never had so much manliness in their lives as they had now. In olden times when a Highlander met his landlord he would take off his hat to him in the road half-a-mile before he came up to him; but all that had now changed, and the crofter now went up and looked his landlord straight in the face. It was because the crofters had acquired more manliness that they refused to be ground down by such laws as were now in force in Scotland. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in referring to the deer raid in Lewis, had stated that it did not seem at all to indicate to the Government or anyone else, that there was starvation amongst the people. He had said that if the people had been starving what one would have expected them to do would have been to kill a sheep or two and take them home and eat them. But that was a thing which a Highlander would not demean himself by doing—he would rather starve than steal a sheep; but the Highlanders did not see much harm in pulling down a wall as a protest against the present law. As to whether the deer were taken home by the raiders or not, he had a great deal more information on the point than the right hon. and learned Gentleman, because he happened to have had as his guest for some time the gentleman who was at the head of the raid, and he had learned from him that a great many deer had been taken home by the Highlanders to their families; and if the right hon. and learned Gentleman would promise not to prosecute, he might, later on, be furnished with the names of the families in question. So that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had made another mistake when he argued that the agitation had not in view the relief of distress. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that the Mover of the Motion had passed lightly over the rioting at Aignish and Clashmore, but that was a matter of opinion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to have employed this evening in putting up men of straw in order to knock them down again. He said that the hon. Members who had spoken seemed to entertain such and such views, when in reality they did not do anything of the kind. No doubt, Aignish and Clashmore people were wrong in what they had done; but still there was something to explain their conduct. The explanation was simply the despair of the people. They felt that they must do something legal or illegal — something that would make their names talked about in this country, and get into the English as well as into the Scotch papers; and they were even willing to undergo the awful sentences which had been passed upon them in the Court of Session the other day in order to bring their case before the country. He (Dr. R. Macdonald) was not much of a lawyer, and he would not enter into a long discussion with him as to the decision in Edinburgh. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said it was all right; but the country did not think so, and, unless he was very much mistaken, before very long an Edinburgh jury would have another opportunity of trying crofters. In this way the question would be again brought up, and the public would see whether the first decision was right. The people had come to find that deer were nobody's property, and that for taking them all they had to pay was a trespass fine of £2. No doubt, a great many people would be willing to risk such a fine as that when they would have the prospect of taking as much vension as would pay the fine, and when they knew that they themselves would go scot-free. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to observations made at public, or semi-public, meetings, and had quoted the statement of one person, that he was prepared to shed his blood in the cause; and he had asked what meaning was to be attached to that sort of thing. Well, the right hon. and learned Gentleman knew what his own principal witness against these deer raids in Edinburgh was going to do. This person had said that he was going to the forest alone, if no one else went with him; and it was plain what little value was to be attached to any such statements of the kind. These men of both sides said things which they did not mean. Men threatened to do heroic acts; but such statements were not worth making capital out of. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had been most severe with the awful lawlessness which had been committed at Aignish. He had stated that there had been a mob of 5,000 or 6,000 people; but he had gone on to refer to an incident which clearly showed that the people were not lawless, because he had mentioned the fact that the Sheriff had been able to go and smoke his pipe amongst the men, who had not attempted to interfere with him in any way. It therefore did not come very well from the mouth of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to talk of these people as being very lawless. So far from doing the Sheriff of Stornaway any injury, the people had not even spoken disrespectfully of him. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of the Royal Scots Regiment being called upon; but he had not referred to an incident which was not very creditable to those soldiers—he had not mentioned that when the crofters came down with spades and pikes the soldiers were put to flight.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Will the hon. Member tell me where that happened?

Dr. R. MACDONALD said, he believed it had occurred at Aignish; at any rate, the newspapers reported it, and he had not seen it contradicted. With regard to another matter alluded to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, it was only fair to remark that the witnesses for the defence ought to have been assisted to get to Edinburgh. It should not be said that witnesses in such cases as this were of no use. Scores of people had written to him (Dr. R. Macdonald), and pointed out that witnesses could be brought up to show that the men in custody were innocent and to prove an alibi. It was, no doubt, a great inconvenience to the poor crofters who had not a shilling in the world, to be removed from Stornaway to other parts, and not only was that unjust in itself, but it was unjust in enabling the Government to keep away witnesses for the defence. As to the sentences passed upon these poor people, very few Scotch Members, he thought, would agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman that they were very light. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman thought that a sentence of nine months' imprisonment on a poor woman for simply having thrown a clod at a policeman was a light sentence, his view and the view of the right hon. and learned Gentleman differed. Then with regard to rents in the Highlands. No doubt, they had been lowered, and very properly so; but did the right hon. and learned Gentleman know of any reduction—except in the single case of the Duke of Sutherland—having been given before the year 1886. There were many cases in which reductions had been given upon large farms, but no reductions had been given to the crofters until the Crofters' Commission got settled down to its work. If there were no Crofters' Commission, he did not believe that the crofters would have obtained any reduction in their rents. Everybody knew that the crisis in the farming industry occurred long before 1887, when the Crofters' Commission began to sit. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to Lady Matheson as a brave woman for continuing to live in Lewis, but he (Dr. R. Macdonald) would put it to any hon. Member whether that statement was correct and whether it could be called a sign of bravery on the part of any one to continue to reside on the Island. The right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that the Government had done all that they could in this matter, and if that were the case then their "all" was very little indeed, and this or any other Government would have to do a great deal more than had yet been done to satisfy or allay the agitation in the Highlands. Before he left the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech he must just remark, with regard to the sentences which had been obtained against the prisoners, that if the jury had known what the sentence was to have been it would have influenced them very much in finding a verdict. Even the jurors had their hearts touched when they found that the sentences were not such as they expected. The Crofter Members did not contend that there were not too many people in Lewis; but while admitting that the place was over-populated, they pointed out that three-fourths of the land was under deer forests and sheep farms, and only one-fourth was in the hands of the people, and they asked that the Government should give them that three-fourths, or as much as the people could make use of. When education was more advanced than it is now in the Highlands, the Government would find that it was not necessary to emigrate the young men and women, but that they would emigrate themselves very quickly. With respect to the Duke of Sutherland's improvements, he would point out that in no case had any of the improved land been allotted to a crofter. They had all been offered to large farmers; but if the Duke of Sutherland would try the experiment of offering them to the crofters he would not be very likely to try unsuccessfully. The hon. Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland) had said that it was not very nice for them as Highlanders to talk about the poverty of the Highlands, and that was very true; but, after all, that was the only way to bring the subject before the world. The Report on Lewis gave a number of incidents showing the poverty of the inhabitants. It stated in one case, that of Kenneth M'Kenzie, that he had no potatoes; that he had got destitution meal; that he had two beds badly equipped for nine people to sleep in; that a son of 17 and a son of 10 had to sleep with two daughters of 21 and 14, or else sleep with their parents, as there was no other way of doing it. Many other cases of this kind were quoted. It was a well known fact that there were formerly 37 crofting villages in what was now the (Park) deer forest, averaging from two or six families up to 20. Those villages had disappeared and the inhabitants had not gone abroad, but were crowded amongst the other people. The landlords did not come out of this matter very well. With reference to the condition of the people of Lewis, all the medical authorities, with one exception, agreed in saying that the state of things was very serious there. As to the Crofters' Commission, it was sometimes said that they ought to be satisfied with what had been done in the Highlands, and with the Courts which had been established; but, although rents had been in many instances reduced, the crofters had been ordered to pay very large percentages of the arrears. It had been held out to them that they would get more land. He did not know whether hon. Members in all parts of the House were aware of the fact, but the Crofter Members were. However, although it was understood that the crofters were to have more land, already the Crofters' Commission had dealt with 1,500 odd crofters, but in no single instance had they given an inch more of land. Hon. Members had thought that the Government of the day had been giving them something, when in reality they were giving them nothing at all. The crofters, as a matter of fact, had not been treated as favourably as the tenants on the large farms, because, whereas the former had only received reductions to the extent of 38 per cent, the large farmers had received reductions ranging from 37 to 57 per cent, and this notwithstanding that the crofters ought to have the benefit of all their improvements. How could the right hon. and learned Gentleman think that they were going to have peace in the Highlands if this was the sort of justice that was to be meted out to the people? He maintained that the crofters would be wanting in that manliness which the right hon. and learned Gentleman referred to if they put up with such a thing, and it was for the Government to see that something was done for them. The crofters were quite willing to go to prison rather than to put up with the existing state of things. Therefore it was desirable that the Government should do something. Though he sat on the Opposition side of the House, up to to-night he had had very great expectations of the Tory Government. His hopes were in a fair way to be disappointed, however; still he must express a hope that something better would be done than emigration.

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) said, he had been very much amused to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) deliver such an interesting speech and ask hon. Members to look at this matter in the calmest manner. He thought that this appeal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was evidence that he was somewhat afraid of the result of the present condition of things being allowed to continue. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had alluded to those Members who represented Highland constituencies as agitators, and said that hon. Gentlemen were giving advice to the people in those constituencies which they dared not get up and report in that House. But he (Mr. Macdonald Cameron) had sat in that House for two years, and he had never heard from them anything that could be considered as advice to the people [to indulge in lawlessness; on the contrary, it was a wonder to him that they should have accepted for so long as they had the condition of things. The hon. Gentlemen referred to were agitators in this sense—that they were doing all they could to get the wrongs of the people righted by what they believed to be Constitutional agitation; and he thought it was perfectly undeniable that such wrongs did exist. If the Government did not listen to the Constitutional agitation which they were engaged in, how, he asked, could they possibly preserve law and order in the country, because otherwise the people would be driven to do what all deplored? The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that no one would get up and repudiate those acts. He (Mr. Macdonald Cameron) repudiated those acts. He was exceedingly sorry that the people had committed such acts; but it was not the people who were to blame; it was those who refused to right the wrongs of these people, and in saying that he spoke of right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House. If the present attitude towards these people was maintained, the present agitation would probably spread and there was no saying what the result might be. Reference had been made to the Report recently presented with regard to the position in Lewis. It was impressed on the House at the time of the passing of the Bill by hon. Members for Scotland generally, that it was of great moment and necessity that the cottars should be possessed of some land, and the result was that, not having got that land. they were in great destitution through the failure of fishing and the change in economic conditions. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to the experiments made by his Grace the Duke of Sutherland; but he would point out that, in the first place, the land selected was at too high an altitude to allow corn to ripen upon it. He had heard that his Grace was badly advised in this matter. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to Mr. Kenneth Murray as one of the most intelligent and enterprizing men in the county of Ross, who had the confidence of the noble Duke and advised him to make those experiments, which were made at his Grace's expense. But it was found that a great mistake had been committed, no matter how practical a man Mr. Murray was. He gave the noble Duke every credit for desiring to do the best he could for his people; but this mistake had been made, and starvation having almost overtaken them, it could not be expected that they would appreciate his Grace's action to the extent they would otherwise have done. If his Grace, instead of spending this large sum per acre, had placed on the land the descendents of the people evicted some eighty years ago, he would have got a large number of men to go there; the land would have been brought into cultivation at no expense to his Grace, and besides, he would be at that moment one of the most highly respected landlords in the Highlands of Scotland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said the young men would be much better off if they would only leave the land and go elsewhere; but he looked at it in quite a different light, and he considered that the reference of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was a most unfortunate one. He looked on the instance given by the right hon. and learned Gentleman as evidence of the great physical and mental power which the Scotch people possessed, and which, if it were well treated on the soil, would develop the country. Why should they send the best blood and sinew of the country to America and other countries? He said that the large cities of the country would become effete, disintegrate, and run to seed, so to speak, unless there was an influx of a healthy element from the rural districts. He held in his hand some cuttings from a Northern newspaper relating to the reductions made to the crofters since they had been engaged in this particular business. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said, in the course of his speech, that reductions of rents meant nothing, and that they had been reduced in accordance with what was obtaining elsewhere; but as his hon. Friend the Member for Ross and Cromarty (Dr. R. Macdonald) had pointed out, they would not have been reduced were it not for Lord Napier's wishes, and for the passing of the Act of 1886. He said it was begging the question to bring forward such a miserable case as the right hon. and learned Gentleman had adduced. There were two estates mentioned in the Paper before him, one of Lord Macdonald and the other of Colonel Frazer; on the first of these there were seven or eight townships, and the reductions had been about 50 per cent; but what struck him forcibly was the great number of widows on these estates, and the high rents these poor women had been paying for many years before the passing of the Act. There were no less than 35 on the Macdonald estate, and their rents had been reduced by 30 and 35, and, in one or two cases, by 40 per cent. He thought they ought to try to get the landlords to disgorge the money they had improperly exacted for some considerable time back from these poor women. In connection with the fact that landlords had been forced to reduce the rents, he might mention the case of a landlord who had not been so forced, but who, knowing that it was better to deal sympathetically with his tenantry, called them together, and told them to value the land for themselves. This was Mr. Macdonald, of Skaebost, in Skye, and the result was that a committee was established for the purpose, the land was valued, and in most instances he got a fair rent, and in several others it was agreed that he should be paid more than he considered the land was worth. Let hon. Members contrast that with some of the neighbouring estates, and also with the case of Mr. Sutherland, of Skibo, who refused to accept the rents which were fixed by the Crofters' Commission. He had not that pessimistic view of the working of the Crofters' Act which was entertained by some hon. Members. He believed it was a great gain. It had admitted for the first time in Scotch legislation that the landlord could not do exactly what he liked with his land, especially if in doing so he acted against the well-being of the community. He was afraid that hon. Gentlemen opposite had been basing their arguments on the principle that if a man possessed property it did not matter whether he managed it in a manner injurious to the community or not. He was sorry that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had not promised greater amelioration for the crofters than he had done in the speech they had heard that evening. With regard to the sentences which had been passed lately on the poor crofters, and which it was said were not cumulative, it was monstrous that a man should get 15 months' imprisonment, and women nine and 12 months, for being present at what was practically nothing more than a moderate attempt to advertize their grievances. Let hon. Members contrast those sentences with what occurred in Scotland a few years ago, when the City of Glasgow Bank directors were arraigned before the chief tribunal of the country for having defrauded widows and orphans, and reduced them to poverty. Those men got off with a few months' imprisonment, and he was reading the other day, in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, the account of a man who came home one evening drunk and trampled on his wife, and crushed her almost to death, and who, when brought before a London magistrate for the offence, got off simply because he was the wife's husband. With regard to the estate of Lady Matheson, he knew Lady Matheson to be a most worthy woman; but in the midst of this agitation she was perfectly helpless; she was surrounded by the same sort of advisers who had surrounded proprietors in the Highlands from time immemorial. He exceedingly regretted to read some little time ago that a deputation had waited on her Ladyship, asking for a greater amount of land for the crofters, and, in some instances, for a reduction of rental. To this deputation her Ladyship replied—"I cannot give you what you want when you cannot pay the rent of the small piece of land you have got." When the Crofters' Bill was passing through Committee in that House it was repeatedly stated and urged on the Government that these people could get a very good living if they had more land; and it was distinctly stated, in reply to Lady Matheson, that the crofters could not pay their rents on their small holdings because they were not large enough to occupy the whole of their labouring time, and so yield sufficient for their subsistence. Her Ladyship said—"If you are not able to maintain yourselves at home, you should go to foreign lands and make provision for yourselves." But that, he (Mr. Macdonald Cameron) said, was just what the Highlander would not do. He was now reading the Penny Press; and, if hon. Members liked the term, the Constitutional agitation was going on among the Highlanders, and they did not regard the alternative offered them as the solution of the difficulty. There was another point he would mention in connection with this subject. These people believed—whether rightly or wrongly—that they, as descendants of the head and progenitors of the Clan, had a right to the Clan lands. That belief governed them; it would continue the present agitation; and the Government might send their troopships with soldiers and police, but they would never drive the Highlanders into believing the contrary. There was no doubt that a great deal of the existing destitution was due to the failure of fishing. He did not mean by that that they did not catch as many fish as in times past; in fact, they caught a great deal more; but there were difficulties in the way of their obtaining a market for it. A few years ago a large number of the Western Highlanders used to hire themselves to the fish curers at a large and handsome wage, *plus* a certain sum per cran for the herrings they took; but in recent years there had been much competition, not only among the fish curers themselves, but several Continental ports that were previously open to the British fisherman were now closed, so that the Northern curers were not able to give so large a bounty as formerly. The result was that those Lewis men who went to the East for a few months' fishing had practically come back empty handed, whereas previously they earned sufficient money in six weeks or two months to enable them to carry their families through with comfort for the better part of the year. He was sorry the right hon. and learned Gentleman, on behalf of the Government, had not seen his way, by timely assistance, to allay the agitation among these poor people.

The Government had power under the Crofters' Act to utilize £20,000 for the purpose of assisting these fishermen on the North and West Coast; and one thing had struck him in connection with this subject—namely, that not a single shilling had been advanced to the people for whom that House had authorized the money to be employed. They had made terms which those men could not possibly accept; and in that way the most important part of the Act had become practically a dead letter. The Government said that they would never listen to the proposal on behalf of these men; but there was a power more supreme than that of Her Majesty's Government, and that power was outside the House of Commons, and it would decide in this matter. The Government had created a precedent, and they could not go back upon it; and he said that it would cost the country much less to spend money in helping the people to earn an honest livelihood on their native soil than in sending ships and men to coerce them into obedience to iniquitous laws or emigrating them to foreign lands.

MR. ASHER (Elgin, &c.) said, he did not intend to travel over the wide range of subjects which had been introduced by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, for if all speakers were to do that the debate on the Address would be indefinitely prolonged. No subject at the present time occupied more of the attention and the interest of the people of Scotland than the state of matters in the Highlands. They were now in possession of an official Report from the gentlemen appointed to make an inquiry, indicating, that although up to the present time there had been few, or no cases, of actual starvation, yet that the time was close at hand when the people in some parts of the West Coast of Scotland would be undergoing all the privations of absolute starvation. That was a state of matters requiring the immediate attention of the Government; and with that information before the Government, it appeared to him that, in the absence of any adequate explanation, it was expedient that this House should express its sense of the propriety of that matter being noticed in the Speech from the Throne. As to the causes of that state of matters, he had little doubt that the more immediate cause was the great adversity in the fishing industry; but he would remind the House that that was not a temporary cause or one that would pass away in a limited time. It was due to a change which had been brought about in the method of prosecuting the industry. Formerly the fish-curers employed boats' crews at specified rates, the curers taking the risks of the results of the fishing for the season. But that system was found to be disastrous for the fish-curers, and the new method had been adopted of letting the men work for themselves, and sell the fish to the curers daily at the market rates. In this way men from the West Coast who had hitherto found employment on the East Coast at fixed rates had to take their chance of the results, whether profitable or not. In bad years like the present they would make little or nothing. That being so, it became all the more important to consider the other schemes for the amelioration of the condition of the crofters. But before coming to that, he would refer to a matter in connection with which the Lord Advocate had appealed to him (Mr. Asher)—namely, the administration of the Criminal Law. Now, he had no hesitation in saying that he regretted sincerely that the agitation or the movement connected with the crofters should to any extent whatever be sullied by anything in the nature of crime. He thought it most desirable, in the interests of the crofters, that they should keep in all respects within the strict limits of the law. At the present moment they enjoyed a very large measure of the sympathy of the people of Scotland, and, for his part, he believed that that sympathy would remain with them, and that they would have the best efforts of the Scottish people and their Representatives to secure every right and legitimate demand; and the only ground on which he would conceive that they would forfeit that sympathy and support was if they so far forgot themselves as to give way to a system of criminality. But when he came to the part of the speech of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate dealing with the Government proposals of amelioration, it appeared to him that there were vital principles distinguishing the right hon. and learned Gentleman's views from the views entertained on that side of the

House. His right hon. and learned Friend appeared to place as the first and most effective ameliorative method, the emigration of the people; then, secondly, that there should be some aid given to the fishing industry; and in the third place—if, indeed, it was recognized at all—some alteration of the rights of the people with regard to the occupation of the land. Now, on that head, he (Mr. Asher) humbly took a different view. He would class the various means in precisely the inverse order from that in which they were stated by his right hon. and learned Friend. It appeared to him that the most natural quarter in which to look for the amelioration of the crofters' condition was a further possession of the land in the district where he lived. He did not suggest that there should be anything in the nature of spoliation, or taking the land without due compensation; but he thought there should be made available to the people of a district all the land in their neighbourhood susceptible of profitable use for cultivation or pasture, they, of course, obtaining possession on fair and reasonable terms as between them and the owner. His right hon. and learned Friend—and it was greatly to be regretted—seemed to depreciate very much the efficacy of the Crofters' Act, and to look back with satisfaction upon the predictions made to that effect when the Bill was passing through the House. But now that the Act was in operation and being carried out by a Royal Commission, he (Mr. Asher) thought it would have been more conducive to the benefit of the Highlands if his right hon. and learned Friend had spoken of the Act as a measure which was to be carried out so as to give all the benefits which could possibly be conferred upon the people within the limits of its provisions.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I did not suggest anything to the contrary. What I said, and still maintain, was that the Act was not efficacious for the purpose it was intended by its promoters.

Mr. ASHER said, he quite understood what his right hon. and learned Friend meant, and regretted his depreciatory remarks. He admitted the Act might be in many respects defective and incomplete. There was no doubt it embodied a new principle. That was conceded at the time. It was to a large extent tentative, and was guarded and restricted so as to let the principle be tried without being unduly extended. But if it had been inefficacious to produce the results intended, he should have listened with more satisfaction if his right hon. and learned Friend had told the House in what respect it had been found inefficacious, and what was necessary for the purpose of remedying its defects. They had been told that under the Act there had been no extension of the crofters' holdings. If that were so, undoubtedly the Act had not fulfilled one of the primary purposes which its promoters intended. The three leading ideas on which the Act was passed were, first, the reduction of the rent to a point which indicated a fair rent; second, the extension of the area of the crofters' holdings; and, thirdly, the development of the fishing industry by means of loans to fishermen for the purpose of prosecuting their industry. With regard to the first, he was disposed to think the Act had fairly fulfilled its purpose, because there could be no doubt there had been large reductions of rent. His right hon. and learned Friend said the reductions which the Act had brought about had not been larger than were voluntarily given by landlords in other parts of Scotland. He believed that in many parts of Scotland landlords had given large and liberal reductions; but he was afraid that had not been universal. But when one remembered, what must not be overlooked, that the crofters and their predecessors were the persons who had, to a very large extent, created the value of their holdings, he was inclined to think there would not have been such reductions as had been granted without the agency of the Crofters' Act. As to rents, he thought all the evidence justified the passing of the Act, and showed its success. But in regard to the extension of the holdings, if it were the case that up to the present there had been no extension of the crofters' holdings under the Act, then, in his humble opinion, the Act had failed in that department. He should have liked to hear from the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate what had been the experience of the Commissioners in that respect. If the Act had been inoperative, was it due to any undue stringency in the Act, or to what other cause? He was aware that there were certain provisions in the Act regarding deer forests which he did not think were introduced by the Party to which he belonged. He had never said, neither did he hold the opinion, that there ought to be a complete annihilation of deer forests in Scotland. He believed there were portions of Scotland which could be devoted to no more useful purpose than deer forests; but, on the other hand, he contended that all those parts of the mountainous districts which could be profitably applied to the purpose of cultivation or pasture ought to be dedicated to these purposes, in preference to deer forests, where they had a teeming population which could not find sustenance in any other way. If the Crofters' Act had failed to affect deer forests to the extent of giving the people the possession, on fair terms, of those portions of land at present under deer, which were susceptible of profitable cultivation or pasture, then, in his opinion, the Act had failed in its purpose, and the sooner it was amended the better. Then, with regard to the fishing industry, he was glad to hear that arrangements had been made to facilitate loans being granted to fishermen under the Act. From the time of the passing of the Act in 1886 to the present, there had, as far as he knew, been no loan effected for the purpose of enabling fishermen to procure boats and other implements for fishing. But he did not care to criticize the past if they were to have things put right in the future; and he received with great satisfaction the statement of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, that arrangements had at last been made which, he hoped, might result in the fishermen being able to take advantage of these provisions, and obtain the means of prosecuting the fishing industry, in which he agreed with his right hon. and learned Friend was to be found one of the most important channels for improving the unfortunate condition of the people of the West Coast. With regard to emigration, he would put that in the third rank, though he by no means left it out of view as a means of alleviating the condition of the people. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was aware that there had been rumours in Scotland for some time that the Government were about to propose a scheme having for its object the providing of facilities for those crofters to emigrate who were disposed to do so. There was no doubt that the idea that such a scheme was contemplated had taken possession of the public mind to a certain extent, and it had been spoken of in official utterances as under consideration; and he thought it would have been a most appropriate time for Her Majesty to have intimated to the people of Scotland in the Speech from the Throne what was the result at which the Government had arrived. He quite believed that many parts of the Highlands and North-West of Scotland were of such a character that they should have at frequent intervals overcrowding of the population, and he had no doubt that emigration, which had been a common practice all along amongst Scotsmen, would be a most wholesome principle to introduce there. At the same time, it was impossible to ignore the fact that there was a very great disinclination amongst the people to go away. He was bound to say, whilst he regretted it, that it excited his sympathy. He had no doubt that it was largely due to this. Distinguishing these people from Scotsmen on the mainland, they were less intelligent, less well-educated, more grouped together in small communities, and, above all, they were much poorer; and those small groups of people have positively only one possession in the world and that was the sympathy and charity of the neighbours amongst whom they lived. It was impossible to read the Report of Sheriff Fraser and Mr. M'Neill without being struck by the extraordinary extent to which the poor in that locality helped those who were a little poorer; and it was perfectly intelligible that those poor destitute people should have some comfort in the thought that at the last extremity they would always have a share of the little belonging to a neighbour, however poor, and so feel unwilling to renounce that, their last possession, and go abroad amongst strangers upon whom they would have no claim. He sympathized with the feeling which found its origin in that source; but he deeply regretted it. He thought it would be very much better for the people in the West of Scotland themselves, and for the country, if they could only become imbued with the same spirit of enterprize which had sent Scotsmen from other parts of Scotland into the Colonies and elsewhere abroad. But he did not believe that the result would be accomplished by adopting the policy proposed by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, of putting emigration in the front and foreground as the first remedial step for the present condition of the Highlands. It could only be efficaciously and practically adopted when all those portions of the land which the people could occupy with advantage had been made available for them. When, in addition to that, they had the fullest facilities afforded them for the prosecution of the fishing industry at home, then, and after that only, would it become expedient to press the emigration theory. While appreciating what the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate said as to the fishing industry, he should have been glad to have heard something on the subject of railway rates, because, considering the situation of the locality in question and the difficulty of carrying the produce of the fishing to an available market, he was afraid until they had some legislation in the direction of making the railway rates for the carriage of fish very much lower than at present, they never could get the full benefit conferred upon those people of the fishing industry even by the instrumentality of those advances which it was proposed should be made by the Government. On the grounds he had stated, it humbly appeared to him that this Amendment ought to be adopted, and accordingly it was his intention to support his hon. Friend.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) said, that notwithstanding the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had gone over almost all the ground connected with this subject, he thought his speech most unsatisfactory, because in substance he had really left the question just where it was when he began. The Government he said had only one thing to propose, and that was the encouragement of voluntary emigration. The right hon. and learned Gentleman did not tell them by what means the Government intended to do this, but he limited himself to voluntary emigration, and having done so he had not moved the question one step onwards. He did not think the Government could leave this question where it was. It appeared to him impossible that they could decline to take some steps to deal with the condition of the people in Lewis, where a state of things existed which they would be compelled to deal with. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that a Member of that House had spoken in a somewhat derogatory manner of the late Sir James Matheson, and he believed those remarks referred to himself. He could assure him that the report of his (Mr. Provand's) remarks was most inaccurate. He accepted the right hon. and learned Gentleman's own description of Sir James Matheson when he said he was a business man. His whole connection with Lewis was of a business kind; he had paid £200,000 for the Island, and he bought it on terms that would give 5 per cent for his money; he also bought with it the right to sit in that House, which he (Mr. Provand) believed in 1844 carried with it a certain monetary value. He thought all the rents collected in that Island since the late Sir James Matheson bought it, with the exception of a small amount, had been re-invested in various enterprises in the Island, and no one regretted more than he did the unfortunate outcome of every venture the owner had put his money into in that place. He did not intend to travel over any of the ground in the North of Scotland which was covered by the Amendment except Lewis, because it was there, he thought, the Government would find a state of things which they would be compelled to deal with. He did not think it was possible to exaggerate the importance of the question relating to Lewis. Within the borders of this little Island they had examples of every kind of evil to which the crofters were exposed. They had had crofters turned out for sheep, and they had had sheep turned out for deer; they had squatting; they had general poverty and sometimes destitution. Besides all these they had had what he did not think existed in other parts of the Highlands; they had over population. The present condition of Lewis was really that of impending famine, and he did not think it was possible for the Island to be brought into any condition in which the inhabitants might live in ordinary comfort unless Parliament intervened. Legislation could not long be postponed with safety. The present state of the Island was not, however, without precedents; they had experienced many periods of scarcity and some periods of actual famine. They had the details brought before the House in 1851 in the Report of Mr. McNeill. That gentleman predicted that there would be a great famine. His prediction, however, was not fulfilled; still it was possible to account for the fact that his prophecy was not fulfilled; as he could not have foreseen everything that had taken place since; indeed it was only during a few of the intervening years that there had been at all good times in the Island. In 1883, only five years ago, there was great scarcity, and about £7,000 or £8,000 was subscribed in Glasgow and other places for distribution in kind amongst the crofters. It was impossible that the inhabitants could live for ever on charity. Everyone would like to see every man in Lewis able to maintain himself from the time he became a householder until he passed away. Everyone would like to see him a self-dependent man all his life. If such a condition was good for anyone it must be good for a community, but it was impossible for the community of Lewis to be self-dependent in future unless Parliament took up the work. He had received a Report within the last 10 days of an official kind. In that Report it was said that about 1,600 families, that was about 9,000 persons, or rather more than a third of the inhabitants of the Island, would require to be relieved with food and seed potatoes, and also with clothing during the coming spring and the early summer months. Of course, good fishing,—and they had that at present in some part of the coast of Lewis—might have some effect on that estimate. At the same time it was clear from the official Report that had been made, and also from all the other information that came from Lewis, that they were at the beginning of a severe economic crisis amongst the inhabitants. The condition, in fact, was that of impending famine. On page 1 of the Report to which he alluded, and which had just been laid on the Table of the House, Mr. McNeill said that from his inquiries wide-spread destitution amongst the population seemed inevitable. On page 5 Mr. McNeill said that on all sides he found evidence of the deepest poverty and dejection, and following that he remarked—

> "In short, within the next two months, so far as I have been able to discover, the bulk of the population will be brought face to face with the necessity of killing cattle and sheep to sustain life, while those who have no stock will have to appeal to the Parochial Board or to starve."

He had mentioned that charitable funds were being raised in different places, so that there was no positive risk of actual starvation amongst the people until the early summer; but if the people had to depend upon the parochial rates starvation would certainly ensue. Mr. McNeill stated that the scale on which relief was allowed was altogether inadequate. There was no doubt that was correct, because he (Mr. Provand) found that in one case 4*s.* a-month was allowed to fill nine mouths. It was true that this widow and children had some extraneous support from neighbours and others, but to allow her only 4*s.* a-month was to aggravate the conditions under which she must starve to death unless she was assisted in some other way. There was more than that to be said about the parochial assistance. The rates were at the present time very much in arrear; the bank account had been overdrawn, and the effect was that in Lewis they were fast approaching a state of things which had no precedent in this country since 1841 or 1842; that was to say, the whole of the rates in Lewis would exceed the whole amount collected for rent. The Island was very nearly in a state of insolvency. He had got a Return of the whole stock in the possession of the crofters, and according to the current rates that stock was worth about £40,000. Against that £40,000 and a few shares they had in boats, they owed on the average somewhere about three years' rent, about £25,000; they owed rates and other debts, and he was certain the crofter population of the Island of Lewis was at this moment insolvent. With respect to the rents he did not think the right hon. and learned Gentleman stated the case quite clearly. Perhaps he might be excused if he mentioned how far the rents were behind. The rents had been getting behind for years past. The rent which the crofters were supposed to pay was about £8,200 a-year. In 1883 they only paid £6,300; in 1884 they paid less than £5,000; in 1885 about £5,000; in 1886, £3,600; and last year they paid less than £2,000 out of the £8,200; that was to say, less than a quarter of the rent due. He understood the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate to say that they had paid no rent, or, at least, were paying no rent at present. That might now be correct, but some of the rents at least were paid up to December. The total amount of rent due in Lewis was about £27,000, and nearly the whole of that was due by crofters. After this statement of the case no one would question that the matter demanded the attention of the House, and that there was ample justification for his hon. Friend the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) placing his Amendment on the Paper. The condition of Lewis was known to Her Majesty's Government weeks before Her Majesty's Speech was prepared, and yet there was not a single word of reference to the condition of the North of Scotland in the Speech from the Throne. On the other hand, the Government appeared to think it quite reasonable to devote a whole paragraph to the information that a Mission had been sent to the King of Abyssinia, a very trumpery matter indeed as compared with the state of the Northern parts of this country. There might be some difference of opinion as to the causes of the present state of affairs. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had spoken about the population of Lewis; but he did not intend to follow the right hon. and learned Gentleman in putting the matter in the detailed way in which he did. He should try to put it so that any Member of the House could carry the figures easily in his mind. There was no doubt that Lewis was very much over populated. From the beginning of the present century until now the population of the Lewis had increased threefold, whereas during the same time the population of the whole of Scotland had only increased two and a-quarter fold. From 1841 to 1881 the population of Lewis increased 50 per cent, whereas that of the whole of Scotland, during the same period, only increased 40 per cent. In these 40 years 2,300 persons emigrated; but, nevertheless, it was found that the population of the Island had increased much faster than that of the whole of Scotland. These were very significant figures, and he was certain it was impossible to exaggerate their importance. One would think that when a population increased to such an extent all the outlets and opportunities would be given to the people to benefit themselves as far as it was possible—that no door would be shut upon them. The House would presently see how far the Government had carried out views of this kind. Amongst the accidental causes of the present condition of things was the failure of fishing since 1884. The precarious existence of these people was shown by the fact that in 1883, just one year before the fishing began to fail, a single storm left them with very little to eat, and in that year between £7,000 and £8,000 had to be distributed in relief amongst the people; but there were two other causes which had accentuated the distress, and that was the suspension of two forms of credit to which the people were accustomed to look for assistance—the advances which were made by fish curers had stopped, and so had also the supplies by country store keepers, because it was said they could not go on trusting the crofters any longer. The Crofters' Commission for the settlement of fair rents would shortly go to Lewis; but did the Government suppose for a single moment that the Crofters' Commission could possibly deal with the present condition of things in the Island? It was impossible that the Commission could do so—[Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!]—for their power, as he understood it, was to revise the rents; at least, if they possessed any other powers they had not, up to the present, exercised them. A great many applications had been made, and a few had been considered; but he was not aware that the Commission had enlarged the holdings of any crofter. What did the Government intend to do? He understood that the Front Ministerial Bench agreed with him that the Crofters' Commission could not deal with the present state of things in Lewis. If they could do nothing to assist the people to emigrate, he maintained that the Government should give them an answer as to what they intended to do. If the Crofters' Commission settled what they might call fair rents, although he was unable to see on what basis they would go, that would not settle the matter. They might reduce the crofters' rents, and they might wipe out the arrears altogether; but if they left the Island in its present congested state there would be nothing for the squatters, cottars, and others, who were living there at present on charity, but to continue to do so. One point had not been touched upon in the debate as yet, and that was how many people Lewis would keep. Of course, it was very easy to say that so many persons given a certain number of acres could be accommodated; but no one could really say what the Island could accommodate. To enable the Crofters' Commission to do any good—to enable them to increase holdings—they must be empowered to examine the Island. If the Government really intended the Crofters' Act to be of any benefit to the people of Lewis they must confer additional powers on the Crofters' Commission, otherwise the Commission might as well never go to Lewis at all. One or two remedies had been suggested. The Government's favourite remedy was emigration; they did not appear to have any other except some civilities which the Lord Advocate dropped with respect to the fisheries. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Elgin Burghs (Mr. Asher) spoke of the impression in Scotland that the Government were negotiating in reference to emigration. He (Mr. Provand) believed there was some foundation for that impression. He believed that negotiations took place last year between the Government and the Canadian Government, or between the Government and the Land Companies of Canada, and that the proposals fell through. The Land Companies were perfectly willing, on terms which appeared reasonable to most persons, to assist emigration from the North of Scotland, but for some reason or other the Government were pleased to let the negotiations fall through. He was certain they could not get such terms this year as they did last year. Would any Member of the Government tell them what those terms were, and why they did not accept them? If they had accepted them the condition of things at this moment might have been very different. The Lord Advocate allowed Lady Cathcart or her advisers to make arrangements with the Canadian Government which they might have made and did not make. Would the Government explain why it was Lady Cathcart considered the negotiations good enough, and how she succeeded in making terms with the Canadian Government or with the Land Companies, and that we failed? He was afraid there was a good deal to be set down to the circumlocution to which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) alluded in opening the debate. Besides emigration there was migration. He had heard nothing said about migration by the Lord Advocate except that he did not intend to propose to do anything to break up the large farms or large holdings in the North of Scotland notwithstanding that one of the provisions of the Crofters' Act was expressly intended to effect that object. He had heard from one or two Crofter Members what the crofters' views were on the question. Why would not the Government give the question more consideration when there were so many hundred thousand acres in Scotland used as forests? He quite agreed with right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite that deer forests should be kept up wherever they could be kept up without injury to the community. Deer forests would always be fashionable with rich men, who if they could not get forests of 100,000 acres would take those of half that extent. In the Island of Lewis there must be a great deal of land that was only fit for deer. Now, he had said that the Island was insolvent, and he thought the Government were amongst those who had made a very bad debt there. He did not see how they would ever get back the money they had advanced for education. The amount advanced for education was extravagant to a degree which he should not attempt to describe to the House. He asked if the Government would not try migration? Was it intended to set that principle expressed in the Crofters' Act at naught, because by the end of the summer, or certainly by next winter, there would be a state of things not as it was to-day but greatly aggravated. The Lord Advocate had referred to the fishing industry of the Island. He (Mr. Provand) had said they could not estimate what the soil of the Island could support, but the fishings there were of great value. If the Government were very anxious to help the people why had they never surveyed the banks off the coast of Lewis? Experts had given their opinion that the bank off the North-West Coast was the richest fishing bank in the world. Up to the present moment, however, it had never been surveyed except so far as the length and breadth of it. Of the character of the bank they knew nothing. In some places it was poor, but in other places it was remarkably rich; in some places turbot, which commanded high prices, was caught, while in other places inferior kinds of fish were caught. He believed that a vessel was fitted, or partly fitted, last year for this survey. Why did she not go and do the work? There was another way in which fishing could be assisted, and that was by laying telegraph wires over the Island. Nothing had been of greater value than the wire in the North of Scotland. On one occasion, while boats were fishing in one place, news was sent by telegraph of the presence of fish in another place, the boats came, and within a few days £1,800 worth of fish was caught. With reference to boats, he was glad to have the assurance of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the question of making advances to fishermen had been settled. It was more than two years since authority was given to make advances, and it was only now that terms had been arranged whereby the advances might be made. Letters were written by the Government officials to the fishermen on the faith of which the men had commenced to have boats built, then the advances were not made, and the boats were retained on the builders' hands until now. Again, additional harbour accommodation was requisite. There were three harbours about which there had been much agitation in Lewis for a long time past. The three harbours were recommended by the Crofters' Commission who sat there. Admiral Fellowes made a sketch of what he thought might be done, and two of the harbours were estimated for by a firm of Edinburgh engineers. It was not quite certain that the estimates made were for harbours which were suitable for the purpose. They were not, so far as was known, surveyed by any engineer at all, and, notwithstanding what the right hon. and learned Gentleman had said, he (Mr. Provand) had tried in vain to get the noble Lord the Secretary for Scotland to appoint an engineer to see what could be done in reference to the three harbours. The noble Lord had told him that he had no money whatever for such purpose. It would cost very little for an engineer to survey the places. Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman do something in the matter? Probably the whole survey could be made for £100. He was satisfied that the fishings could be largely developed. Would the Lord Advocate do something to assist the development? This was the source from which the people must live if they were to live at all; it was the source from which one-half or three-fourths of the people must find their food in the future unless they were removed from the place. He wanted some assurance from the Government that they would take this work in hand. The condition of Lewis demanded the serious attention of the House of Commons. No Member could free himself from the responsibility. There was not one of the 72 Scotch Members who was not more or less responsible for the condition of the people. The subject must be brought up again and again until the Government consented to take the work in hand and to provide a permanent settlement.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, the House generally, and certainly the Government, were prepared to admit that no more proper subject could be brought up on the Address than the one dealt with by this Amendment; and certainly it was not because it was a subject that had failed to attract the earnest attention of the Government that no allusion was made to it in the Speech from the Throne. The Government entirely admitted that it was a topic well worth raising on the Speech. They entirely denied that the fact that no mention was made of the difficulties in the Western Highlands was in any way due to *laches* on the part of the Government, or to any want of interest in the population concerned. The hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Provand) had shown, in the course of his speech, a knowledge of his subject and a candour which he (Mr. Balfour) confessed he thought was lacking in some of the other speeches made on the same side. For example, the hon. Gentleman admitted frankly that the population of Lewis was greatly in excess of the possible means of sustenance derivable from that Island. That was the contention which the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, in his most able and masterly speech, had abundantly proved; but it had not been admitted generally by hon. Gentlemen on the other side, except in a sort of lame and halting manner by the late Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. Asher). He (Mr. Balfour) did not think anything his right hon. and learned Friend had said about over-population of Lewis was in the least in excess of the facts of the case. The growth of the population of that Island during the past century was amazing—he might say appalling. In 1755 it was 6,300; in 1790 it was 8,300; in 1841 it was 17,000; in 1881 it was 25,000; and it was now, he believed, 28,000. A growth of population of that kind was not a matter for condolence, but for congratulation, if the industrial resources of the community which had grown had increased in anything like that proportion. But what growth of the resources of Lewis had taken place, or was possible? No doubt, since the middle of last century, there had been poured into Lewis a vast amount of wealth from other sources than the Island itself. The Island was owned by a very wealthy man, who spent his money freely among the population; but, unfortunately, that source of wealth was now dried up. The present owner was quite incapable of carrying on the vast works undertaken by her predecessor. When hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway said the one thing required was an opportunity for work, they forgot that work in the Island was formerly given by a wealthy man, and that everything had been done by the agitators to prevent any human being spending in the future a single sixpence where it could be avoided. If any set of men more than another were responsible for the fact that the amount spent on wages had fallen off, and was likely to fall off, it was the agitators who had taught men like the Duke of Sutherland, who had spent money derived from other parts of the country, that a more foolish investment, whether they desired cash or gratitude, could not be undertaken. If, then, it was admitted by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, as it must be by every candid man who had listened to his right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate, that the present difficulty in the Lewis was due to over-population, what were the remedies which had been suggested by those who had spoken especially on behalf of the crofters? The hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) said great statesmanship was required to deal with the present difficulties, and he gave the House a sketch of the remedies he thought should be applied. The first was an increase of the number of the Crofter Commission, as he said the present Commissioners were dealing too slowly with the question, and that rents ought to be reduced more speedily; but the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Provand) told the House that the question they had to deal with was not the problem of rent, but of population. The next remedy referred to was loans for boats. Now, if there was one question more than another on which he should have thought the Government were not open to reproach, it was with reference to these loans, for the Treasury had one by one dispensed with the guarantees which in the interests of the public purse they had first imposed, until now he believed, if the Treasury were asked whether they would give the money or lend it, they would perhaps almost say they would prefer to give it, and yet the hon. Gentleman said the Government had been too rigid in the conditions they had imposed. The next remedy proposed by the hon. Member was that the foreshores of the Islands should be thrown open to the fishermen; but it was not worth while dealing with the question, for a more absurd contention on that point than that of the hon. Gentleman could hardly have been raised. The hon. Gentleman was aware that if the foreshores were handed over to the population for nothing, no appreciable improvement of any kind could possibly accrue to the population of the Island. He was not going to discuss the question of local self-government for Scotland, although the hon. Member had further suggested that the prosperity of the crofters would be promoted by making the Parochial Boards more representative; but he should like to know whether there was a man in that House endowed with sufficient gravity to keep his countenance when it was proposed as a remedy for the pauperism of 28,000 people to make an alteration in the electoral system of Parochial Boards? The last recommendation of the hon. Gentleman had reference to deer forests. He (Mr. Balfour) was not going to raise the general question of deer forests, after the judicious and moderate statement of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down; but he would apply himself to the problem whether the difficulties in which the population found themselves could be mitigated in any way by the whole Matheson deer forest being thrown into the common stock, and divided amongst the population. The hon. Gentleman gave a very highly pictured account of the attack upon the deer forests in Lewis. He would not say the hon. Gentleman had defended it, but he went very near defending it, on the ground that the people who indulged in that raid were suffering from the pangs of want—a circumstance which he (Mr. Balfour) freely admitted might palliate much, if it did not justify much. But let the House bear in mind people who made the raid on the deer forest destroyed the deer, and did not send a single atom of deer's flesh to their starving wives and families.

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON: The hon. Member for Ross (Dr. R. Macdonald) in his speech distinctly stated that he had letters in his possession which showed that many of these deer found their way to the homes of the crofters.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the information he had received led him to an entirely different conclusion, and that conclusion was borne out by what the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) said, because he gave a picturesque and glowing account of the Homeric feast made on the scene by the men who indulged in the raid, who apparently were accompanied by a gentleman who pronounced a blessing on the proceedings; but he entirely omitted to mention the interesting circumstance referred to by the hon. Gentleman opposite.

Dr. CAMERON: My information as to the disposal of the deer flesh for the benefit of the families quite coincides with that which has just been stated to the House by my hon. Friend.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he must repeat that his information led him to an entirely opposite conclusion. He did not wish to say an unnecessarily harsh word against the people of Lewis; but they unquestionably behaved, to say the least of it, in an extremely foolish manner. They were like children who pulled down china and furniture about their ears from sheer temper. This raid was utterly incapable of doing them any good, and he wished the House would realize what these foolish people were doing. The rates in the parish of Lochs, supposing them to be paid, would be 11*s.* 6*d.* in the £1 on the present rents, including the shooting rents. If they abolished the latter, the rates would rise to 21*s.* in the £1; and if they were, in addition, to destroy every farm above £30 rental, the rates would rise from 11*s.* 6*d.* to about 24*s.* It might be urged that the ground taken from sportsmen could be used by the crofters, and that as tenants they would pay rates, and thus fill the vacuum left by the abolition of the sporting rents. But if the whole ground from which the crofters were now excluded was given to the crofters at the rents now habitually fixed by the Crofters' Commission, leaving the remainder of the parish rented as it was at present, then the rates would amount to 18*s.* 8*d* in the £1. In speaking of these rates, he meant merely those which were divided between the owner and the occupier. There were others, which he had not included in his statement, paid entirely by the owner. But, beyond this, if they supposed the Crofter Commission was going to make the same reduction in crofter rents generally in the parish of Lochs as they had been doing elsewhere, then it would be found under that reduction, assuming the whole of that parish had been taken away from the sporting tenants, that the rates would amount to 26*s.* in the £1. So that the result of this mad proceeding on the part of the crofters in that parish would be to raise the rates from 11*s.* 6*d.* to the bankrupt level of 26*s.* in the £1. He earnestly trusted that in their own interests the unhappy example set by these crofters would not be followed by any of the other inhabitants of the Highlands. The hon. Member for Sutherland

(Mr. A. Sutherland) told them the Highland Question would be settled if land out of cultivation were given to the people. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) supposed that was a new version of the land of the country for the people of the country. In the Highlands, unfortunately, it would be too often the bog of the country for the people of the country, and while the deprivation of it might injure the present possessors the new possessors would not be benefited. He had a strong objection on principle to the proposals laid down by the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for Wick (Mr. Macdonald Cameron) said the people of the Highlands had, rightly or wrongly, a strong belief that the land which belonged to the Clans, and had been owned by the Chiefs, was theirs of right, and ought to be divided amongst them. Admitting this for the sake of argument, it meant that the land which used to belong to the M'Lennans should be divided amongst the M'Lennans, that the land which belonged to the M'Leods should be divided amongst the M'Leods, and the land which belonged to the Camerons should be divided among the Camerons——

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) said, what he had said was that the present crofters were the descendents of the ancient clansmen, and, whether rightly or wrongly, they believed they had some claim on the soil of their ancestors.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Precisely. But he was at a loss to understand on what historical Highland principle the hon. Member based his argument. The principle of nationality had now risen to such a height, and had taken such eccentric forms in that House, that people seemed to suppose that the Highlands had at one time constituted a separate nation. They never had been a nation; they had always been an integral part of Scotland, and, in so far as the Highlands might be considered separately, they had always been divided among themselves by internecine feuds. And even if every Highlander supposed that he had a right to a share in the ancient Clan lands, he could hardly suppose that he had any right to share the lands of any other Clan. If they had a right to other people's land when their own was exhausted, why exercise that right only in Scotland? Why not come down upon the dairy farms of Aylesbury or the rich pastures of Northampton, or divide Mentmore and Althorpe among the starving clansmen of Lewis? These were the main objections in principle to the proposals of the hon. Member; but there were other objections of a still stronger kind. Hon. Members talked in a glib manner of taking the people from Lewis and locating them casually over the less occupied lands of the Highlands and Mainlands. But where were they going to find the money to do that? He presumed they would not settle these new colonists on worse terms than the people now on the Mainland. No landlord, so far as he knew, built cottages for tenants or labourers at a less rate than £130 or £150 per tenant. No farm capable of supporting a family which depended on agriculture alone could be stocked for less than about £150, so that the Government would be committed to an expenditure of £300 per family to start these people. And where were they going to start them? On the unoccupied lands—in other words, on the least fertile lands of Scotland. Could there be a proposal more insane than that? To the people whom it was proposed thus to migrate, migration would be almost as serious as emigration. To take these people from Lewis and to land them in the glens of Ross-shire and Inverness-shire would be as great an exile from their homes as to transport them to Canada. It would cost three times the money, and when they had done it they would not have laid the seeds of a future prosperous colony, but the seeds of the same difficulties on the Mainland that they now found it so difficult to contend with in the Islands. Therefore he thought, in addition to the difficulties in principle, there were financial difficulties, and difficulties of expediency which the House would think of, not once, twice, or thrice, but many times before it attempted to surmount them. The Government had felt as acutely as anyone the sufferings and the difficulties to which the population of the Western Islands were at present subject, and they had done what the hon. Gentleman who criticized them had not done—they had taken some practical steps towards diminishing that suffering. But they held, in the first place, that the question was mainly one of over-population; in the second place, that when they came to supporting a people by charity, the first source from which such eleemosynary aid should come was the rates, and if the rates were bankrupt—and they were nearly, if not quite, bankrupt in Lewis—the second source was public charity, and that it was not till these two sources were exhausted that any Government would think it their duty to step into the breach. The Government felt the heavy and solemn responsibility—a responsibility apparently not felt by some hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway—the responsibility which rested upon any Government who undertook—in however guarded or modified a form—to support a population unable to support itself. He was not aware that hitherto in any single case in these Islands such a course had ever been pursued. He might be wrong, but he was not aware of it. The principle universally adopted hitherto in England and Scotland was that every locality was responsible for the support of the population in that locality. Never before had they been so directly face to face with the problem of over-population as to feel that the resources of the locality were inadequate to meet the wants of the locality. While the Government felt that responsibility, they might, under certain circumstances, and as a merely temporary measure, preparatory to a large system of emigration, be prepared to step into the breach. But emphatically they said that they could not be guilty of a more criminal action than to hold out the slightest hope to the population of Lewis that they were to be supported in a district where they could not earn their livelihood by honest labour out of the Imperial funds for an indefinite time. They believed it would be absolute madness, and that the people who would suffer most in the long run would be the people of Lewis themselves; and they would be no parties—directly or indirectly—to any such proceedings. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment seemed to imply—by way of a sneer—that the Government specially believed in the principles of political economy. The principles that they believed in he did not care to christen by the name of any special science. They were the principles of common sense, and nothing that the hon. Gentleman had said would shake their belief—that if a population recklessly multiplied generation after generation in a singularly inclement climate and on a singularly infertile soil, the time must eventually come when that soil would no longer support them. Hon. Gentlemen might call that political economy if they liked; but no name, no definition—however contemptuously used—would shake the primary truth of the axiom which lay at the very basis of the whole question of population. The hon. Member seemed to think that our laws might be modified in a manner to remedy this state of things. It was not our laws that required to be modified, but the laws of Nature, and the laws of Nature were in no sense amenable to the sentimental considerations which naturally influenced Members of that House. Something more was required in a doctor than mere enthusiasm for his patient. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not deny the enthusiasm of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. He did not deny that it was perfectly genuine, and that they had at heart the welfare of the population whose cause they pleaded. But he emphatically said they were going the wrong way to work to obtain the amelioration of that condition. The hon. Member for Sutherland told them that he was an agitator, and that he was proud of being an agitator——

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): A Constitutional agitator.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, exactly; Constitutional; he had no objection to agitating. He had rather a weakness for it. But he certainly preferred that agitators, when they agitated, should show some slight appreciation of the problem with which they had to deal. Neither the Mover nor the Seconder of the Amendment gave the House the slightest idea of what the real difficulty in the Highlands was, or how that difficulty was to be met. In so far as they dealt with the question of emigration at all—the very root of the whole matter—they dealt with it only because it served their purpose, and in so dealing with it it showed that they were agitators who had at heart very much more the political interests of their Party than the material prosperity of the country. The Government objected to the remedy which hon. Members proposed. They concurred with them in feeling the extreme gravity of the situation. It was not because the Government did not feel that gravity of the situation that they omitted any reference to it in the Queen's Speech; but it was because they did not think this was the time to lay before the House any settled plan for carrying out what they believed to be the only permanent and solid remedy for the evils of Lewis that they had abstained from dealing with the question; but they took this opportunity of stating to the House and to the country the conviction—which they had never wavered in from the time when this question first came before them—that it was by emigration, and by emigration alone, that the question of over-population in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland could finally and satisfactorily be solved.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had made a speech which, when read in the way people outside that House generally read speeches—namely, chiefly with reference to the peroration—would give the idea that those on the Opposition side of the House had been advocating Socialistic measures, and measures which had not received the sanction of Parliament. He thought he should be able to show in a very few words that this was not the case. He should deal with the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate's speech with a brevity which he trusted would not be considered a mark of disrespect. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had, as he was bound to do, stated the case at great length and with thoroughness, and in the most calm and temperate spirit—he had spoken also on a great deal besides the Amendment before the House. But for that he did not for a moment blame him, because in the previous speeches there was a great deal to answer, and the matter to which he referred was not really introduced into the debate by him. But it was difficult to believe that he could think his speech would be considered by the Mover of the Amendment as an argument against it. He could only say that the propositions laid down by the right hon. and learned Gentleman were of such a nature that he, at any rate, and Gentlemen who sat with him on the Front Bench opposite, would be obliged to go into the Lobby in favour of the Amendment. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken much of law and order. On that point he did not intend to say a single word, except that he was himself the strongest supporter of law and order; that he thought law should be administered impartially and firmly, and that when they administered it they should take very great care that it was just. He had always been opposed to lawlessness in any part of the United Kingdom and elsewhere. He was always opposed to any crime—and not least to the crime now in question, which resembled what in Ireland was called taking forcible possession. But under the extremely severe laws which had been passed for Ireland crimes of the nature which had been committed during the crofter agitation had been considered to be sufficiently punished by periods of imprisonment for three and six months, which, under the Irish Coercion Act, was the utmost penalty given to these crimes. But while the Government punished the breaking of the law, they should alter the law, so as to bring it into such a shape as to have on its side the conscience and opinion of the community. It was quite useless to come down to the House, whatever question might be uppermost, and talk about agitators. The Government should prove, if they could, that the doctrines put forward were not correct doctrines; but they ought not to say that the men who laid them down were urging the people to break the law. The position laid down by the Lord Advocate was a very serious one. He said that the crofter was a man whose croft was to help out his labour, who had other industries besides his croft. Now, that, he thought, was entirely opposed to the opinion of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry. That Commission spoke of a particular district in which there was a great number of crofters in a position in which they did not think they ought to be. They said there were little more than one-twelfth of the whole number who were provided with holdings that could afford sufficient occupation for a labouring family and provide for its subsistence: which showed that the opinion of the Commission as to what a crofter ought to be entirely differed from that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. It was that condition of things which the Commission was desirous of amending, and it was for that purpose that the Bill of 1886 was presented to the House and became law. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the attempt to support the crofters by the soil would end in disastrous failure and humiliation. But that was not the opinion of the Commission on whose Reports the late Government had acted. The essence of the Commissioners' Report was that land should be added by compulsory allotments to the crofts, so as to enable the crofter successfully to support himself without failure and disappointment. In order to carry out that, they had a machinery of their own, which was, in its essential features, the machinery of the Government of 1886. That Government brought in a Bill, and drafted it into an Act, by which the crofter was to have enough land to enable him and his family to live in decency and comfort. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had charged hon. Members who had spoken on that side with violent and extreme views. He said that the hon. Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland) argued that the land in the Highlands should be given to the people, and that the hon. and learned Gentleman described as a new version of the phrase, "the land of the country for the people of the country." It was an old version of the Act which Parliament passed two years ago, and not carried out by the Government. The Chief Secretary for Ireland also spoke of the futility of settling the crofters on the least fertile land in the least fertile part of the Kingdom. But that was not a fair description of the case. The case was that the Government should take measures to have the will of Parliament carried out, and to have pasture land added to the arable crofts to enable the crofters to earn a living. Now, that was exactly what had not been done. The Commission had not enlarged the holdings, and the enlargement of holdings was the essence of the Act of 1886. The Commission had fixed crofters in their crofts, had fixed fair rents, and had dealt with arrears. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate said nothing had been done in the Highlands except to lower rents to suit the fall of agricultural prices. But that was not the case, because unjust rents had been largely diminished. In one case, where the old rent had been £5, the fair rent was fixed at £2 16*s*., and the arrears, amounting to £5, had been cancelled; in another case, where the old rent was £6, the fair rent was fixed at £3 2*s*., and of the arrears, which amounted to £13 10*s*., £6 was ordered to be paid.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I took the average. The average reduction was 31 per cent, which was no more than was given willingly by most landlords over the whole country.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, that 31 per cent was exactly the amount which, if the Crofters' Bill, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman disapproved, but did not oppose, had not passed, the Highland tenants to that day would have gone on paying against all principles of right and justice. There were, besides, numerous cases where the rent had been shamefully unjust, and where the Commission had reduced it by nearly 50 per cent. Then came the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who was a great authority on Highland land. What was the language of the right hon. Gentleman in the House of Commons two years ago with regard to this measure, which had lowered the rent 30 per cent, and in some cases 50 per cent? In March, 1886, when the Bill was introduced into that House, the Chief Secretary said that—

> "In a country where rack-rents and evictions were common, he could understand that such a Bill might be necessary;"

but he added—

> "no such case can be made in respect of the Highlands of Scotland."

The right hon. Gentleman went on to support his opinion by the Report of the Commission; but he expressed this as his own opinion also. In face of what had since been disclosed, the right hon. Gentleman stood convicted of having expressed an exceedingly rash opinion, to say the least of it, only two years ago.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What I said was that I only based my opinion upon the Commission, which was virtually the sole foundation for the whole legislation of the right hon. Gentleman himself.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: The right hon. Gentleman said that the rents which were paid seven or eight years ago were so low that they would not require the services of a Commission to reduce them. This did not augur very much knowledge of the state of agriculture in the Highlands. The Commission had done all this, and a most excellent task it was; but they ought to have done more if they had carried out the spirit of the Act of 1886—they ought to have enlarged the crofts so as to afford substantial occupation and subsistence to the labourer and his family. When the Government found that this was the case they ought to have applied themselves to carry out the intention of Parliament. The Prime Minister had told them that there ought to be a continuity of legislation. Parliament intended that the crofts should be enlarged; they were not enlarged, and it was the business of the Government to say why. That was the essence of the Act of 1886. His hon. Friend the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) thought they ought to have new Commissioners. At first in Ireland there were only seven or eight Commissions; but after the Act of 1881 became law, 40 new Commissioners were appointed, and the Viceroy of Ireland saw 120 Commissioners, with each of whom he conversed a quarter of an hour. That was the way in which the Government of the day carried out the intention of Parliament. Then it was urged that there were difficulties in the Act itself. What those difficulties were were very familiar to hon. Members acquainted with the Act. The conditions, no doubt, were very rigorous indeed, and the most difficult of all was one which was put in by the action of hon. Gentlemen opposite. That was the condition which forbade interference with deer forests. When the Government found that the Act could not be worked, and that the people were not getting the advantage which Parliament intended, it was the business of the Government to alter the Act. As in Ireland it was found impossible to alter the land system all at once, and the present Government had been obliged to extend the advantages of the Act of 1881 to leaseholders, and to revise rents, and might find it necessary to consider the question of arrears, so in this question the Secretary for Scotland ought to have examined into the failure of the Act, and if he had sat in the House of Commons he would have been kept up to his business. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate and the Chief Secretary had said a great deal about emigration. Now on the question of emigration he was not going to utter any uncertain sound. He should indeed despise himself, after years of hereditary connection with the question of emigration in the Highlands of Scotland, and having fought side by side with the right hon. Gentleman now the head of the House for emigration from the West of Ireland, if he did not now say that emigration was a great and important remedy. But it was not the only remedy. They ought not to send people abroad until they had assured themselves that they had made the most of the land at home. The Government to which he had belonged advocated and encouraged emigration in the West of Ireland; but in the West of Ireland the most was made of the land, and a great deal more; and all the land that could be used was occupied. There were no deer forests there; but in this single Island of Lewis there were 90,000 or 100,000 acres devoted to deer forests. With regard to deer forests, he ventured to protest against the system. He protested when he sat upon the Treasury Bench. He remembered very well the speeches upon which the Act of 1886 was founded. The ground on which it was founded was that the hills of Scotland used to be covered with the black cattle of these people, who were able to live in comparative affluence. But these hills were taken from them for the sake of private lucre. The Government likewise based the Bill on the fact that the deer forests might be interfered with as a public nuisance, because for the selfish sport of the few or of many persons agrarian operations ought not to be interfered with. The case of deer was not the same as that of grouse and blackcock—contrary to what the right hon. Gentleman said—for grouse and blackcock interfered with no man's rights and with no man's self-respect or agricultural prosperity. It was only in the deer forests that, for the selfish advantage of one man, and that man sometimes not even a sportsman, that a great number of people were to be put to inconvenience generation after generation, and a very bad example set to the country. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the large sums of money spent in Lewis. He did not wish to mix up the case of the late Sir James Matheson with the more selfish class of occupiers of deer forests; but he pointed out that those sums of money had been spent very largely on the amenity of the Island. Sir James Matheson spent money in a way in which no man could continue to spend it which had not an enormous fortune; so that in that way he ultimately aggravated the unhappiness of the Island without intending to do so, and though he acted with public-spirited and benevolent intentions. Passing from him to those who spent £1,000 or £2,000 a-year on their deer forests, he did not believe that that money added anything to, but rather detracted from, the position of the population. It bred up a number of myrmidons of sport of a class very different from the two or three honest gamekeepers who had care of the grouse moors. He should like to know whether the exchange of the gillies and foresters of Mr. Winans were a favourable exchange for the small cattle farmers who used to graze their cattle on those hills? If it were for the general interest to interfere with deer forests, he thought they ought to be interfered with. In saying that he was uttering no new doctrine, because it was the doctrine on which the Act of 1886 was passed; and he maintained it was the duty of the Government to take all the steps necessary to enable the undoubted intentions of Parliament to be carried out, whether right or wrong. The right hon. Gentleman said they could lend themselves to no scheme which embodied the idea that to break up land in the Western Highlands would be sufficient to meet the difficulty. Now, they did not maintain that the Government should do that; they did not believe that in the Island of Lewis the land could be so broken up as to remove the whole difficulty. But they asked the Government to carry out the intentions of Parliament, and restore to the people that part of the land which it was intended by the Act to restore to them, and to see how much of the difficulty could thereby be met. One main cause of the increasing population of Lewis was the miserable condition of that population. They did not find the people increase at that rate in those parts of the North of England where the country folk were well off, where the old people were supported by their children, where not 1*d.* of poor relief was received, where a parent when he died prematurely left enough to put out his orphans in life, and where, when the husband died, the widow was secure. Those were the circumstances in parts of the North of England, where the population was increasing with far less rapidity than in the Highlands. And, again, population did not increase rapidly where they had a quantity of small holdings on which the people could live in comfort and self-respect. When they had made all the use they could of the land which Parliament intended should be given to the people, they might go to emigration with a clear conscience. The people who would then go abroad would not go with a sense of wrong, but because they would know that they must go having no other resource, and those who remained behind would be able to live in a state of comfort. He thought they had a right to ask that the Government would grapple with this difficulty in such a way as to secure the confidence of the people and to carry out the expressed wishes of Parliament; and it was with an earnest desire to meet the sad circumstances of the situation, and because the Government had done neither one thing nor the other, that he should feel justified in voting for the Amendment.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, he had listened to the speech of the earnest supporter of lawlessness in all parts of the world who had just sat down, and when that right hon. Member talked of Gentlemen on the Government side complaining on all occasions of these questions being raised by hon. Gentlemen who always posed as agitators, would the right hon. Gentleman forgive him for reminding him that it was the hon. Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland) himself who announced that he was something in the nature of a professional agitator?

An hon. Member: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND: I never used the words "professional agitator" at all.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he never asserted for a moment that the hon. Member called himself a professional agitator, but what undoubtedly the hon. Member said was that he was an agitator and had always been one, and intended to agitate on this question until the grievances of the crofters were redressed. The hon. Member said—"I am not ashamed of being an agitator; I am proud of it, and shall always be an agitator." If he (Mr. Chaplin) was not justified in saying that the hon. Member was something in the nature of a professional agitator he should like to know when he would be entitled to do so. But if the hon. Member did not like the phrase he would withdraw it.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND said, that what he had stated was that he should be an agitator until justice was done.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, the question was what was real justice to these people. The hon. Member and his Friends had no monopoly of a desire to see justice done to the unfortunate inhabitants of the Highlands. But what propositions had they made for amending the law which would in any way give effectual relief to the crofters? The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down stated that the Crofters' Commission recommended that additional land should be given to the crofters throughout the Highlands. Allow him to observe that there was great distinction to be observed between the existing crofters and the crofters under the old system. It was true that the Commission did advocate that additional land, and especially grazing land, should be given to crofters already in existence; and, so far as he was concerned, where it was possible he was quite ready to assist them in that respect. But the proposal of hon. Gentlemen opposite was something very different, for they wished to extend the system in every possible direction and to put people in the places from which it was said they were driven in former days. That was their view, and he thought he should be able to show that the House would be taking a very fatal step if it accepted such a proposal as that. Then, said the right hon. Gentleman (Sir George Trevelyan), emigration was a very good thing, but they must have migration until they had first of all taken all the land that was available for addition to the crofts. Well, how much land was there available in Lewis at present? Was there 40 miles? [An hon. Member: 250 miles.] That might be about the total; but they wanted to know how much land that was under deer and game at this moment was available for the hon. Member's purpose? [An hon. Member: It was stated that a number of crofting villages have been cleared out.] Even if that were so, he (Mr. Chaplin) would rely on better authority than the hon. Member. There had been a Report presented on the subject; and when the hon. Gentleman who introduced this subject (Dr. Cameron) spoke of taking available land for the crofters, he must have forgotten the Report of those Gentlemen who had just examined this question on the spot. What did they say on the subject? They stated that certain gentlemen to whom the crofters looked for guidance had forbidden them to entertain proposals for transferring them to some field of labour where their efforts would secure them against want; and they further said that the fact was forgotten that if the whole area of Lewis was transferred to the crofters, they were destitute of capital, and that, if they had the capital with which to work the land, a few years must witness a recurrence of the present difficulty in an aggravated form. That was the opinion of gentlemen who had just made a most complete inquiry on the spot. Then hon. Gentlemen had spoken of unjust rents and rack-rents; and the hon. Member who had moved the Motion, after speaking of disturbances in Lewis, had told them that they were very shortly afterwards followed by the raid in Ross and Sutherland. How did he account for the raids? It had been urged that the harshness of the landlords or the destitution of the people had led them. He (Mr. Chaplin), however, denied that there had been anything which could be called serious destitution or rack-renting in Sutherlandshire. He knew many of the crofters in Sutherlandshire himself, and had conversed with them during the autumn; and one of them, not long ago, told him that they were very anxious to see Mr. Angus Sutherland again, as they had something to say to him, and they had not seen him for a long time. If he were not much mistaken, it was under the advice of that hon. Member that many of those unfortunate crofters had been induced to take their landlord into the Land Court, and when they did so their rents were very considerably raised.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND said, he had never advised anyone.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, that, no doubt, when the hon. Gentleman went back to that part of Sutherlandshire he would explain that matter. In the parish of Clashmore, unless he was misinformed, the proprietor had spent very large sums of money, about £4,000 of which had gone in providing labour and wages for the people, which it would take many years of the rent of the district to recoup. The real reason for the lawless behaviour of the raiders was, as the hon. Member had stated—for he himself had let the cat out of the bag—that the crofters had been seduced by the doctrines about the land for the people which had been preached to them. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir George Trevelyan) had spoken much about the deer forests in the Highlands. Now, he was willing to admit that where land occupied as deer forests would be desirable and useful for the crofters it should be devoted to the latter purpose; but having often walked and shot over the best deer forests in Scotland, he must say he did not know where such lands available for the crofters were to be found. There might be exceptional cases; but, as a general rule, those deer forests were in parts of the country where it was impossible for crofters to exist and get a living. He said, as a matter of personal experience, that the quantity of land which could be obtained for the crofters in the present deer forests of Scotland would be found to be a mere fraction of the whole. Moreover, even if the thing could be done, it would be most undesirable. The whole system had been tried years and years ago, and had utterly failed. If hon. Members would allow him, he should like to give them an account of what he had read and been told from authoritative sources—and what he knew to be true—as to the effect of the system in former days. Most hon. Gentlemen had heard of the clearances effected in the county of Sutherland many years ago. And why were they effected? They were made simply and solely in the interests of the people themselves. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen would allow him to say why he made that statement. It was a positive fact of which there was proof in existence; he had not got it with him, but he could produce it. In those days in many parts of the county of Sutherland people were winter after winter upon the verge of starvation. They lived in wild parts of the country, in glens which were filled up with snow for many months in the year; there were no roads there—no means of approaching people—and their condition was most deplorable. During one winter the then proprietor of Sutherlandshire spent no less than £9,000 in sending meals over those glens, with incredible difficulty and labour, in order to save the people from dying of absolute starvation. That had constantly to be done over and over again; and at last it was resolved that in order to rescue the people from dangers recurring every winter they should be removed to other places where food could be provided for them with less difficulty. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh, but these were facts which were known, and of which proof could be produced. It was well-known that the position of the people at that time was absolutely deplorable. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite discredited what he said; but he would read to them a passage from a book written on the subject containing statements which were known to be true. It was a book written by the father of a distinguished Member of the House, whose only fault, in his opinion, was that he was an extremely advanced Radical. [*Cries of* "Name!"] It was Mr. James Loch. [An hon. Member: A factor.] Yes; he was the factor of the Duke of Sutherland; but was that any reason why his word should not be true, or should be doubted for a moment? The records of the work done by Mr. Loch were records of which no man need be ashamed; of which any man, whether factor or not, might be proud. Writing of the year 1816-17, Mr. Loch said—

> "During the latter period the people suffered the extremes of want and of human misery, notwithstanding every aid that could be given to them through the bounty of the landlords. Their wretchedness was so great that, after pawning everything they were possessed of to the fishermen on the coast, such as had not cattle were reduced to come down from the hills in hundreds for the purpose of gathering cockles on the shore. Those who lived in the more remote situations of the country were obliged to subsist upon broth made of nettles thickened with a little oatmeal. Those who had cattle had recourse to the still more wretched expedient of bleeding them and mixing the blood with oatmeal, which they afterwards cut into slices and fried. Those who

had a little money came down and slept all night upon the beach in order to watch the boats returning from the fishing, that they might be in time to obtain a part of what had been caught. In order to alleviate this misery every exertion was made by the proprietor. To those who had cattle he advanced money to the amount of above £3,000. To supply those who had no cattle he sent meal into the country to the amount of nearly £9,000."

That was in one winter alone. Was that a state of things, in all seriousness, and putting aside all Party questions or political feeling, which hon. Gentlemen really thought it would be desirable to reproduce in the Highlands of Scotland? If they desired really to deal with this question satisfactorily, it was desirable to ascertain what were the real causes of distress in Lewis at the present time. The causes of distress were very clearly explained in the Report from which he had quoted already. They were two—the first of them was the complete breakdown of the herring-fishing industry; and the second was the great fall in prices, which had reduced the value of stock by, he supposed, 40 or 50 per cent a-head. If that was so, there was no remedy but one. They might make room, perhaps, for a few more crofters, but that would not be sufficient. The only remedy was to remove the people to a place where they would have the advantages of a more fertile soil and a less inhospitable climate. That was the only thing they could do in order to bring comfort and relief to the unhappy people living in Lewis, with whom no one had more heartfelt sympathy than he.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) intervened in the debate in consequence of what had fallen on one point alone, first of all from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), to whom he listened with great attention and pleasure, and then from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). He understood the Chief Secretary for Ireland to say that the cause of the evil they had to deal with in the Highlands and Islands, especially in the particular Island dealt with in the debate, was over-population. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the sole remedy for that over-population was emigration. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to denounce the reckless increase of the population of that district during the last 40 or 50 years. He avowed he felt some astonishment that the right hon. Gentleman should put forward such an argument when he remembered that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and those who sat around him, and most of those who sat on the Benches opposite, tried before all England to make him seem as one of the most immoral men alive because he had tried for the last quarter of a century to teach the people the very evils of over-population, and the very difficulties of their condition connected with that reckless increase. It was astonishing to hear from the other side of the House that put forward as a doctrine to be supported, which, when urged by him in olden times, made him the mark of very wicked—[*Cries of* "Question!"]—made him the mark of some of the wickedest language any man could use towards another.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never used such language towards the hon. Gentleman; never, never.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he would not further discuss the personal position of the matter; but he remembered that when the right hon. Gentleman was a Member of a great Party which sat upon the Opposition Benches, he did not repudiate publications made with the sanction of his Party, to achieve that which he repudiated to-night. He would pass on to deal with the remedy. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite pretend that emigration was the sole remedy? Were they going to apply it to the distressed persons mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). Were they going to apply it in every district? Were they going to emigrate the people by the State, by force? Where were they going to emigrate them? There was no part of the world to which they could send any mass of the people of this country. There was no place where the people would not find the labour struggle awaiting them. He did not speak without knowledge of these matters. He did not speak without thought on these matters, and although he might be denounced as an agitator, he never failed to tell the people where he thought the evils lay—namely, on their side as well as those who represented them. What did they do to those who emigrated? Did they not send them to climates unsuitable for them; to conditions of life hostile to them; to temperatures of heat and cold which killed the strongest amongst them? There was no country in the world where paupers found a welcome at this moment. It was said the people of Lewis were paupers. There was no portion of the whole globe to which they could send such people but where they would have to contend with a colonizing race which could live cheaper than the English could. There was a time when we were the colonizers of the world, but the German race, which now flowed out in huge masses, existed on a lower standard of comfort than we did. When men were emigrated they were sent to face contests with that race, and with climates and with conditions which killed the greater portion of those who went out. The Government told the House of the few successes, but they did not tell them of the many miserable failures. Medical men in America and in Canada could tell them of those who had that home sickness which embittered the emigrant's life, and in many cases drove them into the asylums. Were they going to emigrate the people by the State, by force? It was an impossibility if they tried it. By charity? It was a mockery if they pretended it. He agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had said. It was not until they had exhausted every means that were possible of providing a remedy here; it was not until the unjust conditions which hampered the poor, and which had been artificially created by the class to which hon. Gentlemen opposite belonged, were swept away, that emigration ought to be thought of as a remedy for the present state of things.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, there were one or two points to which he thought reference ought to be made. The Amendment of the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) was divisible into two parts. It dealt with the acute distress which prevailed in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and then it dealt with the disturbances which had arisen out of that distress. With regard to the disturbances which had arisen owing to the distress, he quite agreed with what had been said by the hon. and learned Member for the Elgin Burghs (Mr. Asher). There existed in Scotland a considerable amount of sympathy with the population of the Highlands; but that sympathy would be greatly withdrawn if the lawless acts which had begun were continued. If the Amendment had referred simply to the lawless acts which had taken place it would have been a subject which ought not to have been accorded a place in the Address; and it must be admitted that the cause of the people of Lewis who were in distress was being greatly injured by the lawless proceedings of a few individuals. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) stated a proposition to which particular attention ought to be paid. According to the reports which had been made, destitution prevailed in Lewis to such an extent that in the course of a very few weeks the people would be absolutely starving. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had said that the Local Authorities must, in the first instance, deal with the distress. Now, it had been altogether overlooked in the discussion that the Local Authorities of Scotland were in no way responsible for the relief of distress which was caused through the want of employment. In England they might assess local rates for the purpose of giving relief to able-bodied poor; but it was one of the peculiarities of the Scotch system that the authorities could not levy any assessment whatever for the purpose of giving relief to able-bodied poor. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said that the Local Authorities must first of all deal with the distress; that the general public should be appealed to after that; and that not until these two sources of relief had been resorted to did the Government's responsibility come in. But he (Mr. Caldwell) maintained that the Government's responsibility came in first of all. A man was not allowed to steal, neither was he allowed to beg, and if the conditions of life were such as not to admit of human existence, it was the duty of the Government to step in and see that the conditions of life were made such that a man could earn an honest livelihood by his industry. Another point he desired to allude to was that of population. It was stated by the Chief Secretary for Ireland that there had been a considerable increase of population since 1790, and that in 1881 the population of Lewis had reached 25,000. The question of population, however, did not arise in this case, because it was the fact that down to 1884 the people were perfectly able to earn their living, and maintain themselves in comfort. The population was not too great down to 1884 for the means of subsistence. Down to that period the sources of income of the inhabitants of Lewis were threefold. The people had the advantage of hiring engagements, firstly at the home fishing; secondly, at the East Coast fishing; and, thirdly, to some at the home white fishing; and to others there was work on the roads or estates. Since 1884 the fishermen no longer received hiring engagements and freed wages. The fish were sold by auction, the fisherman reserving one-twelfth of the free produce, and therefore was a sharer in the profit and loss of the fishing industry. The result was that, in this Island, there had been a loss of wages to the extent of £40,000 in 1886, and a similar loss in 1887—the sales in many instances leaving nothing for the fishermen at all. It was evident, therefore, that it was not over-population that was the true cause of the present state of affairs, and that it was not mere agitation that had produced the loss of £40,000 to which reference had been made. What was the remedy? The remedy was to be found not by any change in regard to the Land Laws; but it was to be found in the development of the fishing industry. It was to be found in increasing harbour accommodation, whereby fishing might be conducted with safety. That was one of the essential means of promoting the fishing industry. In the next place, they must have speedy communication with the main land. It had been suggested that there ought to be a railway from Garve to Ullapool, so that the fish might be brought more rapidly to market. In the third place, there ought to be a cheapening of the railway rates. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] At present the charge for the conveyance of preserved fish to London was double that for the conveyance of the same weight of potatoes. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] The question of railway rates was a very important one indeed in regard to the development of the fishing industry. [*Renewed cries of* "Divide!"] 20,000 people were reported by a Commission to be on the point of starvation. Surely the matter was one which deserved the consideration of the House of Commons. The development of the fisheries would not only benefit the people of the immediate neighbourhood, but would result in the production of cheaper food for the large industrial population in the West of Scotland. Besides, the making of harbours and railways would give immediate employment to those who were willing and able to work. He quite agreed that, in the first place, land was intended for cultivation. The country had long acknowledged the principle of the supremacy of the Crown and of Parliament in dealing with land. On giving fair compensation to the proprietors, land was taken every day for public purposes—for railways and the like. If land were required for the purpose of tillage and giving employment to the inhabitants of any particular district, there was no reason why Parliament should not adopt the very same principle which they had adopted in the case of railways. It, however, was a matter for serious consideration how far the giving of land would meet the present exigency. The giving of land was the more remote question; what they had to deal with was the population who were not tillers of the soil. He was fully persuaded that the remedy was to be found in the direction he had indicated.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) moved the adjournment of the debate. He thought that in view of the importance of the subject, and more especially in view of the numerous or rather innumerable fallacies set forth by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, a little more time ought to be allowed for the proper thrashing out of the question.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Wallace.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) greatly regretted the hon. Member had thought it right to move the adjournment of the debate. There was certainly a distinct understanding with right hon. Gentlemen opposite that the debate should be concluded that night; probably the hon. Gentleman was not aware of the understanding. He ventured to make an appeal to the House.

The House had now been debating the Address for nearly a fortnight, and they were now encroaching most seriously on the time which was required for important Public Business. He was very far indeed from, in the slightest degree, depreciating the importance of the debate which had taken place that night; but there must be a limit even to the most important debate, a limit which was imposed by the necessity of transacting Public Business. It was on this ground that he appealed to the House to conclude the debate, which had been interesting, which had been important, but which he thought had been sufficiently long. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would not press his Motion for Adjournment, but if he did the Government must resist it.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman press his Motion?

MR. WALLACE: I am afraid I must press it.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 133; Noes 194: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 6.)

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he would offer no opposition to that Motion; but he trusted that the hon. Member would consent to some arrangement whereby the House could come to an early decision to-morrow upon the point the hon. Member desired to raise by his Amendment, so that the House might proceed with the Report stage of the Address to-morrow and the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He made that appeal on behalf of the House, for he believed there was a strong desire to conclude the discussion of the Address on Thursday. That could not be done unless the course he suggested were adopted. If the hon. Member and his Friends would conclude the discussion of their Amendment to-morrow, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton might then be proceeded with, and the debate on the Address as a whole finished on Thursday.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he thought the proposal made by the right hon. Gentleman was very fair so far as it could be accepted, and that was that the hon. Member who would open the debate to-morrow would close the discussion of his Amendment early. That discussion would occupy two hours, or possibly less. It was, however, not impossible that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) might attain to debate of a dimension he could not foresee at the moment. He hoped it might close on Wednesday, and he was quite sure that the Business that was to come before the House would induce many Members on that side to do their best to attain that result, but he did not think they were in a position to say that the discussion of the hon. Member for Northampton's Amendment would certainly close by 6 o'clock.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he could only make a further remark by the indulgence of the House, and would only say that the course he suggested was one that would conduce to the convenience of the House and the forwarding of Business. He trusted that he should have the assistance of both sides in the endeavour to dispose of the Address on Thursday.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman would not deny that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton was of a most important character, and both in the House and throughout the country there was the greatest possible anxiety for a free and open debate on the question. Unfortunately, on previous occasions, they had generally found that they were a day too late, but now his hon. Friend had taken time by the forelock with a view to safeguarding the country that it should not be committed to engagements without full consideration. He was afraid the subject might not be concluded by 6 o'clock, and if that were the case no harm would be done to Business and a great deal of good service would be done.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (BELFAST) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to assimilate the rating qualification of the Municipal and Parliamentary Franchise of the borough of Belfast."—(*Mr. De Cobain.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, the hon. Member would have very little chance of carrying a measure of this limited character, and he would advise him to acquire the support of Irish Members by not confining the operation of the Bill to Belfast. The evil of such a course was strongly felt last year in reference to a Belfast Bill passed under very peculiar circumstances, whereby a Bill intended for all Ireland was cut down to a single borough. The Irish Members were now free from any entanglements with the Tory Party or Members of that Party such as went on last year, and, so far as he was concerned, he would oppose the Bill and block it, though he was not in the habit of blocking Bills—to prevent a single town like Belfast, a town specially remarkable for riots and loss of life, from being in possession of the English franchise when it was enjoyed nowhere else in Ireland. He would respectfully ask the hon. Gentleman, whom he recognized as a sincere Democrat though sitting on the Tory side, not to proceed with the Bill in this form, but to leave out reference to Belfast and bring in a Bill assimilating the Municipal and Parliamentary rating in the whole of Ireland.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. O'Neill, and Mr. Fenwick.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 138.]

WAGES (IRELAND) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the payment of Wages weekly in Ireland."—(*Mr. De Cobain.*)

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he did not know whether it was in Order to do so, but he would suggest to the hon. Member that he should place on the back of the Bill the name of a Colleague in the representation of Belfast (Mr. Sexton), who was prevented by serious illness from attending the House. He was sure his hon. Friend would not refuse to act in support of the Bill.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) said, he would be most happy to add the name of the hon. Member, if he knew that the hon. Member wished it.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought the hon. Gentleman might take it that he would.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Fenwick, and Mr. Howell.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 139.]

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (CASES TRIED).

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) said, he should have thought—and he did hope—that the nature of the Return he moved for would have commended itself to the approbation of Her Majesty's Government. The particulars it would include were, as it appeared from the recent debate, those upon which there was a strong desire for authentic information; but this, it would seem, was to be disappointed, for in communications he had had with the Chief Secretary, it appeared the right hon. Gentleman objected to give the Return, though his grounds for refusing it were not sufficient. So far as he understood them, they were that he thought the Return would have been of no great use, also that such a Return had never been given before, and that it would take a great deal of trouble to prepare. The question of expense it was hardly necessary to take into account if the information were useful; and upon that point he ventured to differ from the right hon. Gentleman. It was a new form of Return; but then the procedure was new under the Act, and the policy of the Government, strongly objected to on that side of the House, was new altogether. He would not say it was illegal; but it was an unconstitutional course that had been pursued, and had been attended with great injustice. The hour was late, and he would not take up time in supporting what really appeared to him to be a self-evident proposition. He hoped the Government, on reflection, would not refuse the Motion, or that the House would support him in it.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there be laid before this House Return of Cases tried under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' up to the 18th day of February, under the following heads:—Date of Trial; Place of Trial; Names of Magistrates presiding; Name and age of accused; Date when offence was committed; Place where offence was committed; Nature of offence; Result of Trial; Sentence (if convicted); whether appealed against; Date when Appeal heard; Place where Appeal heard; Name of Judge by whom Appeal heard; Result of Appeal."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he had had some communication with the hon. Member, and had told him that he could not agree to giving the Return. He allowed that the House had a perfect right to information as to the working of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act. He felt, as his Predecessors had felt, that it was perfectly right that information should be given, and he had given everything that they gave under similar circumstances; everything that Earl Spencer laid before Parliament under similar circumstances in 1882; and he had even given additional information, so that it could not be said that he was unduly reticent or more reticent than his Predecessors. He had given the additional Return in reference to Boycotting—[*Laughter*]—he did not observe that it was received with gratitude—[*Laughter*]—he had the Return prepared upon the best information he could obtain, and regretted if it was inadequate. He had no better source of information in detail or Return, and if hon. Members disliked it he did not see that he could give any Return at all. Let it be understood that what the hon. Member for Swansea asked for was not a statistical statement of cases. As a matter of fact, he had given that, and he would give more. He was perfectly ready to state the number of cases, the crimes for which prisoners were tried, and the county in which they were tried, the nature of the offences, the result of the trial, sentence, and appeal. But he was not prepared—that he wished to state distinctly to the House—he was not prepared to give the names of the magistrates who tried the cases. Of course, hon. Gentlemen who chose to make the investigation could find out all the information asked for in the Return; but if he were to give the names of the Judges, he would practically be giving a list of a certain number of gentlemen in order that they might be attacked not merely by Members below the Gangway but above. In his opinion, nothing had been more lamentable in the course of the debates than the attacks upon Resident Magistrates, and neither directly or indirectly would he do a single thing to forward such attacks. He had told the hon. Member for Swansea that he was perfectly prepared to give the statistical information to almost the whole extent he required, but the hon. Member wanted specific cases. Why did he want specific cases? Was it in order to judge of the merits of each case? Then this information would not be such upon which any human being could form a fair judgment on the cases. Such a Return had never before been given; it would serve no useful purpose, and he could not consent to it.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he regretted the right hon. Gentleman's opposition to the Return, and did not quite follow his reasons for refusing it. First, he objected that it would be work of enormous labour; but they had not heard that other Returns of the operation of the Crimes Act had been attended by any specially enormous labour. Secondly, he objected to giving the names of magistrates, because it might leave those gentlemen open to attack. But the names of those gentlemen had already been given in newspaper reports, and Members of the House might, if they chose, collect those reports. But this was hardly a duty that ought to be imposed on Members. It was important to have the names of the magistrates, because there was a stipulation as to the legal qualification of Resident Magistrates, and he had read in the newspapers of a magistrate who gave a very strange account of his qualifications. The objection that the Return was not wide enough came with a bad grace from a Government which also objected that it was too wide. Parliament had given exceptional powers to the Executive, and had a right to all reasonable knowledge as to the working of those powers.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, if any Member could make out the information for himself surely a Government clerk could readily make out the Return, send it to the printer, and have it circulated. It would not cost £5 besides the time of the Government official. But really the Chief Secretary desired to work in the dark as much as possible. He refused on the ground that these magistrates might possibly be subject to attacks not only from Irish Members but from the Front Opposition Bench. Well, if Resident Magistrates were not to be open to the criticism of the Leaders of the Opposition, what were their Parliamentary institutions worth? It was not for the people of the localities that this information was required; the names and actions of the magistrates were well known for 30 or 40 miles around the place of trial; what was wanted was information in an authentic form, so that electors in this country might form their judgment, and he was sorry the Chief Secretary refused official data for this purpose.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Dublin, College Green) said he should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman meant by having the conduct of the magistrates attacked? What he really did mean was probably that he objected to having their conduct criticized. Was it come to this—that the conduct of Irish magistrates could not be criticized by the House of Commons? He thought that was a very fair subject for criticism, and, indeed, it was the business of the House to criticize such conduct where it seemed open to censure. If the conduct were such as the Chief Secretary knew would bear criticism, why should he fear to give the House the names and qualifications of those gentlemen? With the Speaker in the Chair, surely there need be no fear of any unfair or un-Parliamentary attack? It was not to the credit of the Government that they tried to shield those gentlemen from the light of day and the investigation into their conduct that would, perhaps, result from the laying of this Return before the House. It spoke very badly for those gentlemen and their conduct. Probably they were afraid, and the Chief Secretary was afraid, and they had good right to be afraid to have their conduct subjected to discussion. As for the people of Ireland, they knew all about it only too well, how those gentlemen had been discharging their duty, those gentlemen as to whose legal qualifications the Lord Lieutenant was to satisfy himself. On other points the Lord Lieutenant had certainly satisfied himself; he had assured himself how those gentlemen would act under particular circumstances, and he had not been disappointed—they had certainly fulfilled his expectations. It was not to the credit of the Government to refuse this information; it could have no good effect on opinion of their history in the House or throughout the country.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, the grounds of the objection put forward by the Chief Secretary were wholly insufficient for refusing the Return. The right hon. Gentleman would not deny that it was the right of the House to have placed before it all the information that could be derived from official sources, which could be put in a compendious form, that the House might judge how the Coercion Act was working. The Return asked for would supply valuable material to that end. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] With great deference, he (Sir Charles Russell) entertained a different view to the right hon. Gentleman. He confessed he was a little at a loss to know what it was the Chief Secretary was conceding and what he was refusing, because he gathered from his statement there were two points in the Return to which he took exception, giving the names of the magistrates and giving the names and ages of the accused. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR again dissented.] Well, the right hon. Gentleman certainly expressed objection to giving the names of the magistrates. But the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had given a specific reason why the House should have the names, that the House might judge of the legal attainments of those gentlemen as to which the Lord Chancellor had satisfied himself. [An hon. MEMBER: No; the Lord Lieutenant.] Well, if it was the Lord Lieutenant, the more necessity to have these data. The House should know the names in conjunction with the particular cases with which the magistrates had to deal. Those gentlemen had not been exercising the ordinary functions of magistrates; their jurisdiction had in a majority of cases superseded the action of juries altogether. He must enter a serious protest against the suggestion that the conduct of magistrates and even of Judges was not a fit subject for criticism and discussion in the House. He fully admitted the necessity—he had observed the rule himself—of being exceedingly cautious in criticizing any judicial utterance or decision, but he denied that these were not proper subjects for the House to entertain. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had taken credit to himself for giving the Return of Boycotting, but under this head the House had reason to be grateful for very small mercies, for the right hon. Gentleman knew very well that prosecutions for Boycotting never had before assumed the dimensions they promised to assume, if they had not already assumed, under the Coercion Act of last year. Finally, the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the trouble of compiling such a Return as was asked for by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), but towards the middle of January he saw a very clear and what appeared to be a correct statement of the kind in the columns of *The Freeman's Journal.* It was no answer to say that hon. Members could collect the information for themselves. Of course they could do so, with the expenditure of time and labour, but what was wanted was the information in a compendious form that would be received as authentic. He hoped the hon. Member would go to a Division, for no substantial reason had been given for refusing the Return.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, the Chief Secretary, in giving his reasons for refusing the Return, had made an extraordinary statement. He said he objected very much to affording the Leaders of the Opposition the opportunity of criticizing his own conduct, for it was that which was involved with the action of the magistrates. It was the policy of the Executive quite as much as the conduct of the Resident Magistrates on which the information was needed. One of the most important bearings of the Return would be upon the principle that had guided the Executive in their selection of magistrates. He maintained—and it was a most serious charge to level against the Executive—that they had selected men to discharge those exceptional functions who were utterly unsuited, by their past history, their present circumstances, and their terms of appointment, for the just discharge of their duty. That was a charge under which no Executive Government should lie without an attempt to clear itself. The charge against the Executive was that they had selected men to act as magistrates under the Act who were notorious partizans, and who had made political orations showing that they were not impartial administrators of justice; and those men had been kept on the run from week to week, going from one county to another, each doing the work of two or three magistrates, because they could be relied upon for convictions. If that were true—if it should appear on the Return that certain magistrates tried an outrageous number of cases—then that would demand an explanation, and it was more for criticism of the conduct of the Executive than of the magistrates that the Return was required. The plea of expense was absolutely absurd. It would be a matter of ease for a single clerk to compile the Return in a day. The information was probably to hand in the Castle; if it was not, it was only another instance of the incompetency of the system. Another objection urged was that the Opposition might attack the conduct of the magistrates; but did the right hon. Gentleman shut his eyes to the fact that the names of the magistrates were published in the newspapers, and it was perfectly competent for anyone to use the scissors and collect the information? There must be something damaging in the information that the Government put a difficulty in the way of collecting it. The object of the Return was to give the information the value of Parliamentary authenticity; and consequently, both in that House and in the country, Parliamentary Returns, stamped with the authority of official preparation, had greater weight than a Return obtained from other sources. And that being so, he ventured to say that the refusal of the Government conveyed to his mind, and would convey to people outside the House, a conviction that with the details which were refused there were some details which the Government would have great difficulty in explaining. The excuses set up by the Government as to the expense and the difficulty of preparing the Return was nothing but a pretence to avoid the issue of inconvenient details.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) said, that while he had no desire to continue the debate, he wished to urge on the Government the advantage which would, as he thought, accrue to them in publishing a Return of that kind. He presumed that the object of the Government was to reconcile the people of Ireland to the law. Did the right hon. Gentleman think his refusal to grant this Return would have a pacifying and conciliating effect, either in this country or in Ireland? He did not think that any Government which actually refused to furnish Parliament with so simple a thing as a Return showing the way in which it had exercised the powers vested in it last Session could hope to satisfy the people. The right hon. Gentleman had told them he would not give the names of the magistrates, or the ages of the accused—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not say anything about giving the ages of the accused.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that that denial then disposed of one of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman. He had told them that the Return would involve great labour and expense; but surely it would not add very much to the labour or cost simply to include the names of the magistrates in the Return he was willing to grant. The right hon. Gentleman had said that no such Return had ever been granted before; but was one ever asked for? He had quoted Earl Spencer, and the House were constantly being told that Earl Spencer did not do one thing or another. Well, he knew a good deal about Earl Spencer, and he ventured to assert that he would have been ready to join with them that night in urging the Government to give this Return, especially in face of the fact already alluded to, that when the Act was passed the House insisted on obtaining from the Government assurances that the magistrates employed in these cases should have certain qualifications. The House was entitled to know if the Government had carried out those assurances; and they could best discover that by having the names of the Resident Magistrates who had dealt with the cases. Did the right hon. Gentleman think it would conduce either to the satisfaction of public feeling in that country or to the conciliation of the people of Ireland to the present law if, on the ground of unwillingness to supply one particular, he refused a Return which, as a whole, was so reasonable?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he thought the speech of the Chief Secretary did equal credit to his head and his heart, and they certainly had not had a more valuable one for a long time. It could only give rise to the suggestion that in the future he should answer the Questions, and allow his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) to make his speeches. Now, the right hon. Gentleman had refused to give the Return solely because it was to include the names of the magistrates. But would such a Return expose information which was not already known to the country? It would show one thing certainly, and that was that there had been certain magistrates told off in Ireland for that particular work, that those gentlemen had been *chasséed* to distant counties for that purpose. What, he would like to know, had become of Captain Butler, Mr. Crotty, and a number of other gentlemen, who had disagreed with gentlemen like Mr. Cecil Roche? Why, they had been sent to the Irish Botany Bay —to some distant quarter in Connaught, while the true and tried and trusty members of the right hon. Gentleman's Irish administration were set to do their work. The Return would show the House that it was Mr. Cecil Roche who had been sent here, there, and everywhere to impose sentences of a month's imprisonment; and that was the real objection to granting the information asked for. He would be told that Earl Spencer appointed many of the Resident Magistrates. So he did; but where were they now? They were in Ulster and other parts of Ireland, where they were not likely to deal with cases under the Coercion Act. Captain Butler was considered so good an officer by Earl Spencer that he was placed in charge of the police arrangements when the Prince of Wales visited Ireland; but neither he nor any of the type of men in whom the public and the Irish people had some reason to feel confidence was operating under the Crimes Act. Instead, Captain Keogh was brought down to hunt in the same covers as Mr. Cecil Roche, and those two gentlemen were working continually together, like the blades of a pair of scissors. The Irish Members had the best of reasons for knowing how Earl Spencer worked his Crimes Act; but it was never administered in the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was working his Act. In Earl Spencer's days the Act was worked fairly, and in only two or three cases had they reason to allege that it was improperly applied, while the magistrates were not moved from one place to another in order to obtain convictions; but under this Act the Resident Magistrates were like movable gallows, these gentlemen were constituted Judge, jury and all, and they went about from one county to another, sending people to gaol. He was amused to hear the Chief Secretary urge that those gentlemen's actions should not be criticized; surely they had developed into very sensitive plants. They knew of cases where sentences had been imposed and the Court of Exchequer had subsequently found that there was no evidence to justify the conviction by a man of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant had had to satisfy himself. Was his Lordship still satisfied with that particular magistrate's legal knowledge? As to the point of expense, that could not be pleaded, for it would not be so very expensive to insert Mr. Cecil Roche's name at the top of the column and below it put "ditto" all down the list. The only real objection then was that of criticism, and he would ask were the Resident Magistrates to be shielded from that more than anybody else? Were they ashamed of the men they had appointed? Were they ashamed of Captain Segrave, the dismissed Army man from South Africa; were they ashamed of the fact that the magistrate who sentenced Mr. Blunt had had judgment signed against him by tradesmen for several thousands of pounds? Let the Chief Secretary remember that he must have dirty instruments to do his dirty work. If the Government insisted in their refusal let the country take notice of the fact. It was not only they insisted on working the Act, but they wanted to stab in the dark, and he believed that the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman would produce consternation even in the ranks of his faithful followers, who would see how men's liberty and lives were being taken by an irresponsible set of administrators. ["Order, order!"] He was referring, of course, to the Resident Magistrates, and not to the right hon. Gentlemen opposite, of whose value he was fully aware. Under these circumstances, would the Chief Secretary declare in the face of the House of Commons that he refused information which could be obtained from the newspapers? If he did, the country would know that the refusal was due to the fact that he feared to give it because his own Party would be ashamed of what it disclosed.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he did not intend to inflict a speech upon the House of any length, but he wished to point out that the objection to publishing the names of the Resident Magistrates was a bad one, because those names were already notorious. A few nights previously he ventured in that House to charge the right hon. Gentleman with having used the most odious magistrates in the administration of the Crimes Act, and he could now assert that the majority of the convictions were made by two particular magistrates. This being a notorious fact, what reason was there for the Government to refuse the Return? The House wanted the information in a succinct and tabulated form for the purposes of argument. Had the magistrates of the different districts been allowed to deal with cases under the Crimes Act, there would not have been so much cause for complaint, but what had been done was that magistrates most offensively unpopular in Ireland had been used to work the Act. Let him explain the policy which had been pursued. Captain Butler and Mr. Considine sat together on a case under the Crimes Act; they had some of the Glenbeigh tenants before them. They differed in opinion. Mr. Considine was for a conviction and Captain Butler was in favour of an acquittal. He had already alleged, and it had not been contradicted, that Mr. Butler, as a punishment for that, was transferred to the district of Cahariciveen, and he had never since been allowed to deal with cases under the Crimes Act. He was prepared to allege, further, that the magistrates employed under the Act found it a very remunerative employment indeed, or out of the salaries they received they could not keep up the great establishments they did. Mr. Cecil Roche had in Tralee a mansion which it cost his predecessor £10,000 a-year to maintain, yet Mr. Roche had only a salary of £300 per annum. How did he keep up the establishment except that he made a large amount out of his allowance for travelling expenses? The fact was, that by means of those allowances he doubled and tripled his salary—aye, he even quadrupled his income, and thus the National Exchequer maintained his large establishment. Captain Butler had only been employed in one case under the Crimes Act—the temperate men, the even-minded men, the men who, in the worst phases of Liberal Coercion Acts, gave the Irish people no cause for complaint, those men had not been used in the administration of this Act—it was only new, fiery-brained men who would make most villainous accusations against the prisoners they were trying, who would convict and chuck them into gaol, who would baton the people who accompanied prisoners to the gaol, those were the only men who had been used by the Chief Secretary. He should be sorry to give expression to the theory that a day of reckoning would come when those men would be brought to account for their deeds; he hoped there would be no lingering sense of revenge remaining in the minds of any of the Irish people; but he warned the Government that by refusing this Return they would increase the dissatisfaction of the people. Were they afraid of the truth? Were they afraid of the consequences of an exposure of their own acts? He would say no more.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 92; Noes 134: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Kenyon, Bill for the promotion of Intermediate Education in Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Kenyon, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Swetenham, Mr. Walsh, and Admiral Mayne.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 136.]

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Fenwick, Bill to provide for the examination of persons having charge of Steam Engines and Boilers on land, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Pickard, and Mr. Arthur Ackland.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 137.]

SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Maurice Healy, Bill to amend the Law for the regulation of the profession of Solicitors in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. M'Cartan, and Mr. O'Doherty.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 140.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 22*nd February,* 1888.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—The Right honble. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, baronet, *for* Bristol Borough (West Division).

SELECT COMMITTEE—Rating and Valuation (Scotland), *appointed.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment* [141]; Official Trustee* [142].

Second Reading—Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment [58], *negatived;* Parochial Boards (Scotland) [68], *negatived.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [TENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th February].—[See page 64.]

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION (SCOTLAND).—RESOLUTION.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he begged to move as an Amendment, at the end of the Address, to insert the following words:—

> "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that owing to the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, the payment of rents in Scotland fixed before such fall has in many cases become impossible, and that, by reason of many landlords not having made any reduction of rents or having made reductions wholly inadequate, great loss, in some cases amounting to ruin, is being incurred by occupiers of land, and to pray that, by the creation of some

competent tribunal or otherwise, steps may be taken to relieve the occupiers of agricultural land from the serious consequences above mentioned."

He had risen for the purpose of bringing to the notice of the House a question connected with the condition of agriculture in Scotland which he conceived to be of very great importance. He did so with great humility, but with less reluctance, owing to a paragraph which appeared in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, and which he thought was intended by Her Majesty's Government to invite on the part of Members of that House any suggestions they might think desirable, with the view of bringing before the Government and the House remedial measures for the prevailing distress in agricultural industry. He thought he should be able shortly to satisfy Her Majesty's Government and the House that the matters which were embraced in the Amendment he had placed upon the Paper would effect that object. The rise of rent in this country during the past century had been enormous, and he believed it would be interesting if he were to inform the House at the outset what the rise in agricultural rent had been in the three countries—England, Scotland, and Ireland. They had heard a good deal of the increase of rent in Ireland, and it was well known that rents there had been enormously reduced; but he thought the House would be astonished to find that in the past century the proportion of increase in the rent of Scotland had been much greater than in England or Ireland. It appeared from Mulhall's Book of Statistics that the agricultural rent of Ireland in 1780 was £5,300,000; in 1884 it had risen to £9,982,000, an increase of not quite 100 per cent. The agricultural rent of England in 1780 was £16,900,000; in 1884 it had risen to £47,955,000, or an increase of somewhere about 275 per cent. But when he came to Scotland he found in 1780 the agricultural rental was £1,200,000; whereas, in 1880, it had risen to £7,705,000, showing an increase of over 600 per cent. The House must be startled by this comparison of the increase in rental in England and Scotland; but certain figures were startling. He could not help thinking that this increase was due mainly to two causes. In the first instance, he attributed it, to a great extent, to the existence of leases in Scotland. It had been the practice and the habit during the past century to give leases in Scotland, and the tenant farmers had displayed much zeal and skill in the cultivation of the soil. Therefore, as their leases came to an end it was found that the ground under cultivation had been rendered more valuable, and the landlord put up the leases in many cases to the highest bidder, the effect of which had been to enhance the value of land acquired during the last century. The result had been an enormously increased rental by what he ventured to think were unfair means, because this state of affairs had mainly been brought about by the tenants' own improvements, although, no doubt, the landlords of Scotland had contributed considerably to the increased value of agricultural land. According to the Duke of Argyll, they were the chief contributors to that increased value, because, in a work upon Scotland past and present, the noble Duke asserted that mind, represented by the landlords, had much more to do with the matter than muscle, represented by the tenant farmers and labourers. He (Mr. Anderson), on the other hand, ventured to think that the increase in the value of these farms had been brought about by the skill and capital of the tenants, and the result had been that as each lease came to an end an additional rent was charged. When that fact was borne in mind, he thought the House would have less reluctance in dealing with his Amendment. He wished now to refer to what had happened during the last few years affecting rents which had been so abnormally increased. Unhappily, it was not necessary for him to go into statistics for the purpose of showing the great decrease which had taken place in the price of agricultural produce, because that was admitted on all hands. It was acknowledged to have been excessive. He would, however, for a moment call attention to a valuable document prepared by the Morayshire Farmers' Club—one of the counties which he had the honour to represent. In October last, so severe had become the pressure on agriculture that the Farmers' Club met to consider the extent to which there had been a fall in the price of agricultural produce of all kinds, and also the important question to which his Amendment was directed—namely, what reduction of rents it was necessary to make in regard to leases fixed some years ago. That Report dealt largely with figures and facts for a period of years up to 1886. He would take, first of all, the 15 years up to 1881, and deal with the average prices during that period; and, in the next place, he would show what had been the fall in the price of agricultural produce between 1881 and 1886, as compared with the average of prices during the 15 years to 1881. Taking first of all the case of wheat, in those five years there had been a depreciation of 30 per cent; in the price of barley, 25 per cent; of oats, 17 per cent; and beet, 14 per cent. That was the first table. He would now take 20 years up to and including 1886, for the purpose of comparing the average prices of agricultural produce during those 20 years with the prices which existed in 1887. The result in that case was that the average prices in the 20 years up to 1886, compared with the prices in 1887, showed a depreciation in cereals of 30 per cent; in beef, 14 per cent; in second beef, 22 per cent; in mutton, 20 per cent; in second mutton, 22 per cent; in pork, 25 per cent; in milk, 30 per cent; in butter, 33 per cent; in hay, 17 per cent; in potatoes, 50 per cent; in wool, 33 per cent; and 40 per cent in horses; showing a great reduction throughout the whole range of agricultural produce. It necessarily followed from that, as the Report of the Morayshire Farmers' Club went on to say, that a large reduction of rent must take place. The Report pointed out—

> "That the Committee, after considering the whole circumstances, are of opinion that to establish the same relative position that existed between the owner and cultivators during the period under review a reduction of more than 50 per cent would require to be made; and, to make farms workable without serious loss, a reduction of at least 33 per cent on the average would require to be made on all such rents."

He might inform the House that that Report had been considered by 33 agricultural associations in Scotland up to the beginning of the present year, and every one of them, with one exception, which was of a rather singular nature, because it recommended Protection—with that one exception, all agreed with the conclusion at which the Farmers' Club had arrived. There existed, therefore, a large body of evidence from the Farmers' Clubs of Scotland to show that they were unanimously of opinion that a reduction of this kind was necessary. He did not think, however, that that was all the evidence before the House, because many hon. Members who owned land in England were quite aware that a reduction of rent even higher than 50 per cent had in many cases been made. He believed that the reduction of agricultural rents in England would be found to be very much larger — at any rate, quite as large—all round as the 50 and 33 per cent suggested in the Report. It was conclusively proved that in order to put the farmer in a fair position, so that he might make a profit out of his farm, the rents must come down to this extent. He now came to the point to which his Amendment was chiefly directed. He had heard it stated yesterday by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), and also by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), that in Scotland and England the landlords had fairly met their tenants, and that the necessary reduction of rent had been made. He had heard a similar statement made before in that House. He regretted to say that it was not a correct statement of affairs. It was unquestionable—as he should satisfy the House by figures very shortly—that in Scotland such was not the case. He quite admitted that in England it had been done to some extent, and it had been done for this reason—that the landlords had no other alternative. In England the farms were held chiefly under yearly tenancy, and a tenant was at liberty to give up his farm without much trouble. In Scotland, owing to the system of leases, the landlord had the farmer fast by the bond he had signed for so many years. Unfortunately, he had taken advantage of this bond to refuse, in many cases, to make the reductions which in England the landlords had been compelled to make, because they felt that if they did not make them their land would be left unoccupied. In Scotland the existence of leases had been used as a weapon for increasing the value of agricultural land abnormally, and extorting from the tenant a rent which the land could not and ought not to bear. The effect of that system had been most serious.

He would give some examples to illustrate what he meant. It was not necessary for him to give them from different parts of Scotland; he would, therefore, confine the illustrations to the two counties he represented. The Report of the Morayshire Farmers' Club was published and circulated to the proprietors last October, and it might have been thought that, after seeing it, they would have made liberal reductions in the direction to which it pointed. Now, what had been the reductions? First of all, he would say that of the leases now in existence many of them had been made before 1880—before there was any idea of the great depreciation in prices which would take place. On three estates—those of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Cawdor, and Sir George Grant—reductions had been made ranging from 20 to 30 per cent. Next came another range of reductions from 10 to 15 per cent, including the estates of Lord Moray, Lady Seafield, Lord Fife, Mr. Brodie of Brodie, and Major Rose. He believed that on some of these estates, notably those of Lord Fife and the Earl of Seafield, larger reductions had been made in individual cases; but 10 to 15 per cent was the general reduction. He now came to another class, which was a very extraordinary one, though he regretted to say it was a very numerous one in Scotland, in which reductions had been made of 5 to 7 per cent, but coupled with this extraordinary condition, to which he invited the attention of the House—that the tenant, in order to get the reduction, must give up his rights under the Agricultural Holdings Act. Bearing in mind that these rights were of great value, it was undoubtedly a strange position for a landlord to take up, that when he found his tenants in great distress, and in great difficulty in scraping up the rent, he should say, in order to make a miserable reduction of 5 per cent—"You must give up your rights under the Agricultural Holdings Act." He was told that that had taken place on two estates, one in Morayshire and one in Nairnshire, and he had been informed by Members of that House and persons from other parts of Scotland that it was a common condition made by the landlords in giving reductions of rent. All he could say was that he did not think that words could be found strong enough to condemn the conduct of landlords who insisted on a condition of that kind, and he believed that it was altogether illegal. The object of the Legislature in passing the Agricultural Holdings Act was to give the tenants the benefit of that Act, and the 36th clause prohibited any contract the effect of which would be to deprive the tenant of the advantages he obtained under that Act. He was therefore glad to think that these conditions would not hold water in a Court of Law. He now came to another class which was lower than this—namely, the landlords who had made no reduction at all. He thought the figures he had already given would astonish English owners; but he might tell the House that on a large estate in Morayshire, of more than 40,000 acres, not one shilling reduction of rent had been made after the publication of this Report. He believed that had occurred on the estates of Sir William Gordon Cumming and Mr. Frazer Tytler, and other holdings. On all the estates where only small reductions had been made, and where none had been made at all, he knew, from personal communication with some tenants, that they had been brought to the very brink of ruin. That must inevitably be so. It was the condition of affairs even where reductions of 10 to 15 per cent had been made. Every hon. Member acquainted with the cultivation of the land in these times of agricultural depression must know that it was perfectly idle to give a reduction of 10 and 15 per cent. Therefore, a very large class of tenants must be suffering enormously, especially those to whom no concessions had been made by the landlords. If he succeeded in establishing these facts, surely the House would have before them a problem which well deserved their attention, because if agricultural depression continued, and no relief was given, the farmers must inevitably be driven into bankruptcy. Hon. Members had discussed the question whether this was a temporary matter. Unfortunately, agricultural depression had now been going on for a long series of years, and there were causes at work which seemed to baffle altogether the ingenuity of the Government to ascertain—causes which still kept the agricultural industry in its present state, and prices, instead of showing any prospect of increase, he was sorry to say, had a tendency in a downward direction. This state of things had now been going on for a great number of years, and was likely to continue. Then, what was to be the condition of the tenants? Were they to be left to the tender mercy of the landlords, many of whom were exacting from them, under the terms of their leases, a rent which never ought to be paid? That was the question to which he invited the attention of the House of Commons. It was a question of great importance, because it involved the existence of men who were deserving of every consideration. He thought the House would have no difficulty in forming an opinion that some relief should be given to them. No doubt he would be asked—"What do you propose to do?" That was a question he was bound to answer, and it would be seen that, in the Amendment, he referred to the creation of a tribunal for the purpose of fixing the rent in case of a dispute between a landlord and tenant. The Report to which he had referred dealt with the question of what was to be done, and it referred to the breaking of leases. The breaking of leases had been considered by many of the agricultural associations, and had met with considerable favour; but he could not help feeling that it was a difficult question to deal with. It might be a solution, but yet it seemed to him to be a rather strong and sharp measure, and if he could see his way to give some relief to the tenant without going to that extent he would prefer to do so. Another suggestion was that there should be a sliding scale of rents. There was a great deal to be said for that, because it had the advantage that in good times the rent would be raised in favour of the landlords; whereas, in bad times, it would be reduced according to the decreased price of produce. The practice of fixing rents by a sliding scale had certainly this advantage, and it had been adopted in some parts of Scotland. Still, it was a question of great difficulty, and would have to be carefully examined before it was adopted. Another course, which was the one he suggested in his Amendment, was that some tribunal should be created, on the lines of the Crofters' Commission. They had in Scotland already a tribunal which had done admirable work. Her Majesty's Government admitted that the Crofters' Commission had done good service to the small tenants of Scotland; and, if so, why should not the principle of the Crofters' Act be extended first of all to small tenants? At present the Crofters' Act dealt only with small tenants up to £30 a-year. He wanted to know why the principle of that Act should not be extended to all the small tenants of Scotland? Why should it be limited to the small tenants in the crofter counties? It was difficult to see why it should not be extended to tenants who paid a higher rent. In Scotland there were 55,000 tenants who held under 50 acres. Now, he could not conceive that there should be any difficulty in extending the principle of the Crofters' Act to all these small holdings. The holdings between 50 and 100 acres amounted to 10,000, and there were 15,000 tenants who held over 100 acres. In the counties where the Crofters' Act had been applied it had had a most beneficial effect, and the extension of the Act would have a similar beneficial effect. He would give to the House an example of its operation. The House would probably be aware that the Crofters' Act applied to Inverness, but did not extend to Morayshire. It so happened that the Countess of Seafield had large estates both in Morayshire and Inverness. She had made in Morayshire a reduction of 10 to 15 per cent. But the other day it was made known that the Crofters' Commission were about to visit Inverness, and a number of the tenants gave notice to Lady Seafield that they intended to apply to have their rents fixed. The factor of Lady Seafield went to them and said—"I will give you a reduction of 15 per cent;" but they replied—"No; they were looking for a reduction of 30 per cent." After a little bargaining, rather than go before the Crofters' Commission, the factor agreed to give every tenant a reduction of 30 per cent. That illustrated the admirable effect of legislation of that kind. But it also illustrated the great hardship inflicted upon Lady Seafield's tenants in other parts of the country who did not possess the means of bringing down the unfair rents they were now paying to a proper level. He therefore maintained that what he suggested in regard to the extension of the application of that Act was only fair and reasonable. The Act itself had worked well already, and would, if adopted, prevent great abuses in the country. So far as the large tenants were concerned, he did not imagine that there would be any great difficulty. He had referred to the various suggestions which had been made for dealing with the question—namely, the breaking of the leases, as some of the agricultural associations suggested, creating a tribunal to fix fair rents, and having a sliding scale of rent. He wished to point out that after voting for his Amendment the House would not be pledged to any particular form of relief. All the Amendment declared was that the circumstances were such that in the present condition of affairs some attempt ought to be made, either by creating a Board of Valuers or otherwise, for the purpose of giving relief to the tenants. He could not help saying that, unless something of that kind were done, he foresaw a terrible time in the future for the tenants who had nothing before them but absolute and total ruin. He did not wish to use hard words with regard to the landlords. There were a great many good landlords; but there were, unfortunately, some landlords who would get the uttermost they could out of their tenants. For them he had no sympathy whatever, and he was sure that no hon. Member in that House would sympathize with them. They ought to be dealt with for the purpose of doing justice to the tenants. There was another class—and he was afraid it was a large class—who said that they could not make reductions from very peculiar circumstances. When good times existed, they expected those good times to go on; and, thinking that the existing rents would always be paid, enormous charges had been put upon their estates in making provisions for younger children and jointures for widows. In the case of an estate in Morayshire, he was told that the estate was so encumbered by the various charges which had been placed upon it, that very little was left for the landlord to live upon. Of course that state of things was very serious, and he could not help thinking that it was a matter which ought to engage the attention of Her Majesty's Government. No doubt it was a difficult problem to deal with. He fully admitted that it was a matter of great difficulty; but he had always understood that statesmen were brought into the world for the purpose of dealing with these questions of difficulty. It was not necessary to discuss the question of the reduction of the interest on mortgages, seeing that it was discussed last year in the debate on the Irish Land Bill. There was much to be said in favour of reducing the interest on mortgages and of reducing the interest on the permanent charges on land. His proposition, however, did not involve that difficult problem. His case was that the House ought not to allow a large class of tenants to be ruined, simply because interest had to be paid on certain encumbrances. It was much more important to prevent the tenants from being ruined, and the whole of their capital being taken away without being guided by the interests of other persons in reference to mortgages. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would look upon the question fairly, and regard it as one of great importance to Scotland. He did not bring it before the House in any Party spirit. He brought it before the House for the purpose, if possible, of benefiting and averting from ruin a large class of deserving persons who were entitled to the interference of the House of Commons in their behalf. He, therefore, hoped to hear from Her Majesty's Government that they were prepared to accept his proposal. It was not in its nature a revolutionary proposal. It simply suggested that in these depressed times, when the landlords, either from necessity or other causes, did not fairly meet the pressing claims of the agriculturists, the State should interfere. If ever there was a case for the interference of the Government, or for some attempt to deal with the question deserving the consideration of every statesman and politician, this was the question. The House would probably be surprised that Her Majesty's Government had not thought it right to suggest some remedy for the dreadful depression that existed in agriculture. At any rate, he hoped that he had not presumed too much upon the province of a private Member in bringing the attention of the House to this very important matter, and in conclusion he begged to move the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeen, W.) seconded the Amendment. He said that the Government had deliberately shirked the agricultural question in Her Majesty's most gracious Speech from the Throne, and as they were contemplating no action with regard to that industry, he thought it was the duty of the House of Commons to take advantage of every opportunity to press on the Government and the House the interests of that great portion of the community which was now suffering from so much depression. If any justification was wanted for the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) it was to be found in the vague promises of the Government. It was absolutely necessary that some means should be discovered to enable the tenants more effectually to meet the difficulties under which they laboured. His hon. and learned Friend had not come before the House with a vague and indefinite statement, but he had brought forward a plan by which some, at all events, of the existing evils might be remedied. There could be no doubt that the present state of agriculture was very grave and serious, even more so in Scotland than in England. In England the agriculturists were able to relieve themselves of their difficulties by leaving their farms; but the Scotch farmer was in the position of being tied up for 14 or 15 years, and compelled to pay rents which the present prices and condition of agriculture would soon render it absolutely impossible to pay. The farmers in the North were quiet men and did not ventilate their grievances very loudly. The question did not reach that acute stage which it was necessary for most questions to reach before legislation could be hoped for. But the tenant farmers were getting worn out with their trials and privations. They were still, however, looking to the Government; they had not yet given up their faith in Governments, and they were in hopes that some pressure would be brought to bear on the Government to do something for them. In all parts of Scotland this question had been discussed. The Scotch people took great interest in the Irish Question, but they naturally took more interest in their own affairs. Wherever he went he found that the one question which came to the front was the condition of agriculture and the best means of improving it. Since the report of the Morayshire Farmers' Club was put forward, all those discussions had been brought to a focus, and the recommendations of that club had been widely adopted. A mistaken notion had got about that the Morayshire Club had recommended a hard and fast reduction of rent. That was not so. They all knew very well that the farmers could not continue to pay their present rents, and, unfortunately, many of the landlords were in such a position that they could not give them the reduction they required. He was himself a landlord, and he thought that landlords, as a rule, admitted their obligations to their tenants somewhat more liberally than his hon. and learned Friend had admitted, but in many cases they had not been able to do as much as they would like. In the first place, they did not wish to lose their tenants, and in the second, they knew perfectly well that if the tenant could not afford to till the soil properly the land must go out of cultivation. What was to be done under such circumstances? Were they to keep the unfortunate tenants under contracts which they could not pay, or squeeze them entirely out of existence? What was required was some speedy and immediate relief. His hon. and learned Friend suggested and the Morayshire Farmers' Club had recommended a plan which he had always been in favour of—namely, that some tribunal should be established in the form of a Land Court which would supersede that haphazard kind of valuation which had rarely given satisfaction and had led to endless disputes. Under such a Court the tenants would have the advantage of careful valuation and proper consideration, and he knew that in the constituency he represented many of his constituents were looking forward to the adoption of this plan with hope in the future. No doubt there were many arguments that might be urged against the adoption of a plan of this kind, such as the rate of interest the landlords had to pay on their incumbrances, interference with contracts, and the responsibilities which would be involved in a new valuation. But this was a period of great emergency. They saw an important national industry being crushed and ruined, and they could afford to throw over all questions of political economy in order that they might come more directly to the root of the evil. They did not, in Scotland, as in England, see the land going out of cultivation day by day, because the dogged perseverance and industry of the farmers would make them carry on their business to the very last. They did not want to be beaten by adversity if they could help it, and they meant loyally to meet their obligations if they could. But the present state of things could not go on for ever, and must ruin them at last, if something could not be done. He had therefore great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend, and in urging upon the Government to consider carefully and patiently the proposals which were submitted to them. He had only one word to say in conclusion. His hon. and learned Friend had brought in, perhaps not quite regularly, the question of the Crofters' Act. In his own part of the country, upon his own property, he had a large number of tenants living under the same conditions as the crofters. He thought that they had a full right to equal protection, and therefore he should not cease to urge upon the House the desirability of extending the benefits of the Crofters' Act to all the tenants in Scotland.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words,—"Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that, owing to the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, the payment of rents in Scotland fixed before such fall has in many cases become impossible, and that, by reason of many landlords not having made any reduction of rents or having made reductions wholly inadequate, great loss, in some cases amounting to ruin, is being incurred by occupiers of land, and to pray that, by the creation of some competent tribunal or otherwise, steps may be taken to relieve the occupiers of agricultural land from the serious consequences above mentioned."—(*Mr. Anderson*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he was not sorry that this question had been brought forward, as it enabled the House to see both sides of the question. He regretted, as much as anyone, the unfortunate position of many of the tenants of Scotland, who were bound by a hard-and-fast line by leases entered into 10 or 12 years ago, when times were prosperous, and who now, when times of adversity had arrived, had found themselves unable to meet their obligations. Prices had fallen in some cases from 20 to as much as 50 per cent since the leases had been entered into. But he was bound to give all praise to the tenants of Scotland as a whole that, notwithstanding the difficulties of the situation, they had made it a point of honour to meet their obligations as far as they possibly could. They must not forget, however, that the long leases were entered into it mainly with the view of benefiting the tenant farmer, because, while the 19 years' leases were binding on the landlords, they were not so binding on the tenants, landlords frequently relieving tenants of their leases at their request, and re-letting the farms at lower rentals. The statistics which had been presented to the House were open to criticism as coming wholly from the side of the tenants. He felt bound to dissent from the statement of the hon. Member that landlords had not as a rule given any considerable reductions of rent. Very considerable reductions had been made, and it was not fair to say that the landlords of Scotland had dealt in an unfair and tyrannical manner with their tenants. On the contrary, he believed, where landlords were in a position to make reductions, they had, as a rule, generally done so, but in some of the cruel and hard cases reductions had not been made through the absolute inability of the lordlord to do so. That was why reductions had not been universal. He questioned if the great majority of tenant farmers in Scotland would like their leases entirely swept away; as with improving trade there was still hope that better times were in store for the agricultural industry. He did not believe that the leaseholders desired a tribunal to settle rents, as it would interfere with the independence which they so much prized, and although he had talked to many Scottish farmers on this subject, he had found few who would like to do away with their leases altogether. Long leases had many advantages, although in some cases undoubtedly they had done harm, such as where the landlord had been so foolish as to pin down his tenant to the strict letter of his contract. That policy might be successful for a time, but in the end it was bound to result in disaster; and he thought few attempted to pursue it. No doubt, if the bad landlords refused to listen to reason, such a debate as that now in progress would show the landlords of that stamp that unless they adopted a more humane treatment of their tenants the Legislature would be compelled to step in and use stringent means. But, on the other hand, to act upon the recommendations of the Morayshire Farmers' Club by adopting the Amendment would be doing a vast amount of harm to the majority of the tenants for the sake of the benefit of a few. Where the landlord lived upon his property, the tenants would come to him and state their difficulties; and if he were a man of honourable feelings, he would meet their difficulties to the best of his power. The hon. Member the Mover of the Amendment did not say one word as to the amount which had been remitted by landlords in the shape of arrears of rent during the last few years. It was impossible to get any tabulated statement; but he could say from personal knowledge that thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of pounds of arrears had been remitted within the last few years. The hon. Gentleman said the Government had done nothing to recognize the difficulty of the agricultural tenants; but surely he could not have heard the speech of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners) when he made that statement. There was the Railway Rates Bill, which was to be introduced in an amended form from the Bill of last year. Then, again, the noble Lord spoke of local taxation being removed from the shoulders of those who bore it so heavily—namely, the agricultural tenants, and put it upon others to bear a share. It could not, therefore be said that the Government had turned a deaf ear to the many entreaties addressed to them. This was not a Party question. They were all anxious to do what they could for the tenantry and landlords of England and Scotland; but while sympathizing most deeply with the tenants of Scotland in their present distress, he would tell the House that in many cases the landlords themselves were in equal difficulties, and did not know how to make ends meet.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, he did not think it incumbent upon him to take any pains in answering the propositions which had been advanced by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Mark Stewart), because it seemed to him that the strain of the hon. Member's remarks was rather in favour of the Amendment. He (Mr. Wallace), however, was afraid that the hon. Member's vote would be cast on the other side; and though he admired the impartiality which gave arguments to one side and votes to the other, that was not a division of benefits which was likely to be useful to the Opposition in the present instance. He thought his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) was justified in every way in bringing forward this Amendment. It seemed to him that the way in which the Government and the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, as representing here the Secretary for Scotland, were treating the Scotch Business, was extremely disappointing, and would prove, he was afraid, very irritating to Scotland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that the Scotch people were thinking about nothing else than University reform, Borough Police laws, and Private Bills. Now he ventured to say that nine out of ten of the population of Scotland were not thinking of these matters at all. There was no grumbling about Universities in Scotland on the part of the people. He did not know what some people who had academic interests might be desiring, but he was aware that the people of Scotland were not considering that one of their grievances, and he was not aware that in Scotland the people were complaining so much of the police as they did in some parts of England; and with respect to Private Bills, no doubt there was some reason in that matter in one way, but he thought it was chiefly in the Parliament House in Edinburgh that interest was taken in the improvement of legislation as to Private Bills. He did not want to make objection to that. There was a proverb which held that the entrails of the local fish should be given to the local seamew, and that was a proverb which he thought should apply to the Parliament House at Edinburgh as well as to other local institutions. He had no doubt that in the matter under discussion the Lord Advocate would be as successful in voting down Scotch Members as he was last night, when he brought in the usual smoking-room brigade to vote down

Scotch public opinion. They (the Opposition) had 34 Scotch votes to eight last night, and he dared say that to-day the Division would be even more overwhelming against the Scotch Members than yesterday; but he ventured to think that that vote would be taken note of by the people of Scotland, and that the Lord Advocate would be questioned in regard to it when opportunity was given for interrogation. They had heard in these debates recently, attempts made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to draw from the case of Scotland illustrations and arguments with respect to the Irish difficulty. It was said that Scotland was contented with the Union, because Scotch opinion was always deferred to on Scotch matters. But that was not the case; the fact was precisely the opposite. Scotch opinion in any matter which was peculiarly Scotch was voted down in this House by overwhelming numbers of English Tories. These remarks were of a general and discursive character, and yet they would not, he thought, be without their practical effect in Scotland with respect to the particular question before the House. From all the information which had come to him, he believed that his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) was perfectly well-founded in the complaint that he had made and in the picture that he had drawn of the sad state of the agricultural tenants in Scotland. He (Mr. Wallace) did not represent an agricultural constituency; but he had had brought very closely home to his attention, by deputations from agricultural constituencies, the state of things in different parts of the country, and his conviction was that the sufferings of the Scotch tenantry were not less in proportion than the sufferings of the agricultural tenants in Ireland. There might not be the same case of absolute cruelty, though he believed there were cases to be found in Scotland which would parallel any case of cruelty in Ireland if they were equally advertised. But the condition of things—the grievous and serious condition of things—was such that, in his opinion, it ought to have been mentioned in the Gracious Speech from the Throne. At all events, if there was to be a selection made of the Scotch topics that were to be mentioned in the Speech, not those that were mentioned would have been selected, but such a one as formed the subject of the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend. He would take one instance of the manner in which Scotch tenants were treated. He believed that the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Mark Stewart) did not take greater courage than to say that there were many landlords who dealt liberally with their tenants under the present circumstances.

Mr. MARK STEWART: I said the generality of landlords.

Mr. WALLACE said, he failed to hear the words "generality of landlords," but of course he accepted the account the hon. Gentleman now gave. He was, however, afraid from what he had heard that it was only a minority of landlords who dealt in this way with their tenants. From the county of East Lothian, which was peculiarly an agricultural district, he would give an instance—the case of an important farm at Cairndinnis, of which he thought the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) knew something. Well, on that farm—and it was simply a specimen and instance of a number of cases which had been brought to his attention, and which he believed had been correctly described to him—the circumstances were these. He believed the farm was now in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman himself. The tenant, having passed through many bad seasons, and having sacrificed a large amount of capital on improvements, and paying too high a rent, owing to the operation of the Law of Hypothec, which, though abolished some years ago, was still living in its disastrous and fatal effects on rents which had been artificially raised above what any rent ought to be, asked his landlord, the right hon. Gentleman, for a revaluation; but that revaluation was refused under circumstances which, in his (Mr. Wallace's) opinion, did not entitle the right hon. Gentleman to be classed as one of the landlords who were dealing in a liberal or even a just spirit with their tenantry. Well, notwithstanding the difficulties which were imposed upon this tenant, he persevered. He kept up the condition of his farm at a sacrifice of his own capital; but in the end he failed altogether to do so, and two years ago he threw up the farm after having held it for 14 years. He left it in a state of the highest cultivation, but compensation was not given to him for what he had done on the farm, and he was now in the position of a ruined man. The improvements he had made were valued by a person of experience in business of that kind, and it was understood that the farmer had improved the right hon. Gentleman's farm to the extent of £3,000 or £4,000. The right hon. Gentleman had now in his pocket that amount of this poor man's capital, and on the strength of that he came here and was able to fight the battles of Lord Clanricarde. Now, he (Mr. Wallace) put it to the House that that was a real and typical instance of what was going on in Scotland at the present moment. It was simply a balance of evidence, and his (Mr. Wallace's) testimony, so far as he had been able to gather information about the matter, was that the Scotch landlords generally did not treat their tenants generously, and did not even treat them justly. He could not believe that that fact was unknown to the Lord Advocate, and it seemed to him an extraordinary thing that, with a knowledge of the state of matters in Scotland as it actually was, he should not, if he had been going to call attention to Scotch Business at all, have given attention to state of Scotch agriculture and the treatment of Scotch tenants by Scotch landlords. It was hard to say why he had not given these subjects a prominent place in the Speech from the Throne. He (Mr. Wallace) did not think it necessary for him to do more than bear his testimony to what he believed to be the real state of matters in Scotland at the present time, and to add his voice against he would not say the scandalous neglect—though if that were a Parliamentary word he would use it—but against the neglect of the true and burning questions in Scotland at the present time on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Their promise of University reform, and to deal with the borough police and Private Bills, were simply three red herrings which were drawn across the path to give an appearance of paying attention to Scotch matters, and to enable them to give the real questions which were interesting to the people of Scotland the go-by, and to do nothing that was worthy of being done. He would assure the Government that they were the most active apostles of Home Rule in Scotland that he knew of. He (Mr. Wallace) was not a red-hot advocate of Scotch Home Rule in the meantime; but he could assure the Government that there were no people doing more to create a determination on the part of Scotland to have something in the nature of an independent local legislature and local government than Her Majesty's Government by the way they were treating, or rather maltreating, Scotch Business.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I think, after the speech we have just listened to from the hon. Member for the East Division of Edinburgh (Mr. Wallace), the County Members for Scotland have reason to congratulate themselves that the hon. Gentleman does not represent an agricultural constituency. When he mentioned that a very large number of Scottish Members last night appeared to take a particular view upon a question before the House, as compared with Scottish Members who took a different view, he very clearly pointed out by that reference how different the state of things is to-day. Because I could not help observing when he made that remark, and told us how many Scottish Members had voted against the Government last night—I could not help observing how extremely few Scottish Members on the opposite side of the House, who represent agricultural constituencies, have thought it worth their while to come here to-day and hear this most interesting and proper debate. It is a lamentable thing that the Government should be charged with a grievous breach of duty in not mentioning this matter in the Speech from the Throne, when this matter, having been before Scottish Members for at least 10 days, we have not had during this debate more than seven or eight hon. Members representing Scottish agricultural constituencies present to listen to the interesting and instructive speech of my hon. Friend, indicating, in point of fact, that they do not take any practical interest in this question at all. I pass from these matters with an expression of regret that when a matter of this kind is brought forward on any occasion whatever, it should appear that, while we had upwards of 40 Scottish Members voting on the question last night, we have not had in the course of this debate any expression of interest by the presence of Scottish Members on the Benches opposite.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) here made an observation which was inaudible in the gallery.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I do not know why it is that hon. Members should so often interrupt me inarticulately when I begin to speak. But if anybody has anything to say I will sit down. I do not think it is fair treatment to give to the announcement in the Queen's Speech to say that no notice is taken of this matter. It is surely an important announcement in the Speech from the Throne, followed up as it is by the statement made by the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners), that the matter of agriculture is to be taken up by the establishment really of a Department for its administration. I think that is a broad and comprehensive statement. All subjects of immediate and local interest cannot be inserted in Her Majesty's Speech, and clearly nothing can be inserted on which definite action cannot immediately be taken. I venture to say, from what we have heard to-day, it is quite clear there is no evidence in this case for definite action, because many of the suggestions made have been alternative, and many of them doubtful. I want to know why it should be thought that Scotland should in this matter specially be referred to in the Queen's Speech more than England? Is not the state of things in England as deplorable, if not more deplorable, than in Scotland? It is a very remarkable fact, indeed, that notwithstanding all the difficulties which had existed, and still exist, there is scarcely such a thing as an empty farm in Scotland. In some cases, no doubt, the landlords have to take over their own farms, and are cultivating them themselves; but that will not place them, if the views of hon. Members are correct, in a much better position to help their remaining tenants, because their assertion is that they will have to carry on that work at a loss. But, in point of fact, throughout the length and breadth of Scotland, as a whole, the tenants who have been in possession of the farms hitherto are in possession of them still; and the tendency has not been, where leases have fallen in, to decline to take leases in future. The objection by the hon. Member who moved the Amendment is to the leases. Every Member of the House who is a Scotchman, and has lived long enough to know the history of that matter, knows that the establishment of the system of long leases was made in the interest of the tenant, at the desire of the tenant, and for the benefit of the tenant. But will any agricultural constituency Member get up and deny that the long-lease system was looked upon as being of great value to the tenant—as giving him the opportunity of making his own improvements, and reaping the fruits of them before the expiry of the lease? Another thing occurred in the interest of the tenant at that time, though now, unfortunately, it turns out to be the opposite. Within living memory—and a much shorter time than that—most leases were partly on a money rent and partly on a grain rent; and that was put an end to solely in the interest of the tenant. Because the grain rent, which rose and fell with the price of grain, necessarily had this result—that if the grain became dear at any time the landlord reaped the benefit; and accordingly, at the time of the Crimean War, and when many tenants had entered on 19 years' leases at very low rents, in consequence, on the depression following the repeal of the Corn Laws, these grain rents were abandoned, money rents were substituted, and enormous fortunes were made at that time by farmers, in consequence of their having 19 years' leases and receiving enormous prices for their crops. Many of the men who at that time made very large fortunes—indeed, are still, or their sons are—sitting in the farms they sat in then. Does anyone who knows the state of Scotland not know that a great expenditure had been made by the landlords in improving the social condition of the farmers—by improving their dwellings and other buildings? And will anyone deny that the scale on which the farmer lives now in Scotland is vastly better than it was 20 or 30 years ago? When the pinch comes we must all suffer. Landlords must in many cases reduce their establishments, let their houses, and farmers must suffer also—they cannot live on the scale on which they have been living in the past 40 or 50 years. And in many cases it goes further—it amounts practically to ruin both to the landlord and the tenant. But is that a reason for going in at once for breaking up contracts between people in that position? Is that a reason for treating them as you treat people who cannot protect themselves? It would be a most disastrous thing for the tenants, on the assumption that we are ever to have good times again, to place them in the position which hon. Members contemplated during the last few weeks or months. We have had some evidences and some hopes of improved trade throughout the country. That improved trade will at once affect agriculture in various ways, but most distinctly in one way. One of the most crushing influences on the agricultural industry during the last few years has been that in consequence of the decrease of trade, and the vast amount of unemployed shipping, grain and flour have been brought to this country in vast quantities, practically without paying any freight at all, and, therefore, brought into the market at prices perfectly inconsistent with the ordinary rates which obtain when good trade prevails. The moment trade revives and shipping once more becomes an industry in which remunerative freights can be obtained, the bringing home of grain practically without freight at all will cease, and agriculture will be affected all round by the price of grain being raised. And the result, we all hope, will be that a very great increase and improvement will take place in the return which is to be made from the occupation of land. My hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) boldly stated that in this matter, as in others, you should throw over political economy. I do not suppose he suggests that political economy is to be thrown over in the same way as you throw over a tree by cutting it down at the roots. I accept his statement as meaning that, in this present emergency, you must take some special steps for the purpose of dealing with the special distress. Very good. I ask, why is it to fall solely on the landlords? If it is a special distress, it ought to be met by national intervention, and not by coming down on a particular class. Why is political economy to be thrown down as against the landlords, and not anybody else? If you are to go on the rule that, whenever any difficulty occurs to a particular class, the rest of the community are to throw over political economy as regards the class, while maintaining it as regards themselves, you are entering on a system of downright injustice, which will result in no good to the community. You cannot throw over political economy without doing two things—without making difficulties in the future, and without, to a certain extent, doing practical injustice. These laws are too strong, and they will come back on you. The tenants of Scotland are people who, in ordinary circumstances, are perfectly capable of making their own bargains, and fighting their own battles; and I do not believe the majority of the farmers of Scotland would be content to be treated as children who cannot manage their own affairs, or would consent to the degradation of not fulfilling their bargains, so far as they can, and endeavouring to make the best arrangement they can with others, in whom, as a class, I venture to say they have perfect confidence. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken thinks proper to bring up, as an instance of the kind of case which he alleges to be occurring very frequently, a case in which he makes a distinct charge of the most disgraceful character against my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). I do think—and I appeal to the House whether I am not right in thinking—that if a personal attack based upon particular facts is to be made against the character of a Member of this House, and a Member of the Government, it ought not to be made without notice given to that right hon. Gentleman, that he might be in his place to meet it. But I venture to say that if the hon. Member states that as being a case in the least resembling any common case in Scotland—assuming his facts to be true—he makes a statement in which he will not get the farmers of our country to support him. And I say again the County Members have reason to congratulate themselves that the hon. Member is not the Representative of a county constituency when he comes forward and makes that statement against the landlords of Scotland. This debate it was expected would be conducted within reasonable limits, and I trust it has been so. I sincerely hope that some means will be found by the establishment of this new Department to assist and to aid the agriculturists both in England and in Scotland. But I ask the House to reject this Amendment, which proposes to upset a relation between landlords and tenants in Scotland, or landlords having large properties, and the tenants having large farms, without any previous inquiry—without any previous action on the part of Parliament or any Government which has held Office. It is an Amendment which has been sprung upon us as an entirely new thing; and I ask the House to reject it as not being a suitable Amendment to be added to the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he regretted that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate was not in his place, because he (Mr. Esslemont) intended at the outset to show that the encouragement that he gave to the agriculturists both in England and Scotland in regard to the revival of the shipping trade was entirely misplaced and misleading. He (Mr. Esslemont) had, since the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke, during Mr. Speaker's short absence from the Chair, looked up the statistics with regard to the importations of corn to this country during the past few years, and it would be found that they had been gradually decreasing in the years 1882-3-4-5-6 and 7, so that the question of importing larger quantities of wheat at low prices in no way affected the question under discussion. But he would point out, further, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was entirely mistaken in thinking that the cost of importation had been very largely affected in the manner in which he described. The great advance which had been made in the building of steamers and the conservation of fuel by improved triple condensing steam boilers and engines had brought the transit of foreign exports to a minimum which he hoped and believed would not greatly exceed the present cost. Therefore they had the fact before them that the whole produce of the world was brought to this country, and they could not look for a revival in the prices of agriculture. They never could be appreciably affected by the cost of the transit of foreign produce. This was an important fact and factor in the discussion of this subject, and it was because these important facts and factors were brought to bear upon the agriculture of the country that the special interposition of Parliament was required to relieve the agriculturists in Scotland from the bondage under which they were held under 19 year leases. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, or some other speaker on the opposite side of the House, had stated that enormous reductions had been made in rents—that enormous amounts of arrears of rent had been allowed to tenants and written off their present contracts. Well, speaking for the North of Scotland, this was not the fact. In the Northern Counties a concession of arrears was most exceptional, and he was not aware of any estate, except where bankruptcy had come to the tenant, where any considerable sum had been given off in this respect. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman said that there should be no interference with economic law, and he criticized the statement of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) by ridiculing the idea that they could in any way uproot that law, and by saying that if they attempted to do so or to interfere with it, it would re-act on themselves, and give them the punishment they deserved for such interference. But let him (Mr. Esslemont) call the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to the fact that the Legislature had already interfered with economic law. Our Poor Law was a direct interference with economic law. Our Bankruptcy Courts were also an interference with economic law. The establishment of a tribunal of the description implied in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) would only entail the suspension of our economic laws as they had been suspended on behalf of the starving poor throughout the country, and as they had been interfered with in order that justice might be done to the creditors of an insolvent. The case of the Scotch tenant was this—and nothing could be more on all-fours with it than the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Aberdeenshire—that he was bound under a lease granted prior to 1881, where the landlord had, exceptionally, the now illegal power of following the produce of the land, though it might have been sold, to the extent of two years' rent, and recovering that rent to the disadvantage of all other creditors of the farmer. The question before the House, then, was, was it right that the landlord should receive to the extent of two years' rent in preference, and share with the other creditors in the insolvent's estate for the whole of his claim for a rent which was not in the land, and could not be taken out of it by any application either of capital, industry, or perseverence, which the tenant could bring to bear on his farm? He (Mr. Esslemont) thought, therefore, he had shown that the suggestion of his hon. Friend was a fair suggestion, and he should be glad to hear whether or not there was any answer to the statement he had made? But the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) said the tenants of Scotland did not wish, and deprecated, the intervention of an independent Court to settle matters of rents between them and their landlords. He asked the hon. Member, or anyone who might answer for the Government, where was the evidence that the Scotch agriculturist so deprecated a Court of the kind suggested in the Amendment? For himself, he had the most direct evidence, both for tenants and for landlords, that cases of arbitration by the tenant appointing one agent and the landlord another were unsatisfactory. The fact was that they acted as special pleaders, the one for the landlord and the other for the tenant; and what was asked for on behalf of the agriculturists in Scotland was not what the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate assumed it to be, a tribunal entirely on the side of the tenant and to the disparagement of the landlord. What they asked was simply this—and he asked the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate to the proposition—they said a state of things had overtaken them in the North of Scotland which could never have been foreseen nor anticipated by either landlord or tenant. He had already shown that there were certain factors at work by which it had now become hopeless that prices would rise to any appreciable extent; that there was no one now who had studied the question who would say that there could be any expectation of such a rise of prices as would meet the emergency within such a time as would prevent great ruin to a large number of agricultural tenants in Scotland. They asked now for an independent tribunal to come in, not to put an end to leases necessarily, but to say under the existing state of things what it was possible for the tenant to pay taking everything into consideration, and admitting, what the right hon. and learned Gentleman very fairly stated, that the tenant must share as far as he possibly could in the losses which were brought upon them by circumstances over which neither landlord or tenant had control. He should like to know what objection there could be to this proposal? They were told that the landlords had met the emergency in a generous way, and that they had given to the tenants what was right and equitable under the circumstances. Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman look at the figures for the county which he (Mr. Esslemont) represented? He would there find that the rent roll of Aberdeenshire stood higher than ever it did before. Where was the evidence, then, that this generous reduction had been made? Last year he applied to the Scotch Office and ventured to suggest that there should be an inquiry made into the subject. He took upon himself to say at that time—and he thought the arguments that were adduced by his hon. Friends in his support showed—that there was a case for inquiry. He was told, however, that there was no case for inquiry, and that the Government knew all about the matter. He moved in the House that a Return should be given as to the extent of the reductions that had been made and the concessions of rents throughout the counties in Scotland. The Government opposed that Return. They would not give any facilities for obtaining it. His opinion was that that Return was opposed very much in the interests of those who had said that these concessions had been made, because he had it on incontrovertible evidence that on many estates in the North of Scotland there had been no remission of rents whatever, and the rents were being paid out of the capital of the tenants. The tenants were under circumstances in which there was no outlet for them but the Bankruptcy Court, and leaving their improvements in the hands of the landlords, or paying out of capital. He thought he ought to make his acknowledgments to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) for at least this concession—that this subject was one of great interest and importance; and he ought to acknowledge also the services of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Scotland for giving a relief to trustees, who formerly had no power to reduce rents, and making it legal for trustees to give concessions where they thought concessions were needed without personal responsibility. But he appealed to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate to take into consideration the two classes of landlords who had done nothing whatever, and who either would or could do nothing to meet the present emergency. These were the sordid and selfish class, who extorted from their tenants their pound of flesh, and stood by that economic law that suited them better than any other law at the present time, as it gave them their legal rights. But he asked for consideration for another class of landlords, and that was the class whose estates had been so diminished in value, and who had been so overtaken by circumstances of agricultural depression, that they could not raise the same amount of money on the credit of their estates that they were wont to do in better times. These landlords, many of them, told them frankly that they would not make any concessions, because they had nothing whatever to give. It was in such cases that an independent Court would be able to settle for the parties—who could not settle it for themselves—what was due in the shape of rent, and under what circumstances the present holders of leases were to be enabled to complete their engagements. He (Mr. Esslemont) should recognize the understanding which was come to in the House last night, that the debate should not be continued to undue length; but the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, in discussing another Scotch question last night, had said it was desirable that the Scotch Members should use their influence with the people to prevent lawlessness, and to enforce the principles of law and order; and it had been repeatedly said in the House that encouragement ought not to be given to people who took the law in their own hands. They had, in the North-East of Scotland, been overtaken by circumstances of very great gravity and anxiety. They had been law-abiding. They had made no raids; they had required no gun-boats; they had not blackened their faces; they had not done any of those things which were deprecated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but they came here in a Constitutional way to lay their complaints before the House, and he asked what encouragement they had got? They could not get a Commission of Inquiry; they could not get the concession of an independent Court to look into their circumstances. What had the Government to fear in the appointment of a Court? If the tenants had received concessions, and were under such circumstances that they required no abatement or intervention of Parliament, that independent Court would say so; but if it were, as he declared it was, that independent Court would say that this industrious and well-conducted and law-abiding people required the intervention of the House on their behalf. In the one case the Court would do no harm, and in the other it would do much good. He trusted his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson), notwithstanding the criticism that there had been, a poor representation of the counties of Scotland, would bring this matter to a Division, so that the constituencies in Scotland would see what was the opinion of their Representatives in their present difficulty, and make them answer for their representation in the House. He thanked the House for the courtesy with which it had listened to him, and apologized for having interposed at such length.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said that, although experience had taught him to expect little at the hands of the Government on such questions, the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate's speech was even more disappointing than he anticipated, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman was evidently not the least aware of the gravity of the situation of agriculture in Scotland. It was very lamentable to think that the fair and moderate demands of the tenants would receive no consideration on the ground of expediency, right, and justice. He should have thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have learned by this time not to delay such questions until it was necessary for the people to resort to unlawful means to direct attention to their grievances. The former law-abiding character of the people was the best proof that they had been forced to resort to desperate means to call attention to their grievances. While he admitted it was the duty of every hon. Member to exhort the people to observe the law, at the same time it was the duty of the Government to hold out some hope that the grievances complained of would be attended to. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had not given the farmers the slightest hope that their grievances would be attended to, and did not admit that the crofters had grievances. What apparently would satisfy the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be that the crofters in the West Highlands should die in their huts quietly from starvation—for that was the logic of his position. He (Mr. Barclay) did not believe in that theory. Would the Crofters' Act ever have been passed but for the disturbances in Skye and other places? What he deplored was that Parliament would not redress grievances until some extreme measure was taken by the people. The Scotch Members could not too often bring before the notice of the Government the danger which menaced the public peace, and which also seriously threatened the agriculture of Scotland, unless something were promptly done to avert it. They were referred to the laws of political economy. He respected the laws of political economy as much as anyone did; but the question was, what were those laws, and how were they to be applied? He always distrusted such an application of those laws as would condemn honest, industrious men, who were working, to starvation. Mr. John Stuart Mill held that contracts for the hiring of land were not subject to the laws of political economy, and that land being a monopoly, should be dealt with by special laws. The House in its legislation for Ireland had recognized that principle. The Scotch tenant farmers, he believed, were not anxious to have their leases broken; but that there should be a reduction of rent corresponding to the decrease in prices; and he was willing to make this offer on behalf of the tenant farmers, that there should be a revision of rents upon a corresponding basis every three or four years, so that the landlords might reap the benefit of any advance in prices. Unless some such relief were given, it would be impossible for many of the farmers to carry on operations much longer. Already much damage had been done to the land by the lack of manure, through the inability of the tenants to provide it; and if this process of deterioration continued, it would cause enormous loss. The great fall in prices which had taken place in recent years made it altogether impossible for the tenants to pay the rents based on the high prices current some years ago. It would be equally advantageous to landlords and tenants if the rents were made to fluctuate to a certain extent every three or four years according to the average price of produce during, say, the previous three years. That would not be a very revolutionary proposal, and it would be a wise measure for the landlords to adopt in their own behalf. He did not ask for a re-valuation of the land. That would be a matter of great difficulty indeed; but he advocated a proportional reduction in the valuation generally corresponding to the reduction in the value of produce which had taken place since the contract was made. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was in error in saying that the agriculturists of England were in the same position as those of Scotland.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: What I said was, that in Scotland the tenants themselves wished to have those 19 years' leases, which now did not suit them.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY said, that in England the tenants were only tied for a few years, while in Scotland the tenants were tied for 19 years. But when that arrangement was made it seemed to him that both the landlords and the tenants wanted the 19 years. The conditions were such that it was impossible to carry on much of the farming in Scotland unless the tenant had been secured by a 19 years' lease. That was one main reason why the House should now deal with the question of 19 years' leases in Scotland, without necessarily taking up the case of England at all. He thought Parliament could not too soon come forward and give the Scottish farmers some encouragement and hope that—through energy and perseverance—they might be able to meet the competition from abroad they now had to encounter.

Sir ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.) said, he would remind the House that the reason the tenants in Scotland entered into and desired those long leases for 19 years was because prices at the moment were rising. The consequence was that the lease for such a period protected the farmer against any change which might be introduced or extortion which might be made. But now the case was different, and hence this demand for an alteration. He thought it might be possible to have some Court which might fix the rents, taking the prices current 15 years ago and the prices now current, and thus securing a sliding scale. No one wished the Scottish tenants to be under any disadvantage, and the landlords wished it least of all; because the more difficult it was for a tenant to work his land, the more surely would that land be depreciated. He could not—he was sorry to say—support the Amendment. Yet, at the same time, he would be glad to hear the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate say that, if there was a Department of Agriculture, with a Minister over it, they would be able to do something to help the tenants, for some change was needed which would relieve them without breaking the leases.

Mr. ASHER (Elgin, &c.) said, the Report of the Morayshire Farmers' Club had elicited from nearly all the agricultural bodies in Scotland the views they entertained with regard to the proposals embodied in that report. The result of that discussion demonstrated that the report expressed the agricultural opinion of Scotland in stating thatt he present rate of rent throughout the country could not possibly be maintained. He thought there was also a unanimity of opinion that in the case of those leaseholders who entered into their contracts some years ago, it was quite impossible that they could continue to fulfil their contracts to their natural termination unless large abatements of rent were made to them. But then the question arose, in what form was the concession to be obtained? That matter received the very careful consideration of the agricultural associations in Scotland, and it seemed to him necessary to take that opinion into view in considering this Amendment. The practical part of that Amendment was in the concluding words, where his hon. and learned Friend suggested that by the—

> "Creation of some competent tribunal, or otherwise, steps might be taken to relieve the occupiers of land from the serious consequences above mentioned."

Those words were applicable to present leaseholders; and he was bound to admit that it would be very difficult to put any interpretation upon these words which would be consistent with non-interference with existing leases by legislation. He apprehended, therefore, that the question raised was whether this House was prepared at the present stage, and by the adoption of those general words, to affirm the principle of interference by legislation with existing leases. There were several reasons which appeared to him to point against the House coming to a final determination upon that matter at present. And the first was the state of agricultural opinion in Scotland upon the point. He must say he thought the agriculturists of Scotland had shown very great moderation indeed in dealing with this question. They were admittedly suffering severely from a long period of agricultural depression, and in many cases were so situated that they could not possibly remain in possession of their farms at their present rents without abatement. It appeared to him to be authoritatively established that the agricultural opinion of Scotland was against the determination of leases at present existing by legislative interference. He proposed to establish that by reading a few words from the Morayshire Farmers' Club's Report. That body, who initiated this discussion, distinctly stated in their report that—

> "In reference to the suggested termination of existing leases, your committee do not contemplate any legislative interference;"

and that proposal of the committee received the unanimous approval of the Club. Then, dealing with the reports they had received from other agricultural associations throughout Scotland, the Club thus classified the state of agricultural opinion. Nine associations objected to the determination of leases by Parliamentary interference;

three approved of such Parliamentary action, and advocated the passing of a Land Purchase Act, and the establishment of Land Courts for regultaing rents; five proposed re-valuation by amicable arrangement; two proposed re-valuation by Sheriffs under Parliamentary authority; and one advocated Protection pure and simple. It appeared to him that the only conclusion one could draw from that was, that the prevailing feeling in Scotland on the part of farmers was that they did not desire that their leases should be broken by legislative interference. It would be an unusual step on the part of the House to affirm such a principle as that, in advance of the opinion of those who were expressly interested. Reference had been made to the Crofters' Act, as to some extent foreshadowing or applying this principle. It was quite true the Crofters' Act did apply certain principles which were new in the relation between landlord and tenant; but he apprehended there was this vital distinction between the class of cases to which it applied and the leases of Scotland generally, that in the case of the crofter there was undoubtedly that dual ownership which was recognized by the law in Ireland. There was the creation by the crofter of the greater part of the value of his croft by his own labour, which in equity at least made him joint owner with the landlord. To apply that principle to the leases of Scotland generally would undoubtedly be an extension of it; and the question at present was the propriety of applying that principle generally upon an Amendment expressed in such general terms, and not to any extent defining or showing the conditions under which it ought to be applied. He should not be disposed to commit himself to the view that under no circumstances would he be in favour of legislative interference with existing leases; but he certainly was in favour of allowing the agriculturists in Scotland to try and adjust their differences, as they seemed at present to wish, by means less forcible than legislative interference. In coming to this conclusion, he supposed they must have anticipated that success would attend their efforts; and it appeared to him to be expedient that they should have at least the opportunity of trying the methods they themselves preferred. Something had been said as to leases having been established in Scotland largely at the request of the farmers. To a certain extent that was true; but the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate forgot the conditions under which agriculture then was, which obliged the farmer to have recourse to the method of 19 years' leases. At the time when these leases became common, the farmer in Scotland had no security whatever for the recovery of any improvements executed by him on his farm. He generally got his farm in a very low condition. He had to spend a great deal of money in bringing it into good condition, and if he had not a fixed tenure for a considerable number of years he would not have an opportunity of recovering that expenditure. The result was that 19 years' leases were adopted by farmers largely as a means of giving them a tenure of such duration as would enable them to recover the expenditure they had incurred in bringing their farms into proper condition. But now that the Compensation for Improvements' Act had been passed, and the principle had been recognized of the farmers being entitled to be compensated for money expended on their farms in so far as it increased the letting value, that, undoubtedly, was a very important —a very fortunate alteration—of the state of matters which induced the contracting of the 19 years' leases. He must say, if the farmers of Scotland failed to get by private arrangement those adjustments from their landlords which would enable them to carry out their leases, he thought they would have a great deal to say in support of the view that the alteration of the law with reference to compensation for improvements entitled them now to ask the Legislature to consider whether they might not be relieved of contracts which had been entered into in a state of the law which this House subsequently condemned. At present it appeared to him that the prevailing opinion in Scotland was in favour of the opportunity at least being given for allowing this matter to be adjusted by private arrangement; and under the circumstances, he should ask his hon. and learned Friend to consider whether he would not have fully discharged his duty to the important constituency he represented, and to the agriculture of Scotland generally, if he were to be satisfied with the discussion to which his Amendment had given rise, without pressing it to a division. [Mr. ANDERSON: No.] He (Mr. Asher) would be most unwilling to do anything which indicated any want of recognition on his part of the very serious state of matters connected with agriculture in Scotland. He should be sorry not to recognize the demand which he thought there was for a large and substantial reduction of the existing rents. But on the other hand, he felt that, in supporting the Amendment, he would be supporting the application of a principle for the relief of the tenants of Scotland which, so far as he could see, the tenants of Scotland had up to the present time said they would prefer not to be applied to their case. Under these circumstances, he would be glad if his hon. and learned Friend would not press his Amendment to a Division. But, if that were done, he should conceive it his duty not to take part in the Division.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): I invite the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) to the opinion which he expressed about the long leases having been made for the special benefit of the Scotch farmers. Now, I am certain that the Lord Advocate must have overlooked the fact that his distinguished Predecessor, Lord Advocate Montgomery, passed the Act in 1780, which allowed holders of entailed estates to grant leases of 19 and 31 years, solely for the benefit of the estates. No doubt, these leases enabled the farmers who occupied the lands to make those agricultural improvements which the impoverished owners of entailed estates could not carry out. It has, therefore, been recognized that the Montgomery Act did more for the agriculture of Scotland than any other measure, and mainly for the benefit of the estates. The measure of the improvement may best be judged of by the enormous extent to which rents have risen in Scotland since the Montgomery Act was passed. These vast increases may be estimated by comparing the rents of agricultural land in Scotland immediately before the Crimean War with the rents as they stood in 1882. The difference is no less than £2,500,000—a rate of increase far exceeding the ratio of increase of the lands of England. This vast increase in Scotch lands may, however, be attributed, in part, to the action of the Law of Hypothec, which brought into competition, by the occupation of lands, a number of men as farmers who where not provided with the money means sufficient in extent to cultivate the farms with success. They, however, had suffient influence to borrow money, or to get into debt; so that the landlords found on the farms sufficient means to pay the rent, which, under the Law of Hypothec, gave them priority of claim over all other claimants. I submit these facts to the Lord Advocate's attention, in the hope that relief will be given to the farmers who hold leases entered into before hypothec was abolished, and that measures will be adopted to fix the rents of the lands of Scotland so that the farmers may be able to earn a livelihood suitable for their position.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 77; Noes 190: Majority 113.—(Div. List, No. 8.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to draw up the Address to be presented to Her Majesty upon the said Resolution:—And a Committee was *appointed* of,—Mr. Wharton, Colonel Duncan, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Secretary Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Manners, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Akers-Douglas; That Three be the quorum:—To withdraw immediately.

Ordered, That Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament be referred to the Committee.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.—REPORT.

Report of Address *brought up*, and read a second time.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—ALLEGED AGREEMENTS WITH EUROPEAN POWERS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton), in rising to move, as an Amendment to the Report of the Address, after paragraph 7, to insert—

"Humbly to represent to Your Majesty that it will conduce to our proper appreciation of certain of the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our consideration if we can be informed that no Correspondence has been exchanged between Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, containing any assurances of a contractural character, which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's actual Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy, or, if such assurances have been given, that they should be brought to our knowledge,"

said, that if any justification were needed for the course which he had taken he found that justification in *The Times* newspaper. *The Times* had described his proposed action as being of—

> "A most mischievous and unpatriotic character for which, if Mr. Labouchere were a responsible politician, no words of censure would be too strong."

[*Ministerial cheers.*] He had no doubt that hon. Gentlemen opposite would agree with their official organ; but *The Times* was no official organ of those who sat on his side of the House. The same epithets had been applied by *The Times* whenever any Amendment had been moved on the Irish question. In fact, *The Times* seemed to be of opinion that they ought to leave the affairs of Ireland entirely in the hands of the nephew, and Foreign Affairs entirely in the hands of the uncle, and thank God that He had sent such a nephew and such an uncle to take care of the business of the country. Prince Bismarck had lately said that he utterly despised the Press, and that it was the opinion of but one man seated behind one pen. Here they had in *The Times*' article the production of a most abusive and scurrilous henchman of the Government; and, for his own part, he should feel doubt and hesitation in any course which he proposed to take if *The Times* informed him that it was a patriotic, a right, and a proper course. The House would have observed that in the Austrian, Italian, and German Press there had been statements published respecting certain communications from Lord Salisbury which had been addressed to one or more of the Great Powers who formed part of the Triple Alliance. It had been stated by the Press of these countries that the communications were of such a nature as to encourage Italy to join the Alliance, and to leave all the members of the Alliance to form the conclusion that England was prepared in some way or other not only to approve, but also to support, the objects of that alliance. He had tried to elicit from the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs what had transpired, and he gathered that there had been no Treaty. He never supposed that there had. He also gathered that there was no engagement obliging this country to give military aid to Italy. When the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had spoken they would be able to form their own conclusion, if he proved a little less reticent than he had been upon the subject, whether or not a promise had been indirectly given. There was an impression that there had been some sort of correspondence between the Government and foreign Powers on this matter. What was the Triple Alliance? Germany, a great military Empire, was bounded on three sides by great military Powers. Germany had acquired certain Provinces of France, and she was in perpetual dread lest any other Power should go to war with her, and France should take the opportunity to re-acquire her lost Provinces. From a German point of view it was a sound and excellent policy on the part of Prince Bismarck to obtain allies against these contingencies; and it not only rendered Germany safe, but also rendered Prince Bismarck the arbiter and the master of Europe. A Treaty on these lines had been entered into between Germany and Austria, and it had been published. A Treaty had also been entered into with Italy, but it was not quite clear as to when that Treaty was signed. They, therefore, knew so far that Germany, Austria, and Italy had entered into a defensive alliance, and that the basis of the alliance was that Germany should come to the aid of the other two Powers if they were attacked, and that Italy and Austria should come to the aid of Germany if that country was attacked by France, Germany at the same time being at war with Russia. That was a policy most advantageous to Germany, and to some extent advantageous to Austria. Whether it was so advantageous to Italy was more doubtful. But it was no business of England's whether it was or not. When Signor Crispi went to Berlin he had to take into consideration a serious fact. It was all very well for Austria to sign a Treaty with Germany; but if Italy did so she exposed her coasts and her African policy to the attacks of France, because her fleet or the fleets of her allies could not, for a moment, hold their own against the French fleet. It was understood that Prince Bismarck appealed to Lord Salisbury, and wanted him to say, or do, or promise something which would remove the apprehensions of Italy. He hoped that when the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs answered for the Government he would say distinctly whether it was a fact that this appeal was made by Prince Bismarck. What did Lord Salisbury do? He evidently did something. It was admitted that there was a correspondence, and what he wanted to know was when the answer was sent, and what the nature of the answer was. Could the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs deny the statement that the correspondence was sent round to all our Ambassadors in order to instruct them as to what the policy of Lord Salisbury was with regard to the alliance? The Tory Press had stated that in their view the correspondence contained a declaration of Lord Salisbury with reference to the permanent policy of England, and that that permanent policy was to maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean. *The Times* and the Government were great friends, but he did not know whether *The Times* was inspired when it stated that—

> "If there should be any danger of a blow struck at Italy which would destroy the Italian navy and give France an undisputed ascendency in the Mediterranean, it would be the duty of England, for the security of her own Empire and commerce, as well as for the maintenance of the European equilibrium and the preservation of a State to which we are bound by ties of sympathy and friendship, to exert all her power to avert the disaster."

He utterly denied that it would be the business of England in such circumstances to use English treasure and blood to protect Italy. But if there had been a declaration of the permanent policy of the Government they must consider to whom it had been addressed. Italy should not be led by any assurances or hints to join an alliance against France, because England intimated to her that she might do so with impunity. If Italy joined in a war against France she must, like any other nation, accept the consequences. This country undoubtedly sympathized greatly with Italy during her struggle for independence and at the present time also. Prince Bismarck and Lord Salisbury knew this, and he had been making use of our sympathy with Italy to induce England to make an arrangement with that country, which practically would be an arrangement with Germany and Austria and Italy. Admiral Hewett, the late commander of the Squadron in the Red Sea, appeared to have a stronger opinion than *The Times* as to what the effect of this correspondence would be, for in a speech at a dinner or reception given in his honour at Genoa it was stated by the Italian papers—without contradiction—that he said he hoped and believed the Italian and British Fleets would soon fight together. Naturally, therefore, in France there had been great anxiety felt in regard to this correspondence. He believed the French Ambassador had been told that no arrangement had been entered into with Italy. It would appear that the French Ambassador, who had not seen the correspondence, was told that there was no arrangement, while Austria and Germany, who had seen the correspondence, knew that there was an arrangement One of the most important French newspapers had stated that Lord Salisbury divided himself into two parts—the head of the Tory Party and the Minister for Foreign Affairs—and that he had given the assurances rather as the head of the Tory Party than as Minister for Foreign Affairs. They could not recognize such a distinction in this country. For his own part, he was opposed to any intermixture in Foreign Affairs, whether territorial or dynastic. He believed they ought to take advantage of their position as an Island and to remain *mutatis mutandis*, just as the United States did with regard to Europe. Some hon. Gentlemen might not agree with him in taking part in what they called the European Concert, but it was not a European concert. Europe was divided into two camps, and Her Majesty's Government, he complained, had taken one side and had concealed what they had done from the other, and, what was still more important, from the House of Commons and the country. The matter was an important one, because the Government had taken side against our neighbour and ally, France. They were told that the alliance was a league of peace; but leagues of peace ordinarily ended in war. It was formed to deprive France of any opportunity of retaking her lost Provinces in a war. He should be sorry to see a war; but if there were one, his sympathies would be entirely with France in such an endeavour. The worst feature connected with these transactions was the secrecy that had been observed. It was something monstrous that no reference should have been made to them in the Queen's Speech. They had had in the Speech from the Throne communications on a great many matters; but surely a statement as to the permanent policy of the country was much more important than any of those communications. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had alleged the state of Europe as a reason for withholding the correspondence. But the negotiations were over now, and whatever had been done was an accomplished fact, and he had never yet heard such an excuse pleaded when negotiations were at an end. Austria, Germany, and Italy knew of the correspondence, but neither France nor Russia nor the House of Commons were in possession of it. There was another reason, possibly, why the correspondence had not been communicated—a domestic reason. The present Government was a Tory Government, but it had not a Tory majority, and he thought that the tension in the Unionist Members on his side of the House would be very strong indeed if they were told that by supporting the Government they were supporting a guarantee of Lord Salisbury in regard to Germany as against France. The country, he maintained, was in favour of peace, and it objected to all these engagements. We knew well that the country regarded France as our nearest and best ally, and he could well understand Lord Salisbury should wish to keep the matter quiet, and should not wish to submit what had been done to the appreciation of the entire country. He did not accept a policy of what was called peace at all price; he believed that we required a good Army and Navy for defensive purposes, and that if the Empire were attacked we ought to defend it; but if we got into a dispute with a foreign nation we ought first to submit the matter to arbitration, and we ought also to remember, if we were insulted, that there was an *ultima ratio*, which was the same in democracies as in Monarchies. But he was against all wars and all Treaties leading to wars where we had no direct interest in the matter. For example, it was undesirable that Bulgaria should fall into the hands or under the control of Russia; but this was not a matter of such interest to us that we should go to war for it; therefore, he would object to any engagement on this subject which might possibly drag us into war. It would be a little too absurd to insist upon Home Rule in Bulgaria when we were trying to put down the demand for it so much nearer home. During the last 150 years we had been at war with Austria, Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Holland, and France—with France four times—but in no one instance had we gone to war because England was directly or indirectly attacked. But in most cases we went to war for that mirage, the European equilibrium, and we had spent or wasted hundreds of millions in these wars. Of late years we had got wiser, and in the wars between Austria and Italy and between France and Germany we had taken no part. But if our Rulers had had their way we should have taken part. Lord Malmesbury was anxious to enter into some sort of agreement by correspondence which would have dragged us into these later wars. Again, the Conservative Government, a little time before the Franco-German War, was for giving a Guarantee to defend the neutrality of Luxemburg, which Guarantee would have dragged us into war; but the people were too strong for them. While prepared to defend the British Empire, the people of this country were determined not to be dragged into foolish wars which did not concern them. At this time England was taking sides in a dispute which was dividing the Continent, and what had been done was absolutely concealed. It would be said that no assurances had been given; but this was a mere play upon words. Matters had been so arranged that what had occurred could be denied in this House. But an illustration of what had happened was furnished by an account, just given in *The Times*, of an interview between Signor Crispi and the late Count Corti. Signor Crispi suggested the probability of a close friendship between Italy and England in certain contingencies; Count Corti replied that the investigating spirit of English Members of Parliament rendered it difficult for English Ministers to come to a positive understanding, and Lord Salisbury would not do it. There was not a word to show that Lord Salisbury would not have done it if he had dared. Possibly the difficulty mentioned had been got over in such a way as to evade the investigating spirit of the House of Commons. He saw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in his place. Now, he had never heard the right hon. Gentleman express any sort of confidence in Lord Salisbury's policy; but yet now he seemed to consider Lord Salisbury as a sort of reformed Jingo. For his own part, he did not believe that Lord Salisbury was reformed in the least, and had no kind of confidence in him; and he would give a reason. Last year he called attention to a correspondence which had taken place between this country and Foreign Governments in regard to Bulgaria, and he showed that Lord Salisbury had addressed despatch after despatch to almost every Government in Europe, imploring them to enter into an alliance with him against Russia. At last it came to such a pass that Prince Bismarck and the other Ministers, having something else to do, treated these appeals with contempt, and would not reply to them. That was since Lord Salisbury returned to power, and that was why he had no confidence in Lord Salisbury. When they were considering what Lord Salisbury had said, they must remember what had happened previously in regard to Treaties. They must remember that he sprang upon his own allies and friends the secret Treaty with regard to the Berlin Congress. When that Treaty had been surreptitiously signed, he denied that he had entered into it. But he positively prosecuted the man who stole that Treaty and published it, and afterwards admitted that it was a Treaty. They must remember also that Lord Salisbury was not only Foreign Secretary, but also Prime Minister. Ordinarily the Foreign Secretary had to act with the Prime Minister. But Lord Salisbury had to act with himself. He adopted a course as Foreign Secretary, and then appealed to himself as Prime Minister to confirm it. When the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) was in the Government, having rather more sane ideas upon foreign policy, he, to a certain extent, kept Lord Salisbury in order. But how about the present Cabinet? There was not one of them that understood the A B C of foreign politics. They were a very respectable body of men; but he should like to see one of them quarrelling with Lord Salisbury on a point of foreign policy! Lord Salisbury's policy had always been the same—a policy of hatred of France—["Oh, oh!" *and* "No, no!"]—and jealousy of Russia. Not hatred of France? Why, it was shown only last year, when the French Government asked us to join in a ceremony to celebrate a great and important political event—the taking of the Bastille. [*Ministerial laughter.*] He doubted whether the hon. Member opposite—he did not know where he sat for—the hon. Member who laughed—could tell him in what year the Bastille was taken. There was not one man in France—Orleanist, Bonapartist, or Republican—who would venture to dispute that the capture of the Bastille was a great and important political event. Lord Salisbury objected to that festival, because he was at the head of an aristocratic Government, and he did not like to see a great and prosperous Republic so close to us. That Republic somehow got on without large grants to a Royal Family. It somehow got on without the aid of hereditary aristocracy to manage its affairs, and he could perfectly understand how it was that Lord Salisbury disliked to see the prosperity of France. The noble Lord would no doubt be glad to drag us into war to save his policy in Ireland. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, the noble Lord said he was fighting for the maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire, and before now we had been dragged into war to prevent the march of democracy. In the last century, during the whole period of the great war, no liberal reform was effected. The policy of the Conservative Government then was precisely that of the present Government. He remained where the Chancellor of the Exchequer was when he said that he would not give a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury, though the right hon. Gentleman had changed. Either this correspondence was important or not. If it was not important, it ought to be published to re-assure the country. If it was, there was every reason why France and this country should be made acquainted with it. It was for the House of Commons to judge of the importance of these matters. At such a time as this especially we ought to remain absolutely unfettered. What Germany, Austria, and Italy knew, France ought to know, and the people of this country ought to know. He would recommend Lord Salisbury to follow the example of Prince Bismarck instead of being his servile tool. Prince Bismarck took the people of his country into his confidence. Why should not the present Government do the same? The refusal of the Government to take the people into their confidence was the best proof that it was desirable—and not only desirable, but imperative—that the country should be taken into confidence. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) said, his reason for seconding the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was that he was opposed to all secret treaties. He hoped the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would be able to assure the House that there was no Treaty, whether secret or otherwise, or engagement, entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Italy.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of paragraph 7, to insert the words—"Humbly to represent to Your Majesty that it will conduce to our proper appreciation of certain of the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our consideration, if we can be informed that no Correspondence has been exchanged between Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, containing any assurances of a contractual character, which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's actual Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy, or, if such assurances have been given, that they should be brought to our knowledge."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I think that Members of this House must have been somewhat puzzled to imagine with what purpose the hon. Member rose to make the statements which he has just delivered, because there were some of them that were of a nature that was most mischievous in their tendency and reckless in their particulars. The House has been reticent with regard to foreign affairs, and during the time I have been privileged to represent the Foreign Office in this House I have had, I may say, a very easy time of it. I think an acknowledgment is due to the Members of the Opposition that, at a time of great anxiety, when forces were known to exist perilous to the peace of Europe, they have not, by any act of theirs, rendered the task of Her Majesty's Government more difficult. It is right that at fitting opportunities explanation should be asked of Her Majesty's Government; and whatever the hon. Member may say, I believe that the present Government will be always ready to give to the House of Commons all the information that the safety of the country and its interests will allow. But, Sir, when questions are asked that, if they are not mischievous, are idle, questions which all Governments who have had to conduct difficult affairs well know are exceedingly difficult and dangerous—not inconvenient to them as a Ministry, but inconvenient to the interests of the country and the world—then, I think, a Government does well to be reticent, and the House of Commons is very much changed if it will not respect their prudence. The hon. Member began by expressing his contempt for Press criticisms, and when criticisms are idle one does right to despise them; but, at the same time, he himself relied largely on Press rumours. His speech was made up of quotations from rumours, and I think those who have followed the foreign intelligence of newspapers and the comments on them in this and other countries will observe that those rumours are exceedingly various and contradictory. The hon. Member has chosen—I suppose it suited his purpose—to adopt many of them. They could not all be true, because they did not all agree; but he adopted those that suited him, and then went on to treat them as if they were proved facts. Now, Sir, before going into the terms of the Motion, I still must express my regret that the hon. Member for the moment should have quoted such rumours as authentic, and should have quoted altogether unauthenticated statements that demands had been made upon Her Majesty's Government on the one hand, and overtures had been made by Her Majesty's Government on the other. I am quite sure that he had no authority or foundation for those statements. As to my having admitted anything of the kind last year, I certainly did no such thing. Now, Sir, I just ask the House to remember the terms of the Motion, because the hon. Member has now formulated charges which he has put to the House in various questions in a vague and indeterminate manner. [Here he read the Amendment.] Now, the hon. Member has emphasized a theory by his questions, and has demonstrated the offence of such an assurance as he assumes to have been given. He has given no grounds for such belief other than conjectural statements which have appeared in the newspapers—I appeal to the recollection of hon. Members—of what probably might be the course of Her Majesty's Government in conceivable circumstances. But the hon. Member founds a confirmation of his statement—that there exists an agreement between Her Majesty's Government and Italy that in certain contingencies we would take sides against France—upon a speech which was attributed to the gallant Admiral in command of the Mediterranean Squadron on some ceremonial occasion, in regard to which he asked a Question in this House. On that occasion I stated, in reply to the hon. Member, that I could not accept such a charge against the gallant officer on a second-hand report in a newspaper, for the paper itself did not profess to report the words he used. Now, I am happy to say that the statement is amply confirmed by a telegram which I have received from Admiral Hewett, which says—

> "Have read Sir James Fergusson's reply to Mr. Labouchere. I wish to say the statement in Press is absolutely false and without foundation."

I do not quarrel with the hon. Member for asking the Question, because it would be a very important declaration, no doubt; though I think it might have been received with some caution. Well, Sir, I have already, on more than one occasion, stated to the House, in answer to the hon. Member, that we were under no engagements pledging the employment of the Military and Naval Forces of this country, except such as are already known to the House; and it appears to me that, for all practical purposes, that gives a negative answer to the hon. Member. At least, I am unable to understand that any other reasonable interpretation could be put on my words. The only promise which we could have been asked to give in the case of war breaking out between France and Italy would have been a promise to take sides with France on the one hand, or with Italy on the other. I am here to tell the House that no such engagement was ever asked or given. Keeping myself, therefore, strictly within the terms of the answer I before gave, I would say that it included the answer I now give, because the words I gave to the House would not bear the interpretation that we were under any obligation to use military or naval action. I would pass from this point were it not for the remarkable and most unfortunate language—if it could be taken as responsible language—by the hon. Member as regards the attitude of Her Majesty's Government towards France. He said we have taken side against our neighbours the French; and that it is the policy of Lord Salisbury, actuated by hatred of France and animosity to the French, to slight their progress, and to desire to drag us into war with France. Sir, there is not a responsible statesman in France who would attribute such a policy to Lord Salisbury, least of all any statesman who has had to do with him since his conduct of the foreign affairs of this country. On the contrary, I am certain all would acknowledge that Lord Salisbury, in his communications and intercourse with and treatment of France, has been actuated on every point with the greatest consideration for that country. In fact, I have heard from some hon. Members who have some authority to speak on public affairs doubt whether he had not been too cautious and indulgent in some questions of difference with France. I do not believe that that is the case, for I believe that international differences are best settled by due consideration for the rights, the position, and the feelings of other Powers. But it is altogether untrue that Her Majesty's Government have pursued any conduct inconsistent with the good relations which happily exist between this country and France, which I certainly hope shall continue to exist, and which we have every promise and hope of being able to maintain. Our relations with France are naturally in agreement, because we have no reason to think that the external policy of France in the important affairs so much debated in the world differs from our own. We believe that the policy of France in relation to foreign affairs is conducted in harmony with the obligations of the Treaties to which France and Great Britain are alike parties. And, that being so, we believe the foreign policy of France is moving on parallel lines with that of Great Britain. But as the hon. Gentleman has pushed his inquiries further, and in case any hon. Member is inclined to back him in pressing for Correspondence of the most delicate nature, then I must address some further observations upon that point to the House. Well, there must have been Correspondence. Is it conceivable that when the affairs of Europe have been in the somewhat critical condition in which they have stood for a year and a-half past—I may say ever since the disturbance in Bulgaria—that there should not have been constant Correspondence with many Powers, and that of a very confidential and delicate nature? All such Correspondence and discussions with foreign Powers with reference to the maintenance of peace in Europe must, if it is to be more than purely formal, enter into questions concerning the maintenance of peace, and the causes which operate for and against peace. It must have reference to the motives, the character, and the objects of other Powers from whom breaches of the peace may possibly be apprehended. There must be estimates expressed of the consequences of any action calculated to cause a breach of the peace; and, more, there must be a contemplation of the effects which naturally result from calling into action the enormous forces that are now gathered together by any military Power, and the changes that might follow war, and the degree in which, in common with other Powers, the interests of this country might, and probably would, be affected. Therefore, evidently there must be Correspondence upon the policy which this country and other Powers, parties to the treaties of Europe, would necessarily follow. It is obvious that a discussion of this kind, if it is to be full and free as it ought to be, is not of a nature to be published to the whole of Europe. The hon. Member says the time has come when this Correspondence should be made known. I wish the time had come when such Correspondence as it is usual to lay before Parliament could be laid before Parliament. I am afraid the time has not yet come. I hope any prospect of a disturbance of the peace of Europe is not greater, but less than it was a year ago. Some scepticism was expressed when Lord Salisbury declared a year ago that he saw no reason why the peace of Europe should be broken, and he confidently hoped for its maintenance. I think it says a good deal for the correctness of his forecast that that prophecy has so long proved true. We cannot prophesy, but we may hope; and until that hope is fulfilled I think the House of Commons will see that the time has not arrived when there should be any publication and that such Correspondence as must take place in such cases could not be made known without great breach of confidence—without an act of great impolicy, and, more, without depriving this country in future of its right to be consulted on the public affairs of Europe, and of its beneficial influence in the maintenance of peace. If we cannot place before the House the Correspondence in full, which I regret to say cannot be considered yet complete, still more is it impossible that fragmentary portions of it should be disclosed, whether in reply to clearly designed catechisms addressed to the Government, or even in an Address to Parliament. I do not believe the House will lend itself to such a request. It is manifest that fragmentary declarations such as the hon. Member tries to draw from me would create a false impression of the position, and it would be even more dangerous, perhaps, than to publish the Correspondence in full. I have, therefore, to say that Her Majesty's Government do not feel themselves justified in answering, or even discussing further, the questions which the hon. Member asks as to this Correspondence, and we must oppose a simple negative to any Motions which he or his hon. Friends may make for the purpose of eliciting information upon this question at the present time. The hon. Member has referred to some negotiations which have been carried on by Her Majesty's Government, and, I think I may say, with success. We have had some delicate topics to discuss with other Powers. We have certainly some questions with other Powers, and especially with France. With regard to the Correspondence regarding these questions, I was obliged repeatedly to decline to give the House information as to the terms of the agreements which were being drawn up before they were completed. But I think the spirit in which that Correspondence was conducted, and the results to which it led, may give the House some confidence in the attitude which Her Majesty's Government maintain towards France and other Powers. I agree with one thing the hon. Member said—namely, that no war should be undertaken unless our national interests imperatively demand it, and that we should not go unnecessarily or hurriedly into the affairs of Europe, and make onerous engagements. The hon. Member referred to several great wars which have taken place from which this country was happily free; but in those cases Great Britain was happily free because its interests were not concerned except as regards her interest in the general peace of the world. But since Her Majesty's present Government existed, we have not had to ask for any votes of credit. There have been no wars and no rumour of war, although we have not been without our difficulties. But the declaration in Her Majesty's Speech that says she is happily at peace with all Powers is most entirely true, and if a policy has been pursued that so far has maintained peace and harmony with all the world, I venture to think the Government will justify the confidence which I believe the House reposes in their foreign policy.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I shall not detain the House at any length by entering into what I may call the polemical portion of the speeches delivered by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, because I am extremely desirous not to give a polemical aspect to anything I may say; and I distinguish between the criticisms which may be made upon particular expressions and the general aim of my hon. Friend in the Motion which he has made, which I do not construe—I may be wrong, and I am not responsible for the wording of the Amendment—as a Motion intended to force the hand of the Government in respect of later Correspondence, but as intended rather to give vent to a feeling which dwells in the mind of my hon. Friend, that so much has been said both in foreign newspapers and others, and that what has been said in newspapers has been in connection with facts of so much gravity that it is hardly possible for the House of Commons to meet at this period without endeavouring to obtain some satisfaction from Her Majesty's Government as to the general attitude which they assume. Viewing the Motion in that light I own I am at a loss to understand why it should be made the subject of such severe censure. I am not about to censure the right hon. Gentleman in meeting that Motion as he has done, and if he understood it to be a Motion intended to force the production of Correspondence upon matters of the utmost delicacy, and on matters still undeveloped and incomplete in connection with the present state of Europe, I think he would be perfectly well founded in that objection. I have heard with extreme satisfaction, but I do not think it necessary to make it the subject of detailed comment, the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman that Her Majesty's Government have been able to conduct the transactions of their foreign policy in close harmony with France, and I pass on from that declaration, which I wish to leave in terms as simply unqualified as it is in my power to use. I think the hon. Member for Northampton may in some degree congratulate himself upon the tenour of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in respect of his Motion. The object of the Motion, as I understand it, is to give some satisfaction to the House upon the question whether engagements have been made by the Government relating to contingencies not yet developed. The terms of the Motion are, in one respect, perhaps, even a little narrower than possibly they might have been, because the question put is whether there is any correspondence between

Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy—

> "Containing any assurances of a contractual character which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's actual Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of Office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy."

But we may be committed to transactions which provide for our future course, and which may tend to narrow our liberties in respect to contingencies which may arise. I trust that so far as any uneasiness is felt, that uneasiness ought to be allayed with respect to engagements which may have been taken affecting this country during the tenure of Office of the present Government, for it has happened to the present Government, as it has sometimes happened to former Governments, to make engagements which have bound this country, not only during their tenure of Office, but beyond it, quite irrespective of who may be at the helm of Administration. If I understand the right hon. Gentleman correctly, he has told us to-day that he in no respects departs from the terms of the answers he has hitherto given us, but that he conceives that those answers, with the statement he has made to-day, constitute, for all practical purposes, an answer in the negative to the Question put by the hon. Member for Northampton. He did not use the word answer, but evidently his meaning was an answer in the negative to the Question. [SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Hear, hear!] Under these circumstances I cannot doubt that the hon. Member for Northampton must feel considerable satisfaction at the result of his bringing forward his Amendment, and will not press it to a Division, which would undoubtedly have the effect of a hostile vote. I feel very anxious upon all occasions that no measure should be taken of a premature character which will tend to fetter the free discretion and free agency of this country in contingencies which have not yet developed themselves. Without going into details, there are two considerations which, I think, are obvious, and of great force and power, as tending to discourage any proceedings of that kind. One is, that they have an obvious tendency to cast doubt upon the existing relations between the Crown of this country and those among the Powers of Europe, to which those contingent engagements are supposed to be not favourable. The other and most serious objection is this, that it is impossible for us to foreshadow the exact attitude, methods, tendencies, and intentions, of the Powers in those contingencies which have not yet arrived. Let me give the House an instance of this. I remember that on the eve of the breaking out of the Franco-German War, an announcement appeared in *The Times* newspaper with respect to Belgium, and with respect to the communications between Prussia and Belgium that had shortly before occurred—I will not say how many days or hours it was before the outbreak of the war, certainly it was on the eve of the war, if not to be measured by hours at any rate by days. That was a declaration which brought about no change in the attitude of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the war, but which might, if the sequel of the declaration had taken a different course, have very suddenly and materially altered our position. It is, however, needless to argue this question, because from the words that have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion —and in speaking of this occasion I do not mean to speak with censure of what he has said on former occasions—I hope that we are agreed as to the impolicy of anticipating events with regard to which it is almost impossible for us as yet to form a full and accurate estimate. I rejoice to rest on that agreement. But my hon. Friend is, I think, not to be censured for having endeavoured to obtain from the Government assurances on this subject. His doing so has, I know, been justified by him on very broad grounds—namely, of his total want of confidence in the present administration of the foreign affairs of this country; but it appears to me that we do not require that breadth of ground in order to justify the desire for information which he entertains. It is true that numbers of rumours, undoubtedly not all in accordance with one another, but rumours upon matters of great consequence, and circulated in a tone of very great confidence in many quarters, have been before the world; and although it may be easy for the right hon. Gentleman, viewing these rumours from the interior of the Foreign Office, and knowing what credit or discredit ought to attach to them, to dispose of them summarily, still they have affected the public mind, and have affected it in proportion to the extreme and enormous importance of the subject to which such rumours relate. Much depends on the sensitiveness of the public mind at the moment, and I am sorry to think that there is one circumstance, though it is difficult to place it in any precise relation to the contingencies possibly overhanging Europe, which has excited a great depth and I may also say a tenderness of interest and anxiety in this country which can hardly be overstated, and which has increased this sensitiveness—I mean the critical state of the Crown Prince of Germany. It is unhappily beyond all human power to influence the course of that illness which has produced such a profound sentiment at once of pity and of admiration, and which, as we know, affects a life that is, without exaggeration, only to be described as a life of inestimable value to Europe. All these things have made it desirable in the view of many of us, that we should have such an assurance as can be given to us —general declarations with respect to the policy of her Majesty's Government. I am, upon the whole, satisfied with the declarations that have been made, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I am confident that there is no disposition on this side of the House more than in any other quarter of the House to press him for any undue or premature disclosures. I do not think it necessary on the present occasion to enter into any general statement of confidence or want of confidence in Lord Salisbury. The occasion does not call for it. I will say, however, that without binding myself for the future or going beyond the subject immediately before us, it unquestionably has been a matter of lively satisfaction to me to find that the course taken by Lord Salisbury on more than one question of late has been entirely in accordance with what I deem sound principles for the regulation of the foreign policy of this country. I will not give an invidious turn to this observation by referring to periods when we may have been at issue, and sharply at issue, upon matters of foreign policy. I am only too glad to think that the occasion has arrived—and I trust that many such occasions may be still before us—when we may entertain a reasonable hope that the variety of view which prevails amongst us in regard to other public questions, need not find any sharp or injurious expression in regard to the great foreign interests of the country. There is no occasion for me to detain the House at any length upon this matter. We are under circumstances where brevity is possible and every way expedient, and that is a most satisfactory position. I am very glad to find that my recital of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman has met with no expression of dissent from him, and I earnestly hope that whether, as we all devoutly pray, the peace of Europe is maintained for long years to come, or whether the grave circumstances that exist unfortunately unfold themselves in circumstances graver still—I earnestly hope that there may be a great approach to union of sentiment and of feeling in this country in regard to the course we should pursue and in regard to the immense advantages conferred upon us by our insular position, and with reference to the inexpediency of our engaging in any wars excepting those that are manifestly demanded by the calls of duty, which, of course, include all the real interests and all the true honour of the country. Of one thing I am quite certain—that that union of sentiment will double the moral force of this country in all the contingencies which may arise, and will immensely increase the means she will have in her power of fulfilling the very important part which must attach to her in all events where the great interests of mankind are concerned.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I venture to congratulate the House upon the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has thought it fit to deal with this very grave and important question. It is worthy of the ancient reputation of this House, and of the responsibilities which belong to statesmen who have occupied the very responsible position which the right hon. Gentleman has occupied in times past. On the part of the country, much more than on the part of the Government, I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the tone and temper of his speech. The Government is fully conversant with their responsibilities and their duty in these matters. They have laboured earnestly to maintain the peace of the world, and in all negotiations which have taken place during the last 18 months that has been their guiding principle and object, while they have also kept in view the interests and the obligations of this great Empire. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the fact of our insular position. We are well aware of the insularity of the position of this country in more respects than one. But we cannot be unconscious of those obligations which we have incurred in the past, and the duties which we owe to the great industries of this country; and we are conscious that any disaster, any misfortune, which might overtake these industries by an accident of war, would be visited heavily on the head of the Government responsible for these disasters. The right hon. Gentleman has referred in solemn and touching words to one circumstance which affects, I believe, the whole of Europe—the illness of the Heir to the Throne of Germany. We cannot but enter fully and with the greatest possible sympathy into the sorrow and anxiety which attach to the whole people of Germany in the circumstances in which His Imperial Highness is now placed. We cannot dare to estimate the consequences of the loss of so valuable a life. We trust and believe that the spirit which has animated the Empire of Germany in the desire to maintain the peace of the world will still continue to animate the Government of that Empire. But whether that be so or not, we believe that the whole of Europe looks upon the sick bed of the illustrious Prince with the most earnest desire that his life may be spared, knowing that that life is one of the guarantees for the peace of Europe. I entirely concur with the right hon. Gentleman as to the impolicy of anticipating events. But the right hon. Gentleman has also fully recognized that any responsible Government of this country must, in their proceedings and negotiations with Foreign Powers, take into account the possibility of events which might disturb the peace of the world; and that correspondence is not in a condition at any time to be presented to the House unless it is complete—unless it can be presented with the full sanction of those Powers with whom it is conducted. We rely—and we feel that the House will rely—upon the explanations which have been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson), and which have been accepted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite as a full and sufficient explanation of the position of this country with regard to other Powers. We have maintained, and we hope to continue to maintain, the most cordial and friendly relations with France. There is not an atom of foundation for the suspicion that this Government has, in any way or in any respect, offended against that cordiality which we desire to maintain with the inhabitants and with the Government of a friendly and neighbouring Power. We believe that the interests of the two countries are bound up together intimately, and that no greater misfortune could happen to England or to France than that there should be any serious difference which could bring about a war between the two countries. Our chief duty is to maintain the interests of this great Empire. Our duty also is to consider the interests of other countries—their susceptibilities and their feelings; and we shall continue to exercise and discharge that duty with a full sense of our responsibility to the House and to the country.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he did not know whether the Government wished him to go on with his Amendment now.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped it might be agreeable to the right hon. Gentleman to go on with his Amendment; but he did not wish to press the right hon. Gentleman to proceed now, if he was of opinion that by doing so he would in any way damage the subject with which he proposed to deal. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was aware that the exigencies of Public Business required despatch.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it being then 10 minutes to 5 o'clock, if he began his speech he should not have time to finish it that afternoon.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, in that case he should not offer any objection to an adjournment till to-morrow; but he hoped they would have an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends that the debate would close to-morrow.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, he thought that was a fair demand to make; and so far as he had any influence—with due consideration towards others—in the matter, it would certainly be used in that direction.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Further Proceeding on the Report of the Address *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Anderson, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. A. Sutherland.*)

[BILL 58.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he understood that the Bill was not in the hands of hon. Members, and under such circumstances it was quite impossible for the Government to accede to the second reading.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he had the Bill in his hands, and if the right hon. Gentleman would permit him, he would in a sentence explain what the contents of the Bill were. The Bill proposed to apply the provisions of the Crofters' Act of last year to all the crofters and cottars in Scotland. He was of opinion that the crofters in the other counties did not differ in any way from the crofters in Inverness-shire, and, therefore, he thought that the benefits of the Act of last year should be extended to the crofters of Scotland generally.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said, he intended to support the second reading of the Bill. The condition of the crofters was explained at length the other night, and, therefore, a long discussion upon the measure was not necessary. On former occasions they had been assured that there was no rack-renting in the Western Highlands of Scotland; but the result of the operations of the Crofters' Commission was that there had been a general reduction of rents—a reduction amounting to from 20 to 50 per cent. He respectfully asked the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) if he was prepared to admit that the Crofters' Commission, in making this reduction, had acted fairly and properly? Was the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour)—who took great interest in the question—able to say that in the rest of Scotland there had been by the voluntary system a corresponding reduction of crofters' rents? No one knew better than the right hon. Gentleman that the reduction of the crofters' rents throughout Scotland had been very slight indeed. There had been a much larger reduction of the rents of large farms than in the case of crofters. Because the crofters had been able out of their labour to pay rent in larger proportion than large farmers such rent had been exacted from them. It was very clear, therefore, that if the right hon. Gentleman could not say that there had been a corresponding reduction of crofters' rents throughout Scotland, it was necessary in the interest of justice and expediency that the Crofters' Act should be extended to Scotland generally. He hoped the Government would be consistent in the matter and allow the Bill to be read a second time.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he did not think the second reading of the Bill should be taken when the House was utterly unprepared to take it. It was certainly never contemplated that the Bill would come on to-day. The fact was there was really no demand for the Bill in the large majority of the counties of Scotland. There was on the other hand great dread of its provisions, especially when the crofter system, as at present existing in the Highlands, was unknown, and when valuation rolls made no mention of the names of people. In an unprepared moment the Bill was sprung on the House. It was true the measure had been in the hands of hon. Members three or four days, but it was equally true that very few—if any—of hon. Members believed for one moment it could possibly come on to-day. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) undertook that the whole of to-day's sitting should be given up to the debate upon the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. He was quite aware there was certain cases of hardship in some of the counties contiguous to the crofting counties which, no doubt, ought to be taken notice of; but he was equally prepared to say that those cases were few in number, and the hardships were somewhat magnified. Under the circumstances he trusted the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Anderson) would not press the Bill upon the attention of the House to-day, but consent to the adjournment of the debate, which he now moved.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) appealed to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) to withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the debate. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) were, he was sure, quite aware that the circumstances in the North of Scotland and in the county which he represented were exceedingly grave. To show the urgency of a measure of this kind, he might say that he had transmitted to the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland (the Marquess of Lothian) a Petition signed by from 600 to 700 constituents of his—chiefly heads of families—praying that they should be aided by the Government to emigrate.

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the debate is not now on the Main Question, but on the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. ESSLEMONT said, he quite understood that, and in opposition to the Motion for adjournment he was pointing out that circumstances in the North of Scotland were very grave indeed. His constituents were most anxious that this Bill should be read a second time, because, in that event, they would be able, in the trying circumstances of the fishing, to raise money upon their houses, which they could not do now, inasmuch as they were merely tenants at will——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman's remarks have reference to the Main Question and not to the Motion for adjournment.

MR. ESSLEMONT said, that if he could not point to the pressure of the present circumstances he would not attempt to do so. But he hoped that, at all events, he might urge that if this opportunity of reading the Bill a second time was not taken advantage of, the chances of the passing of the Bill would be greatly damaged. He trusted, too, it would be clearly understood by the people from whence the Motion for adjournment came. It was not correct to say that the measure had been sprung upon the House, for it had practically been before the House for 12 months. The principle of the Bill had been discussed again and again. It was discussed when the Crofters' Act was passed, and the majority of the Scotch Members showed by their votes at that time that they were extremely anxious that the benefits of the Act should be extended to all the crofters and cottars in Scotland. He had good means of judging as to the anxiety of the people that the Bill should pass.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Gentleman to confine his remarks to the Motion before the House, which is for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he desired to say a few words in opposition to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. He thought that the Government in their own interest ought not to decline to read the Bill a second time. He was not at liberty to refer to any of the terms of the measure, but he could say that its scope was very small indeed. He was persuaded of this, that the consequence of what was said last night and of what was taking place to-day would be that the people in Scotland would feel that upon this burning question—and it was really the burning question in Scotland at the present moment he had very good reason to know—the Government were not prepared to propose legislation themselves, and were most unwilling to give any countenance to any attempt, however small, a private Member might make to meet the grievances of the crofters. The subject of the Bill had been before the country for a long time, and it was absurd to imagine that the Government could not have come to some decision upon it. The suggestion that they had not had sufficient time to consider the

Bill could not be assented to for a moment. As he was fully convinced that before the Session was up legislation upon the subject would be forced upon the Government by the difficulties at present occurring, he hoped the Government would not make the difficulties of the position greater by supporting the hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) in doing what was neither more nor less than burking the consideration of the Bill.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he opposed the Motion for the adjournment of the debate and called his Scotch Colleagues to witness the change in the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Mark Stewart's) attitude. The hon. Gentleman was one of those Scotch Members who taunted the Scotch Liberal Members with obstructing Public Business when they objected to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate bringing in his Bills at the end of last Session. He ventured to turn the tables on the hon. Member and to charge him with obstructing by his present proceeding the Public Business of Scotland in the House of Commons. Her Majesty's Government, by countenancing, as they were now doing, the hon. Gentleman's obstructive tactics, were laying themselves equally open to animadversion which he was sure would be passed upon them in Scotland to-morrow. This was about the first occasion since the unhappy advent of Her Majesty's present Government to power that private Members had been able to do anything for Scotland. What happened last year? Private Members did not get a chance of doing any Scotch Business at all. Even the wretched Business proposed by the Government did not come on until a Wednesday afternoon late in the month of August, and the successive stages of the Bills were resumed at some late hour, generally from 2 to 3 o'clock in the morning. Now, when by a happy chance there was an opportunity for Scotch Members to bring on their Bills the hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart), who last year stood forward to denounce what he called obstruction, now came forward and himself obstructed. He (Mr. E. Robertson) hoped the Government would withdraw this dilatory plea. It would not do to say that the business had been sprung on the House. There was the Lord Advocate there. What had he to do but to attend to the Order Paper of the House? To his knowledge, there were several Scotch Members who were prepared and anxious to address to the House observations in reference to matters of interest in Scotland; but they had given way in order to allow the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) to bring on his Motion at a time which would be convenient to him and to the Leaders on both sides. They had given way further in order to allow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) to bring on his Motion the first thing to-morrow, and now there was an endeavour to cut them out of an opportunity which lay before them of calling attention to some of the pressing grievances of their country. Now, when this small Bill, the contents of which were known to every Member of the House who took any interest in the subject, which was the same Bill as that which was before the House last year, the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate—who had nothing to do except to attend to the proposals for legislation made in the House—was going to give his support to the hon. Member for Kirkcudbright in the singular operation of turning his coat which he was now performing. He was certain that Scotch Members of the Opposition would be unanimous in resisting this disgraceful obstruction. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] He maintained that it was disgraceful obstruction to stand in their way on the very first occasion on which for two years the private Members from Scotland had had the smallest opportunity of legislating for their country. If Scotch Members were not unanimous in resisting the Government on this occasion, he was convinced that the people of Scotland—or, at all events, the vast majority who professed Liberal opinions—would be unanimous.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought the hon. Gentleman had thrown an unnecessary amount of heat into his remarks. There was nothing so very unreasonable in the request that a Bill, admittedly of great importance, which came up at a time when no human being could have expected a discussion, should be postponed. If hon. Gentlemen doubted that, let them think what happened a few minutes ago. The only reason this Bill was being discussed at this moment was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) said he had a speech in his pocket which he could not deliver in an hour and a quarter. Could anybody have reasonably anticipated that? Though nobody could accuse his hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) of having been unreasonable in moving the adjournment under those circumstances, still, considering the difficulties of private Members in bringing their Bills forward, he hoped his hon. Friend would consent to withdraw his Motion.

MR. MARK STEWART said, he would withdraw the Motion; but he desired to explain that his only object had been to give the hon. and learned Member who had brought forward the Bill another opportunity for a fuller discussion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, that the Crofters' Bill was very applicable to Aberdeenshire and other Northern counties, to which it did not at present apply. There were hundreds of thousands of crofters and fishermen in those counties who had themselves built substantial houses, and who yet held upon no tenure whatever, and it was a matter of urgent necessity that something should be done for them.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he thought that in the statement they had just heard from the hon. Member they had a very clear indication of the difficulties before them if they accepted the second reading of this Bill, and if the House wished to take this Division he should take good care that it was not prevented. But it was only right that he should say a few words on behalf of the Government to explain why they could not allow the second reading to pass. Everybody who knew anything about Scotland knew perfectly well that the word crofter, as applied to the West Highlands and Islands, was a word of totally different meaning from that given to it in other parts of Scotland. [An hon. MEMBER: No!] The hon. Gentleman who said "No!" represented a Scottish constituency, but he ventured to say that that hon. Member knew very little about Scotland as a whole if he thought that the word crofter in the Southern parts of Scotland meant practically the same thing as it did in the Highlands. They would be landed in inextricable difficulties if they accepted a Bill of this kind, framed practically—he submitted—without any real knowledge of the state of the facts more than that the Bill was not a new Bill, and he had himself no reason to complain of its being sprung upon them. The Bill proposed to do what it was the distinct and avowed opinion of the last Liberal Government it would be wrong to do. The present Government saw no reason to alter their opinion upon it—an opinion which agreed with that of their Predecessors in Office. The Crofters' Bill was brought in to meet exceptional circumstances in a certain part of the country, and was not a Bill suitable for the rest of Scotland. The Government had seen nothing to induce them to alter that opinion, and it seemed to him an extraordinary thing that an hon. Member who brought forward a Bill of such large scope as this, for the purpose of upsetting the distinct policy of the Government of 1886 and its Successors, should not have thought it necessary to support it with any more argument than a few perfunctory sentences. This Bill could be dealt with in one or other of two ways. Either the Bill should be fairly discussed, or, if not, the second reading ought to be refused.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he was desirous of pointing out that there would be abundant opportunity to discuss this Bill further on going into Committee, and if it was found that there were exceptional circumstances in the South of Scotland—about which, he admitted, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) knew more than he did—it could be dealt with by limiting the Bill in Committee. He could assure the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, however, that in the North of Scotland, at all events, and certainly in Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire, they used the word crofter in precisely the same sense as it was used in the Crofters' Act and in the West of Scotland. It was true that the majority of English Members had gone against the proposal when the Bill was before the House, but a large majority of the Scottish

Members were in favour of it. A large proportion of the farmers in the North of Scotland were crofters, and there was nothing more cruel and unfair than that they should be deprived of advantages of security of tenure, and especially of fair rents, which the Act gave. He hoped, therefore, the Government would abandon their attitude of hostility to the Bill, otherwise they would know in Scotland that this was a Government that paid not the slightest regard to the public opinion of Scotland, and that would not adopt any measure for the improvement of Scotland until it was too late to be of any use.

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 102; Noes 190: Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 9.)

PAROCHIAL BOARDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Preston Bruce.*)

[BILL 68.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was one with which the House was familiar. It had been before the House for several Sessions; it had been fully debated and voted on; and on the occasion on which, after full discussion, it was voted on, it received the unanimous support of the Liberal Government then in Office. The object of the Bill was simply to make Parochial Boards in Scotland representative bodies, elected on a franchise exactly similar to that for the election of Municipal Councils, and also to do away with the use of mandates.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Dr Cameron.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he thought the House would be fully sensible of the extreme absurdity of discussing in the space of seven minutes (it being now 5.37) a great revolution in the local government of Scotland. But there was further this objection to the Bill, that the Government were pledged and fully proposed to deal in a large spirit with the whole question of the local government of Scotland. Pending the introduction of a measure which he hoped they would bring in at no very distant date, it would be perfectly absurd for the House to attempt to tinker with the question; and for that reason he seriously suggested to the hon. Member that he should reserve his suggestions on this important question until the whole scheme with regard to local government in England and Scotland was before the House and the country. He therefore hoped the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Cameron) would not press his Motion to a Division.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen E.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Local Government Bill for Scotland this Session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot conceive that there can possibly be time at the disposal of the House to discuss such an enormous question as the local government of Scotland this Session; but, of course, I cannot say.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 91; Noes 168: Majority 77.—(Div. List, No. 10.)

QUESTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he could inform the House what Business the Government proposed to take on Friday in the event of the Report stage of the Address being completed to-morrow night?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, the Government had been in hopes of taking the debate on the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). He found, however, that the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman had been postponed until Monday; and, therefore, it was impossible to take it on Friday. In these circumstances the Government proposed to take the Rules of Procedure on Friday's Sitting, on the understanding which, he believed, was assented to generally that the debate on the Address would conclude absolutely to-morrow night.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, he presumed that, unless something unforeseen occurred, his Resolution with reference to Trafalgar Square would be discussed on Monday?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the hon. and learned Gentleman was aware that the Government were under the necessity of considering the Estimates and of taking certain Supplementary Votes in the Army and Navy and Civil Service Estimates before a certain early date in March; but if he was led to believe that those Estimates would be duly voted, he should be very happy to leave Monday open for the hon. and learned Gentleman. His first duty, however, was to make provision for the Public Service, so that there should be no inconvenience.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: Perhaps if I ask to-morrow evening, the right hon. Gentleman will then be able to make a definite statement.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped it would be possible to do so, and also to communicate the Estimates which would be laid on the Table to hon. Gentlemen opposite, so as to obtain from them some impression of their view of the possibilities of the case. If it was possible to surrender Monday, of course the Government would do so. The Civil Service Supplementary Estimates would be taken first, and then, he thought, the Army and Navy Votes.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, whether it was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to appropriate Friday as a Government night by Resolution? If not, it would come under the ordinary Rules which regulated proceedings on a Friday evening.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that was the intention. He understood it to be the wish of the House to get to the consideration of the Procedure Rules.

LAW AND JUSTICE — LIVERPOOL ASSIZES—SENTENCES OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BY MR. JUSTICE GRANTHAM.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department a Question with reference to three sentences of whipping imposed at the Liverpool Assizes by Mr. Justice Grantham, one in a case of forgery and embezzlement. He added that it appeared from the remarks made by the Judge in passing the sentences, that they were imposed under an old Statute of George IV., and before penal servitude was known, the Act giving power to impose a whipping on habitual criminals, either publicly or privately. He wished to know whether, in view of the fact that those sentences had admittedly been imposed under a Statute which had fallen into desuetude, the right hon. Gentleman would advise that the clemency of the Crown should be exercised, and that the sentences, as far as they related to whipping, would not be inflicted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he knew nothing of the cases, except from what he had noticed in the newspapers that Mr. Justice Grantham, at the Liverpool Assizes, had sentenced three men to flogging in addition to terms of imprisonment. One sentence of the three was not under a Statute of George IV., but a much more recent Act. The other two sentences were imposed under the provisions of a well known Statute, 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV., dealing with habitual offenders. He presumed that the learned Judge was inclined, in view of the prisoners being hardened criminals, to try the alternative of a short sentence *plus* a whipping. Without communication with the learned Judge, he (Mr. Matthews) should not think of interfering with these sentences.

MOTIONS.

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RATING AND VALUATION (SCOTLAND).

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider the Law relating to the Rating and Valuation of the various kinds of Property subject to Assessment in Scotland, and to report what amendments may be necessary therein."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

HABITUAL DRUNKARDS ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend "The Habitual Drunkards Act, 1879," *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Trevor Lawrence, and Sir Walter Foster.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 141.]

OFFICIAL TRUSTEE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Warmington, Bill to constitute the office of Official Trustee; and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Warmington, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Bowen Rowlands.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 142.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Debate arising.

And it being Six of the clock, Mr. Speaker left the Chair without Question put.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 23rd February, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Land Transfer * (21); Lunacy Acts Amendment * (22).

BULGARIA—EUROPEAN TURKEY.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL: My Lords, the present Motion is directed to obtain further Papers on the late events in European Turkey. To justify the Motion, it would be sufficient to call attention to the Correspondence on Bulgaria. That Correspondence gives the narrative of incidents which followed the attempt to violate the Treaty of Berlin, and to extend the limits of the Vassal Principality. But it does not go beyond the end of 1886. For all that happened subsequently—and much has happened, as your Lordships know—we have but unauthenticated records.

My Lords, it is remarkable that, although the Eastern Question has been vividly re-opened by what occurred in September, 1885, not a voice in this House has since been heard upon it. At one time, and more especially under Lord Beaconsfield, the subject constantly engaged us. At present the House contains three noble Lords who have presided at the Foreign Office, three who have been Ambassadors at St. Petersburg, one who has held the same appointment at Berlin, two Under Secretaries of the Department mentioned, one Parliamentary and the other permanent. To-day it would, at least, be useful to elicit some of their conclusions as to the line which ought to be adopted. I do not wish myself to go too deeply or too fully into a topic which, since 1871, I have had many opportunities of handling.

The general position, I venture to submit, is that great difficulties are likely to arise out of the Bulgarian events unless a timely measure is adopted. I am not at all inclined to predict war under ordinary circumstances. It seems to me, after a course of observation, that war depends on individuals; that no war is able to produce itself unless, in one of the entangled Powers, some individual has resolved upon promoting it. Nations may be, indeed, excitable in feeling; but do not rush—so far as history tells us—by a spontaneous movement into conflict. On that ground I have habitually maintained in recent times that no war between France and Germany was imminent so long as neither at Paris nor Berlin you could refer to any leader ready to initiate it. It is not, therefore, as a person who exaggerates the tendency to war, but one who might be thought to underrate it, that I am inclined to anticipate disturbances in South-Eastern Europe, if no controlling influence is brought to bear—and even promptly—on the subject. My Lords, the Correspondence on Bulgaria—from which, however, I have no intention to read extracts—throws light upon the Russian grounds of interference in that country.

When in September, 1885, Prince Alexander acceded to the movement for uniting Eastern Roumelia with Bulgaria against the Treaty of Berlin, Russia was disposed—from any motives you think proper to assign—to uphold the Treaty, and to resist the deviation from it. It cannot be said that the other Signatory Powers have ever fully sanctioned the encroachment so as to raise it to legality. Russia, therefore, has a *locus standi* for protesting against the union which the sudden violence of insurrection and the sudden weakness of authority had called into existence. But Russia is entitled to complain of more than fusion of the countries intended by the Treaty to be separate. The Government of Bulgaria is now being carried on by a Prince who has no sanction at Constantinople, no sanction from the other Powers, and who, although elected in Bulgaria, has been elected by a Body of which—to use a guarded phrase—at least the regularity is doubtful. We must remember that the Treaty of Berlin lays down three processes for the creation of a Vassal Prince, not one of which has been adhered to. But there is something further. The intruded Prince is not a member of the Bulgarian Church, or even in the Greek religion on which that Church, however separate in its establishment, is founded. It is true, the Treaty does not lay down that he must be so. But it may fairly be contended that a Prince of alien creed, of opposite convictions, although endorsed by popular enthusiasm for a time, will some day be obnoxious to a Party, as occurred from different causes to his Predecessor. His relations with the Exarch can never be entirely harmonious. On his arrival, there was a hostile movement in connection with this matter. The Exarch in that country, even politically speaking, is much too great a force to be passed over. The Bulgarian Church is well known to have been the germ of the Bulgarian Principality. Again—and I will pass as quickly as I can over so delicate a ground—in France there are contingencies—beyond the bounds of probability, but not of possibility—in which Prince Ferdinand would be the Member of a reigning Family, and so become disqualified to hold his situation in Bulgaria by an enactment of the Treaty.

The despatch writers of Russia, allowed for many years to be the first, are certain to present their case with accessory details and ingenious shades, so as to make it far more hard to grapple with than it would appear upon this statement. If, therefore, Russia is induced by motives unavowed to have recourse to arms, she must have the aspect of doing so as the champion of the Treaty. She may also, as regards Bulgaria, derive encouragement from that speech which has been ringing through the world, although I would not be too positive as to its true interpretation.

A hazard of this kind ought clearly not to be prolonged without an effort to abridge it. It may be said that efforts have been made already. We have heard of various expedients discussed between Russia and the Porte. But none have been adopted. There has been no Conference to regulate these difficulties. When everything else breaks down a Conference suggests itself. When was a Conference more needed? It would not be without a late example. The Treaty of Berlin left dangerous questions open between Greece and the Ottoman Empire. Although results arose which were not wholly satisfactory, it was only by a Conference that some adjustment was effected.

There is another ground on which a Conference may possibly be requisite or urgent. By a peculiar imperfection in the Treaty of Berlin, each Power has a veto on the nomination of the Vassal Prince in Bulgaria, and on the nomination of the Viceroys acting for the Porte in East Roumelia. The subject was debated in the Congress of 1878, and the noble Marquess now First Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury) did his utmost to establish the legal right of a majority. The result is, however, that if in either of these posts a vacancy occurs by death or resignation three times in any year, three times it might be utterly impossible to fill it, without collision between the Signatory Powers. A Conference might thus be necessary for two objects: to put an end to the intrigues and perils of Bulgaria; to prevent their unavoidable recurrence whenever vacancies arise in either of these offices.

These are the grounds on which a Conference—unless some better method is adopted—seems to be desirable. A high authority, however, may be quoted in its favour. In 1878 Prince Bismarck —and here I am again referring to the Protocols—used this language as it is translated. It is the only passage I shall read this evening:—

> "If the Bulgarian populations, either through ill-will or innate incapacity, cannot make their institutions work, Europe will in truth be obliged to take counsel, but later on and when that time shall have arrived."

It may be said, indeed, that by despatches, telegrams, and interviews, the European Powers are enabled to collect their wisdom, and that a Conference may thus be superseded. For two years they have been doing so. The effort has been signally defective, and now we seem to be on the verge of grave events unless a Conference anticipates them. If it succeeds tranquillity will be secured. But time is gained even should no decision be arrived at.

We know the course of Russia in 1877, and the disquietude which followed it. But now her pretexts of aggression are much stronger and more specious. She would not have an European mandate to overthrow the recent usurpation in Bulgaria; but so she had not the shadow of an European mandate to go over the Pruth in 1877 as the guardian of the races said to be misgoverned under Ottoman dominion. But she went over. Her doing so was a grave encroachment on the Treaties of 1856, since the essence of those Treaties was to withdraw from Russia any special right of interference within the territory of the Sultan. At present she would interfere to vindicate a Treaty, not to overturn one. But if Russia occupies Bulgaria, Constantinople must in the long run, and after a certain time, be seriously threatened; while all the Mediterranean Powers—and not least the Power which holds Cyprus, Malta, Gibraltar, and provisionally Egypt—are interested in defending it.

But one thing must be admitted. A Conference can only be initiated by Great Britain. Prince Bismarck has pointed out that the function of leading on the Eastern Question now devolves upon Great Britain. For many reasons, better known to Her Majesty's Government than to myself, the proposal will not come from Berlin, from Vienna, or St. Petersburg, however welcome it might be in all those capitals or some of them. It may not be easy even to induce Russia to partake in any European Council. In 1878 it was not easy. But the noble Marquess and his Friends eventually succeeded. They may succeed now without employing all the methods which at that time were resorted to. The union of two Offices—First Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—in the person of the noble Marquess, so far as it divides his energy, imparts, no doubt, a greater difficulty to the task I have suggested. But when the Bulgarian embarrassment has passed away his union of two Offices may have a better vindication than it has yet been able to arrive at.

There is one further reason—and it seems to me conclusive—for immediate action to finish the anomalous position in Bulgaria, either by a Conference or any other method which appears more rapid or more feasible. It is the instability of Governments—however prudent and however gifted—which, like the present one, have not elsewhere an absolute majority. No doubt, according to the opinion of to-day, the Government is tolerably settled. But few thought in January, 1886, that the noble Marquess was to be so suddenly outvoted. A few months before he had assured us that his Ministry was likely to endure, although he claimed at first no other merit for it. Let us suppose a Government established—I do not point to individuals—which in consequence of past transactions was even thought to have a Russian bias. Russia would be then unduly and unavoidably excited into schemes of action on the Eastern Question which a Conference must limit. She would not, therefore, go into a Conference. But Germany and Austria, whose position is now defined and satisfactory, must soon, in that event, be led into a new one. They may be ready to oppose themselves to Russia; but it does not follow that they are ready to oppose themselves to Russia and Great Britain both together. It is a formidable union for them to contemplate, despotism leaning upon freedom, the greatest naval and the greatest military Power drawn into alignment. But what is the effect at Constantinople of the occurrence to be dreaded? The Porte, deprived of all encouragement the British Embassy can give, is forced to listen to whatever counsels the Russian Embassy may urge upon it.

It will be, at least, apparent that there is no desire upon my part to elicit information from the Government which they have objects in concealing. Whether they have joined in any recent combination for guarding European peace is not the question now before us. It may be left, indeed, to other men and other places. I do not wish to probe the secrets of the Government, although, if the train of reasoning which I have briefly urged is just, I should be glad to think it might contribute to their policy.

Address for further Papers on the late events in European Turkey.—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): With reference to the Motion which the noble Lord has laid before the House, I have only to say that, so far as my recollection goes, we have not laid Bulgarian Papers on the Table because we do not possess any of sufficient interest to justify such a course. But if the noble Lord has any curiosity to see them I will have them looked into to see whether there are any which can be presented, and, if so, I shall have great pleasure in laying them on the Table of the House. With reference to the remarks of the noble Lord, he will not expect me to go at any length into the subject which at this particular moment is occupying a great deal of attention at the Courts of Europe, and which, therefore, I cannot with propriety deal with in detail. But I will say that I think is is a little unfair to the Bulgarians to apply Prince Bismarck's remark at the Congress at Berlin to their present condition. I think it is hardly fair to say that it is their doing that their institutions do not work. On the whole, their institutions are working in a sort of way, and if there are any defects—if there are defects in legality—and we believe there are, I do not think that the fault lies entirely or exclusively with them. The real difficulty is a very simple one. The Congress of Berlin, following the uniform, and, I think, the quite invariable, custom of all diplomatic instruments, provides that the consent of Europe to elections which require that consent shall be given unanimously by all the Powers. It requires no great knowledge of public affairs to know that that unanimous consent will always be forthcoming where there is no difficulty; but where there is a difficulty unanimous consent is a very hard thing to obtain, especially where you have seven consents to bring together. The inference I should rather draw is that any efforts to conduct an administration by the help of what is called the concert of Europe are always apt to break down on the application of that diplomatic rule. Where there are a number of people whose resolution it is important to obtain, you can only obtain it, as a matter of certainty, by applying the principle of the majority, and if you cannot apply that principle in its widest extent it is wiser not to require their consent. The only other remark which I will notice in the speech of the noble Lord is that in which he said that matters are in a position which make a Conference desirable. I do not traverse that suggestion. A Conference is not a thing in itself undesirable or to which I have any reason to take objection; but I think that, in considering the advantages of a Conference, you must distinguish between different kinds of Conferences. Such a Conference as that which has been going on at Washington is, as we know, capable of leading to an agreement. There are at most only three, and, properly speaking, only two, persons whose consent has to be obtained, and, no doubt, discussion in that Conference is very favourable to an adjustment of the differences between the Powers. Such Conferences may be generally resorted to with considerable confidence. But Conferences where a large number of Powers have to meet, as far as my knowledge and experience goes, very seldom come to a satisfactory result unless a number of Powers agree beforehand on what the main result of their deliberations is to be. Therefore, I do not think, until that state of things exists, with reference to any matters which may be in controversy, that a Conference is desirable. There is another thing to be said about a Conference, that where there is any real danger of formidable disagreement, so solemn a measure, if it does not succeed, is rather apt to accentuate and increase the difficulties and to make the danger greater than it was before. Therefore, it should be adopted with some hesitation if there is not a prospect—a sure prospect—of success. Looking from the present standpoint, I do not think that we can describe the present difficulty in respect to Bulgaria as one which involves in itself any immediate danger. I hope that the ordinary interchange of opinion among the various States of Europe by the ordinary channels of diplomatic intercourse will enable us to overcome any difference of opinion that may exist, and I heartily subscribe to the opinion expressed by the Chancellor of Germany in his recent great speech that, on so small a matter as the Government of Bulgaria, it would be a disgrace to Europe if ever it should plunge it into war.

Address *agreed to.*

LAND TRANSFER BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to simplify titles and facilitate the transfer of land in England—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1ª. (No. 21.)

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Acts relating to lunatics—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1°. (No. 22.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 23*rd February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Hampstead, *v.* Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, baronet, G.C.M.G., now Baron Knutsford, called up to the House of Peers.

Select Committee—Public Accounts, *nominated.*

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation).*

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ST. OLAVE'S BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been directed to the practice of the St. Olave's Board of Guardians, Bermondsey, of giving tea and sugar to men by way of payment for stone breaking and oakum picking; whether he is aware that the tea so given costs the Board 1*s.* 4*d.* per lb., and is charged to the men at 2*s.*, and whether the sugar is charged to the men at the rate of 28*s.* a cwt., which costs the Board 16*s.* 6*d.* a cwt.; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the matter, with a view to prevent such practices for the future?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have communicated with the Guardians of the St. Olave's Union as to the practice adopted by them, and I find that the facts are as stated in the Question of the hon. Member with regard to the value at which the prices of the tea and sugar given as relief in kind has been estimated. The matter was brought under the attention of the Guardians on the 8th instant, and a Special Committee of the whole Board on the following day agreed to a Report recommending that in future the value of the tea should be estimated at 1*d.* per oz., and the sugar at 2*d.* per lb. There is no reason to doubt that this recommendation will be adopted by the Guardians.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—BOARD OF GUARDIANS — OAKUM PICKING.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the General Order issued on the 18th December, 1882, by the Local Government Board to Boards of Guardians with respect to casual paupers, directs that one of the daily tasks of paupers who are detained for more than one night shall be the picking of 4lb. of unbeaten oakum; whether in prisons the daily task of prisoners sentenced to hard labour is the picking of 3lb. of unbeaten oakum; and whether the Board will issue a further Order, directing all Boards of Guardians to reduce the quantity of oakum to be picked, or to adopt other means for making the task of the pauper lighter than that of the prisoner?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): One of the tasks of work of male casual paupers, who are detained in casual wards for more than one night, is the picking of 4lb. of unbeaten oakum, and this task has been in force for 17 years. The task of prisoners is, as I understand, that stated in the Question. As regards the casual paupers, I learn from the Superintendent Visiting Officer of the casual wards in the Metropolis, that during the last 15 years he has had no complaint as to the task. While prisoners are not permitted to use any hook, &c., to assist in the picking of the oakum, it is very usual for the casual paupers to have nails, and an appliance which, I understand, is technically called a "fiddle," which greatly facilitates the picking. The habitual casual, I am informed, can do the task in six hours, while those unaccustomed to the work take some two hours longer. Moreover, the Regulations expressly provide that a casual pauper shall not be required to perform the whole, or any part, of the task of work if it should appear that the same is not suited to his age, strength, or capacity. I will, however, undertake to make further inquiry into the matter in connection with the task imposed in prisons.

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—"EMERGENCY MEN."

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the men known as "Emergency men," who accompany the Solicitor for the Clergy Defence Association to and at the tithe distraint sales in Flintshire, have been sworn in as Special Constables; whether at all these seizures and sales they are armed, in addition to the usual police bâtons, with cutlasses and revolvers; if so, whether the carrying of such arms is legal; and, whether the Authorities, and the Home Office especially, approve of these men being so armed?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The Chief Constable of Flintshire informs me that the bailiffs employed at distraint sales in Flintshire were not sworn in as Special Constables, and that he was not aware at the time that they had any arms. He had since ascertained that on one occasion the Solicitor for the Clergy Defence Association and one of his bailiffs each carried a revolver, and some others of the bailiffs had ship cutlasses concealed under their top coats. This was an occasion on which the solicitor received information the evening before a distress, too late to communicate with the police, that he and his men would receive violence from a large gathering of miners. I am not aware that this was illegal. I should certainly disapprove the use of deadly weapons, except in defence of life or in the suppression of riot.

In reply to Mr. T. E. Ellis (Merionethshire),

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was not aware that the men carried police bâtons.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—THE PROPOSED EXPENDITURE.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Government purpose to carry into effect the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners on Irish Public Works, made in their Report just issued; and, if so, whether the required amount will be included in the next Estimates, and a Bill brought in with the least possible delay to obtain the sanction of the House to the proposed expenditure, so that the works may be entered on as early as possible during the coming summer; and, whether the landing piers recommended by the Commission for Rosse's Point and other places on the West Coast of Ireland will be commenced at an early date?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The Report to which the hon. Member refers is, as he is doubtless aware, one dealing with very large questions which will require careful consideration. It has been in the hands of the Government too short a time to enable them to say what recommendations of the Royal Commissioners they are prepared to accept.

INLAND REVENUE—TRANSFER STAMP DUTIES—COMPOUNDING.

Mr. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock, &c.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, On what grounds many Insurance Companies have been refused the right of compounding their transfer Stamp Duties, while certain other Companies, among others the "Alliance" and "Northern" Fire and Life Insurance Offices, have been allowed the facility afforded by the Inland Revenue Act of 1887; if he is aware that the advantage accorded to the Companies named is in proportion to their capital greater than the advantage which would have been reaped by some of the offices which have met with a refusal; and, whether he has any reason to suppose that Clauses 8 and 9 of the existing Customs and Inland Revenue Act, legalizing this compounding, were based by him on a financial miscalculation?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Member will recollect that the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of last Session gives no absolute right of composition. The power which it gives is reciprocal. The Companies who think it advantageous to themselves to compound have the right to apply to the Board of Inland Revenue, who, on their part, accede to such applications, or not, as they think it conducive to the public good. The great Companies have not applied to the Board in sufficient numbers to establish the basis for an average; and this knowledge has led the Commissioners to make a closer and more rigid examination than they originally intended into the circumstances of each individual case when they found that the applications came mainly from those Companies whose shares commanded a very high premium. Let me illustrate the principle on which the Board of Inland Revenue have accepted or refused applications by the case of two Insurance Companies, one of which is mentioned by the hon. Member. In that case the annual amount received for transfer duty was £370, while the composition duty came to £275, showing a slight loss to the Exchequer; whereas in all cases of Insurance Companies which have been refused composition the percentage of loss would have been about three times as great. In the other case, in which the hon. Member is, I think, interested, the annual average transfer duty was £414, while the composition, if accepted, would only have been £92. Obviously in this case the composition would have been so unfavourable to the Exchequer as to make it incumbent on the Inland Revenue Board to refuse it.

Mr. S. WILLIAMSON asked, whether the same scrutiny was applied in the case of the "Northern" Company?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he had not got all the details in connection with that Company; but if the hon. Member would communicate with him he would give him the particulars.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—SUPERSESSION.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the practice of the Irish Lord Chancellor, when he has superseded a magistrate, to communicate the correspondence in the case to the Press; whether this course was followed in the case of the hon. Member for East Waterford and Coroner Byrne; why the same practice was not pursued in the case of Mr. R. H. E. White, of Glengariff, County Cork; and, whether there will be any objection to lay the correspondence between the Lord Chancellor and Mr. White upon the Table of the House?

Mr. Goschen

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is not the practice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland to communicate to the Press his correspondence with magistrates who have been superseded. The publication of the correspondence in the cases referred to did not emanate from the Lord Chancellor, nor with his cognizance. The usual practice was pursued in the case of Mr. White; and the Lord Chancellor does not see that any public advantage would be gained by dealing with it in the exceptional manner suggested.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY NEAR ENNIS — THE LATE HEAD CONSTABLE WHELEHAN.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What pension allowance or other grants the widow of the late Head Constable Whelehan (murdered in County Clare) has received; and, whether she has made any claim for compensation as against the Barony; and, if so, with what result?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The widow of the murdered Head Constable has been awarded an annual pension of £40, to be paid to her so long as she remains a widow, and an annual allowance of £2 10*s.* for each of his four children until they respectively attain the age of 15 years. She received a sum of £155 8*s.* 9*d.* from the Constabulary Force Fund, to which her husband had been a subscriber. I understand she brought forward a claim for compensation at Presentment Sessions last November, which was disallowed.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—BOYCOTTING THE POLICE—SENTENCES.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether on Friday, 17th February, Daniel M'Mahon, Thomas Moroney, John Sexton, and eight others were, by Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., and Mr. Mercer, R.M., sent to prison for one month for refusing to supply refreshments to the police on the occasion of a recent trial in Miltown-Malbay; whether the magistrates refused to increase the sentence so as to admit of an appeal; whether he is aware that the public houses kept by the defendants were closed on the date in question in response to an earnest request from the Rev. W. White, parish priest, made with a view of preventing a repetition of disorder which had arisen during previous trials of a like nature; and, whether it was admitted in evidence that the constabulary had in their barracks on the day in question all needful refreshments?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is the case that the three defendants named, together with the eight others referred to, were committed to prison for one month, having been found guilty of entering into a conspiracy to Boycott the police by not supplying them with any provisions during two days occupied in the recent trials. The magistrates did refuse to increase the sentence, as they saw no grounds for doing so. They appear, however, to have expressed their readiness to allow the defendants out on their own recognizances, to come up for judgment when called on, provided they would sign an agreement not to enter into an illegal conspiracy again. The defendants in question declined to do so, electing to go to prison. I am aware that the Rev. W. White stated in Court, on oath, that he had told the people to make Miltown-Malbay a city of the dead while the police were there. It may, however, be a matter of opinion whether this direction was given with a view to prevent disorder. It was not admitted in evidence that the police had in their barracks on the day in question all needful refreshments. As a matter of fact, they had not the needful refreshments.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): May I ask a Question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, arising out of his answer—whether it is not within his knowledge that it is the usual practice for the magistrates themselves to make an order for the publicans to close their houses during trials of this character; that, in addition, whether during the trials which preceded the ones in question the public-houses had not been closed, and that the consequence was that some of the people who came into the town on that day got drink, and that a disturbance took place; and that they were closed on the day in question because the parish priest from the altar asked the publicans, for the sake of the peace of the district, to close their houses so that no drink might be sold?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I am not aware what took place on the occasion of the preceding trials. The only information I have with regard to the Rev. Mr. White and his advice to the publicans was that which I have stated, that Mr. White stated on oath that he advised the people of Miltown-Malbay to make the town a city of the dead when the police were there.

MR. J. E. REDMOND: The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has not answered the first part of the Question which I asked, which is, whether it is not the almost invariable custom for the magistrates themselves to issue orders for the publicans to close their houses on occasions of this character?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; to my own personal knowledge it is not the habit or the usual custom.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman whether he is aware that on a recent occasion a similar order was made by Lord Kilmorey through his agent, Mr. Henry, to close the public-houses in Kilkeel?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I am aware that such orders are occasionally made. It is quite in the discretion of the magistrates.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS (WICKLOW).

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the cause of delay on the part of the Sub-Commissioners in visiting the County Wicklow, and when they are likely to do so?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that there has been no unusual delay in trying cases in the County Wicklow. The Commissioners sat in that county in the month of September last, and the next sitting of the Commissioners will be on the 8th of May.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ATTACK ON A CHURCH AT CASTLECALDWELL.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that some years ago an outrage was committed in Castlecaldwell; whether efforts were then made to saddle the perpetration of that outrage upon the Catholics of the district; whether it turned out that the author of the outrage was not a Catholic, but a stranger brought into the neighbourhood by a local magnate; whether the perpetration of the present outrages at Castlecaldwell and Mullaghdun has been charged by the landlord party against the Nationalists and Catholics of Fermanagh; whether there is any evidence to disprove the allegation of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond); and, whether, under the circumstances, he intends to order an inquiry into these occurrences, under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act?

Mr. JORDAN (Clare, W.) had also the following Question on the Paper on the same subject:—To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has obtained further information in reference to the perpetrators of the alleged outrages in the Protestant Episcopal Church at Castlecaldwell, and in the Protestant Episcopal Church at Mullaghdun, County Fermanagh; if so, if he would state what; and, if he will also state the conclusion of the authorities in the districts in relation thereto?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is the case that some years ago, in 1881, an outrage was committed at Castlecaldwell. An old house had been entered and a fishing-rod and window blind stolen therefrom. It is not true, however, that an attempt was made to saddle the outrage upon the Roman Catholics, the offender, who was a Protestant residing in the district, having been arrested a few hours afterwards and the articles found in his possession. The only knowledge I have as regards the fourth paragraph is that which appears in the Questions already answered in the House on the subject. The sole evidence at present to disprove the allegation of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh is of a negative character, consisting of the fact that there is no evidence whatever to substantiate it. I am not aware of what further information the police may have obtained; but they are still making every effort to elucidate the matter. The Government do not see any reason to order the inquiry suggested.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BRAY, CO. WICKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any representations as to the necessity for pier or harbour accommodation for fishing boats at Bray, County Wicklow, has at any time been brought under the notice of the Treasury, and with what result; whether the recent lamentable fatality, by which a fishing boat was capsized while attempting to reach the shore, and two of her crew drowned, has been brought to his knowledge; whether it is a fact that two relatives of the drowned fishermen were lost at the same place under precisely similar circumstances; and, whether the Government will take steps to provide pier or harbour accommodation at Bray?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): No such representation in regard to Bray has been brought under the notice of the Treasury, nor was the case brought before the Royal Commission on Public Works, which has recently reported; but I understand that various schemes for providing shelter at this place were being considered by the Commissioners under the Sea Fisheries' Act of 1883, which, however, did not recommend any grant for the purpose out of the fund provided by the Act. The hon. Member has kindly sent me a newspaper report of a recent case of drowning at Bray. There is no fund at the disposal of the Government out of which any assistance can be given for the purpose of providing such accommodation.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT—THE "EMBLETON."

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, If his attention had been called to the evidence given at the trial of Paul James Paynter (captain), and James Fisher (second officer), of the barque *Embleton*, of Liverpool, before the Borough Bench at Sunderland, on the 6th January last, for having unlawfully caused grievous bodily harm to a seaman, named Robert White (which resulted in his jumping overboard), whilst on a voyage from San Francisco to Sunderland, and which ended in the case being dismissed under section 42 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 24 & 25 *Vict.*; whether he is aware that since the trial the Board of Trade have held an inquiry before the members of the Local Marine Board, who have suspended Captain Paynter's certificate for six months; and, whether, under the circumstances, the Government will consider the propriety of ordering a new trial?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this case. The charge was under the Offences Against the Person Act, 24 & 25 *Vict.* c. 100, Section 42. The facts are as stated in the second paragraph of the Question. All the circumstances of the case were before the Justices; and they appear to have arrived at the conclusion that, in the absence of the man White, the evidence against the defendants was insufficient. Section 45 of the statute above quoted provides that in cases where the complaint has been dismissed the defendant shall be released from all further proceedings, civil or criminal, for the same cause. The Government cannot, therefore, order a new trial.

ARMY—OFFICERS AT REVIEWS AND INSPECTIONS.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether all officers commanding regiments and all other field officers are required by the Regulations of Her Majesty's Service to appear mounted at all reviews and inspections?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The officer commanding a battalion, two other field officers, and the adjutant are required to appear mounted at all reviews, and also at inspections, unless the Inspecting Officer direct otherwise.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT, 1882.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the President of the Board of Trade, In how many cases the powers obtained by Provisional Orders under the Electric Lighting Act of 1882 have been actually exercised; whether he can inform the House why so little progress has been made with electric lighting under the Act of 1882; and, whether the Government intends to amend the Act, with the view of encouraging the development of electric lighting?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Since the passing of the Electric Lighting Act, 59 Provisional Orders and five licences have been granted to Companies, and 15 Provisional Orders and two licences to Local Authorities. The Board of Trade are not aware of any cases in which the powers obtained are now being exercised. It is not possible to express an opinion as to the reasons which may have led to this result within the limits of a reply to a Question. A Bill to amend the Act has been introduced in "another place," on which the views of the Government will be stated and issues fully discussed.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) inquired, whether the Bill would give increased powers?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH replied, that that was a matter that would be more conveniently met on the second reading.

LAW OFFICERS (IRELAND)—RESIGNATION OF MR. J. C. BLAKE, CROWN SOLICITOR.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether a letter has been received from Mr. J. C. Blake, resigning his post as Crown Solicitor, on the grounds, as stated by him, that—

> "The nature of the procedure under the Crimes Act seems to me to deprive the Crown Prosecutor of any discretion in discriminating between the innocent and the guilty, while the tribunal before which he would have to act appears scarcely to have the independence that, in my judgment, ought to characterize any Court entrusted with the liberties of the people. Moreover, I apprehend that, in addition to these objections, the class of prosecutions that I should be expected to conduct would be mainly directed against the political adversaries of the Government. I have never been an active politician, and I strongly object to have

any share in such prosecutions, which were never contemplated at the time of my appointment 16 years ago."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): Yes, Sir; a letter was received four months ago by the then Attorney General for Ireland.

EGYPT—ADMINISTRATION—SIR EVELYN BARING.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there has been any difference of opinion between Sir Evelyn Baring and the Egyptian Ministry respecting British interference in the administration of Egypt; and, whether any communication has been addressed to Sir Evelyn Baring, limiting in future that interference?

THE UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): As a matter of fact, there has lately been a certain difference of opinion in regard to certain details of administration; but not generally respecting British interference. Such interference is limited, as far as possible, to what appears to be necessary in the interests of this country and of Egypt; and there has been no occasion for fresh instructions of a general nature.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—GRAY'S INN ROAD—DWELLINGS OF THE LABOURING CLASSES.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works have given notices, in connection with the Gray's Inn Road improvement, to the inhabitants of Fleur de Lis Court, part of Elm Street, and other places, of their intention to take about 56 houses wholly occupied by persons belonging to the labouring classes; and whether their powers purport to be exercised subject to the provisions of 47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 223, s. 42; whether, since the taking of these houses will entail the removal of a very large number of poor people, the Board have, in accordance with the provision of 40 & 41 *Vict.* c. 225, s. 23, proved to his satisfaction that sufficient accommodation, in suitable dwellings, has been provided elsewhere; and, if so, would he state where; whether he, in accordance with the provisions of 44—46 *Vict.* c. 222, s. 4, has given a certificate as to the sufficiency of accommodation; whether he will declare upon what materials and information he did so; whether he will lay such certificate, and all Papers relating to the granting thereof, upon the Table of the House; whether he can state the approximate number of persons who have and will be removed in connection with these improvements, and the situation, nature, and extent of the accommodation provided; whether he is aware that a large number of the persons so removed, and to be removed, are costermongers and traders, and that there is no accommodation provided or permitted at the model lodgings in the neighbourhood for the housing of their barrows and other trade goods; whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of 1885 of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, which refers to the Gray's Inn Road improvements as the cause of gross overcrowding; whether he is aware that the rents of such model lodgings as exist in the neighbourhood are largely in excess of the rents paid by the inhabitants in respect of the said houses; whether he has taken any, and what, steps to prevent the carrying out of the projected evictions; and, whether he will take measures to secure adequate provision for the housing of those persons about to be removed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The 33rd section of the Act of 1877, under which the Secretary of State has various powers for securing adequate provision for the housing of persons displaced in the course of the Gray's Inn Road improvement, has been repealed by the 45 & 46 *Vict.* c. 222, under which statute a scheme has been laid down by Parliament for observance by the Board; and the Secretary of State has no other function than to give a certificate that the Board have complied with the provisions of the Act. I have not yet been asked to give such a certificate, as the operations are not completed. I have received a Memorandum from the Metropolitan Board of Works answering the Question of the hon. Member. It is, however, too long to read to the House; but I shall be happy to show it to him. It is very voluminous indeed, and points out the difficulties in the way.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—NEW STREET FROM HOLBORN TOWN HALL.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has given permission to the Metropolitan Board of Works to commence the second section of the new street from the Holborn Town Hall to the Angel, Clerkenwell; and, if so, under what conditions?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have given the permission in question. The conditions under which my assent was given were communicated on February 11 of this year to the Board, and were—

> "That the Board should undertake not to pull down any houses occupied by persons of the labouring class, nor to remove the occupiers of the houses, and should also undertake to maintain such houses in a condition fit for occupation, and permit them to be occupied on change of tenants until certain new dwellings erected on sections 1 and 2 of the improvement were completed fit for occupation."

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) asked, whether it was obligatory on the Home Secretary to give a certificate of sufficiency of accommodation before the notices of eviction were given by the Board?

MR. MATTHEWS replied, that that was not required by the statute, as he read it. The intermediate works had not been withdrawn from his control.

MR. J. ROWLANDS asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had any idea when the new block of buildings would be completed?

MR. MATTHEWS asked for Notice of the Question.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES inquired, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that those people were under notice of removal, and were liable to be turned out of their homes in three weeks from this time; and, whether the Government would take any measures to secure adequate accommodation for them?

MR. MATTHEWS: This is a very complicated scheme, and I cannot undertake to answer the Question. I must, therefore, ask for Notice of the Question, and that the hon. Member should point out the specific cases to which he refers.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CHARGES OF "BLACKMAILING."

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central), asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the allegations of blackmailing made on the 5th July, 1887, against the Metropolitan Police Force in general, and against the Clapham Division in particular, by the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine) have been fully inquired into, and with what result?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E): Yes, Sir; inquiry was made by the Chief Commissioner into these allegations of blackmailing against the police. Endeavours were made to ascertain from the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness, and other persons likely to possess information, any specific facts in support of those allegations upon which inquiry could proceed. The result was that no such facts were elicited, nor was any evidence forthcoming to substantiate the charges against the police.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): In consequence of the reply of the Home Secretary, I beg to give Notice that on going into Committee of Supply on the Vote for the Metropolitan Police I shall call attention to this question.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUND.

SIR SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, the amount of Greenwich Hospital Funds invested in the Government Three per Cent Securities or Annuities on the 1st of January in each of the five years 1884 to 1888 inclusive; and, whether steps will be taken to obtain a higher rate of interest for the benefit of the Greenwich Hospital Pensioners, by a more advantageous investment of these Funds?

THE CIVIL LORD (Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT) (Sheffield, Ecclesall), in reply, said, the amount of Three per Cent Stock held on behalf of Greenwich Hospital, on the 1st of January of each of the last five years, was as follows:—1884, £1,632,416; 1885, £1,643,845; 1886, £1,395,692; 1887, £1,295,111; 1888, £1,005,772. It will thus be seen that the amount has been reduced by over £600,000, which has been invested at a higher rate of interest. Arrangements have been made to re-invest an additional sum of £50,000, and negotiations for further re-investments are in progress.

ARMY (INDIA)—LICENSING OF IMMORALITY.

Mr. J. WILLIAMSON (Lancashire, Lancaster) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has knowledge of the system of licensing prostitutes in Military Stations in India by the public and Military Authorities; whether his attention has been called to the last Official Report, wherein it is stated with satisfaction, with respect to Sitapur, "that the houses of these registered women are well kept;" whether he is aware that at Sitapur there is one licensed woman to every 11 soldiers, and that on a recent march to Lucknow a number of these women were sent by the Commanding Officer as an escort to the men *en route* to the exercise camp there, who pitched their tents near to those of the English soldiers night after night; whether the tents of these women are placed in prominent positions, and that soldiers are put over them on patrol duty; whether Chaplains of Scotch regiments, such as the Seaforth Highlanders, are obliged to move with the regiments which are accompanied by these registered women; and, whether he will promise to take immediate steps with the view of cancelling this system of registering women in India?

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) wished to ask the hon. Gentleman, before he answered the Question, Whether he was aware that Miss Florence Nightingale, on the 21st of November, 1862, had written a remarkable letter in the sense of the Question, which was published in a Report on the sanitary state of the East Indies in 1863; and whether he was aware that, after the existence of this system had been brought before the Army and Sanitary Commission, they had reported that the system had failed in India to protect the troops——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is rather exceeding the bounds of a Question, or anything that can fairly be said to grow out of the Question.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of the last Question. With regard to the Question on the Paper, in July, 1887, the Secretary of State, in accordance with a promise made to the Bishop of Lichfield in another place, addressed a despatch to the Government of India on this subject. Communications have sinced passed which are not yet complete. The official information, however, which is so far in the possession of the Secretary of State is at variance with the statements upon which the Question appears to be founded. The statements are contained in a Report which has been published and circulated in this country, dated Umballa, January 14, 1888, and signed Alfred S. Dyer. The Secretary of State will send this document to the Government of India and request a detailed Report on the various allegations therein contained. If anything like the practices alleged by Mr. Dyer prevails in India, measures will be taken to secure that any such practices shall be stopped forthwith.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—A MAGAZINE RIFLE.

Sir SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government have adopted a magazine rifle for the Army; and, if so, how soon a sufficient supply of the new weapon will be available for distribution in Home and Foreign Service?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): A magazine rifle has been recommended by the Military Authorities for final trial by the troops. My hon. Friend will find some details respecting it in the Memorandum accompanying the Army Estimates, and if he takes an interest in it I shall be glad to show it him.

SPAIN—ALLEGED MURDER OF A BRITISH MERCHANT SEAMAN BY A SPANISH SENTRY IN THE PORT OF BILBAO.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is now in a position to inform the House fully of the result of his inquiries into the alleged murder of a British merchant seaman by a Spanish sentry in the Port of Bilbao; and, whether any offer of compensation for the poor man's family has been made by the Spanish Government in respect of the aforesaid outrage?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Spanish carabineer was tried by court martial, and was acquitted on the ground that the contradiction between the Spanish and English witnesses, as to his having been assaulted by the seaman, admitted on both sides to have been intoxicated, was decided by the medical evidence that he had received a severe bruise on the chest, for which he had to be treated by a doctor for several days. It was held that, under military instructions, he was bound to fire on his assailant in self-defence, and that, under the 7th Article of the Military Penal Code, he must be acquitted of the charge of homicide. The sentence of the court martial was confirmed. Under the circumstances, it is not to be expected that the Spanish Government will offer compensation.

AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOLS—REPORT OF THE COMMISSION.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he will have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the recent Report of the Commission on Agricultural and Dairy Schools?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.), in reply, said, the Report in question was laid on the Table on the 10th of this month, and he hoped it would be immediately in the hands of Members.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can give the names of the Sub-Commissioners who are to hold a sitting in County Down in April next; whether he can state how many applications to fix fair rents in the County of Down were served on the Land Commission up to the 1st November last, and still remain unheard; and, how many of these applications are in respect of holdings on the estates of each of the following landlords:—The Lord Lieutenant, the Marquess of Downshire, Baron Trevor, Colonel Forde, and Lord Annesley? The hon. Member said: Perhaps in connection with this Question I might be permitted also to ask what town the Sub-Commission will hold its first sitting in?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that the Sub-Commission which will sit in the County Down on the 4th of April will be composed of Messrs. E. Greer (Chairman), J. J. Guiry, H. Johnston, S. Mowbray, and F. O'Callaghan. Of the applications to fix fair rents from the County Down, which were served on the Land Commission up to the 1st of November last, 3,497 still remain unheard. Of the above number, the following are in respect of the estates of the landlords named:—The Lord Lieutenant, 55; Marquess of Downshire, 425; Lord Trevor, 70; Colonel Forde, 263; and Lord Annesley, 419.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, whether this Commission which is to adjudicate on rents in the County Down, the names of which have just been read, and which is to adjudicate on the Lord Lieutenant's estate, whether the Lord Lieutenant has himself selected the Commissioners who are to go there? It would be a desirable thing to know that.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The Lord Lieutenant has had nothing whatever to do with their appointment.

MR. DILLON: Who has adopted the names of the Commissioners?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The Land Commissioners, of course, as usual.

MR. M'CARTAN asked the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, whether he was aware that in the case of a number of tenants on the Lord Lieutenant's estate a settlement had to be arrived at owing to the delay of the sitting of the Land Commissioners?

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, whether Mr. O'Callaghan, whose name has been read out as one of the Sub-Commissioners, is a gentleman whose own rents had been reduced by 30 per cent?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I have no information on the subject whatsoever.

INLAND REVENUE—CUSTOMS OFFICERS FOR BONDED WAREHOUSES.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, In how many ports in Great Britain and Ireland could the present staff of Customs officers take over the bonded warehouses at present in charge of the Inland Revenue; what saving, if any, would be thereby effected, including the salary and travelling expenses allowed to the Inland Revenue officers; what increased charge would be incurred by the Customs in promoting certain of the officers from one grade to the other in order to do the work; and, whether a saving would be effected in any one port or ports should a transfer of houses from the Inland Revenue to the Customs be made in the said port or ports?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): It has been the policy of successive Boards of Treasury to do away, as far as possible, with duplicate warehousing establishments in the same town, and advantage will be taken of any opportunities which may occur of carrying this policy into effect. It is, however, questionable whether any further action in this direction is possible without an entire amalgamation of the two Services. On the whole, more transfers have been made from the Customs to the Inland Revenue than *vice versâ.*

INDIA—MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACT.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What steps have been taken to extend the Merchandize Marks Act to India; and, with what result?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The extension of the Merchandize Marks Act to India was suggested to the Government of India in July, 1887. The matter is still under consideration.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—EXPENDITURE ON RAILWAYS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the cost of the railways to and beyond Quettah are charged to loans and excluded from the Revenue Account; if so, whether the amount is included among ordinary loans or classed with productive Railway Loans?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The cost of the Quettah Railways is charged to loans and excluded from Revenue Account. It is classed as "capital outlay on railways and irrigation works." The technical term "productive" was abandoned in 1884, on the recommendation of a Committee of the House of Commons.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL gave Notice that he would take the earliest opportunity of calling attention to the utterly misleading character of the Indian Accounts.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DURRUS PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to *The Cork Herald*, in which appears the report of a case heard at Durrus Petty Sessions on Saturday, where four men were charged with attacking a dwelling-house; whether Mr. Warburton, R.M., refused to allow evidence for the defence unless the defendants or their solicitor would pay, or guarantee to pay, for depositions about being taken; whether it is customary to require this; and, by what authority such a demand was made?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): I have applied for information as to what occurred at the Petty Sessions on the occasion referred to in regard to the Question of the hon. Member; but owing to the absence from home of the Resident Magistrate I have not yet obtained it. If the hon. Member puts his Question to me to-morrow, I hope to be able to answer him.

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS—EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the examination of candidates for Civil Service appointments, which was fixed for January last, has not yet been held; whether, in consequence of the postponement of such examination, candidates nearing the superior limit of age will, if that limit is exceeded, be disqualified, and thereby deprived of the chance of entering the Public Service; and, whether the date of the next examination is yet fixed; and, if so, for what date?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: If the hon. Member refers, as appears to be the case, to examinations for Lower Division clerkships, I have to say that no such examination was fixed for January last, and none was held, because it was found that none was required. No date has been fixed for the next examination, which must depend on the number of vacancies which arise, and also whether the vacancies can be filled by transfer from any Department where the staff may be in excess of the requirements.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC—THE LOYALTY ISLANDS—EXPULSION OF THE REV. JOHN JONES.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the expulsion of the Reverend John Jones by the French from Maré, one of the Loyalty Islands, where he has laboured for over 30 years as a successful Christian missionary; and, if he has any information to show whether Mr. Jones was expelled because he was a Protestant?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): As soon as it had been reported by Her Majesty's Consul that the Rev. Mr. Jones had been expelled from the Loyalty Islands inquiries were made through the Ambassador at Paris as to the cause. No positive answer has yet been received from the French Government; but it has been stated that Mr. Jones had carried on an anti-French propaganda in the Loyalty Islands, hoping for their annexation to Australia, and that he had been warned by the Governor of New Caledonia to desist from interference in political affairs.

MR. JOHNSTON asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would lay the Papers on the Table?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, that an answer had not yet been received from the French Government. When it was received he should be happy to communicate with his hon. Friend.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — PRACTICAL ELEMENTARY SCIENCE.

MR. HUBBARD (Bucks, N.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, If the Education Department would consider the possibility of encouraging the teaching of practical elementary science, by formulating courses of object lessons for infant schools and classes (as allowed by Art. 106, b (2), and Art. 109, f (1) of the Code of 1887), which would have a direct bearing on the industries of different districts—*e.g.*, lessons on common plants, animals, birds, and "noxious insects," for agricultural districts; on fish and tides, for districts on the sea coast; on earths and minerals, for mining districts, &c.; and, whether the Department would make the adoption of such courses of lessons a condition for obtaining the highest merit grant?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): It is not the practice of the Department to interfere with the freedom of managers and teachers, so far as to formulate courses of lessons; but if my hon. Friend will refer to Section 8 of the Revised Instructions, he will see that teachers are now directly encouraged to adapt the object lessons given to the circumstances of the district; and the Inspector in estimating the merit grant would naturally take this point into consideration. The object my hon. Friend has in view is an admirable one, and I may add that those who wish to give practical effect to his suggestions, so far as agriculture is concerned, will find themselves greatly assisted by some excellent diagrams published by the Royal Agricultural Society for the purpose.

CRIMINAL LAW—RELEASE OF GEORGE BEASELEY, A CONVICT.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether a free pardon has lately been granted to the convict, George Beaseley; whether he was sentenced to death for murder in 1872, and on account of the insufficient evidence against him was reprieved and condemned instead to penal servitude for life; and, whether he has now been released with a free pardon on the ground that he was innocent, or for what other reason?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; it is not the fact that a free pardon has been granted to the convict Beaseley. In 1872 he was, with three other men, concerned in a murderous affray and sentenced to death. The Secretary of State at that time, with the concurrence of the learned Judge who tried the prisoners, commuted the sentences of Beaseley and of a prisoner named Rice to penal servitude for life, on the ground that one of them was only 18 and the other was not sober, and neither of them, although aiding and abetting in the affray, had taken so active a part in it as the other two men who were executed. Beaseley and Rice have now been released on licence at a period somewhat earlier than is usual in commuted life sentences; their own good conduct in prison, and the improved state of the district in respect of crimes of violence, having led me to think that this course was consistent with the ends of justice.

PENSIONS—CIVIL LIST OF GEORGE III.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any, and if so how many, persons are still drawing pensions from the Consolidated Fund in virtue of having been, so far back as the year 1820, already on the Civil List of His Majesty King George III.; and, what are the ages of the oldest and the youngest of such persons?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Six pensions still remain open which were formerly on the Civil List of King George III., the ages of the recipients, so far as known, ranging from 75 to 92 years. These pensions are only paid on production of a life certificate, and in one of the cases this has not been produced for more than a year, and in another for nearly three years; it is, therefore, possible that the list may be now reduced to four.

POST OFFICE—SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office Savings Bank business has largely increased during the last few months; whether a considerable increase of the Staff is now, or will shortly be, required; whether an Extra Duty Staff of 380 clerks has been working 11 hours a day since 5th January; and, whether he proposes to introduce the seven hours' system into the Savings Bank Department?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I am glad to say that the business of the Post Office Savings Bank Department continues to show a satisfactory increase every year; but the increase last year was not of an exceptional nature, nor very much in excess of that of the previous year. It is probable that some addition to the staff will shortly be required, and the matter is now under consideration. As regards the extra duty alluded to by the hon. Member, I wish to explain that the annual computation of interest, and the preparation of the annual balance-sheet, must be completed during the first quarter of the year, and this always necessitates a large amount of extra duty during that period. If the staff were so increased as to obviate the necessity for extra duty at this time, it would be far in excess of the requirements of the Department during the remaining nine months of the year. I may add that extra duty is not compulsory in any case, and that the daily amount is not allowed to exceed five hours. The question of introducing the seven hours' system in the Savings Bank, or in any Department of the Civil Service, is one for the consideration of the Treasury, to whom I have reported on the subject.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that in certain Departments in which the Saturday half-holiday is allowed to Higher and Lower Division Clerks, the same privilege had for many years been also allowed, without loss of pay, to the Civil Service Writers engaged therein; but that in consequence of a Treasury Circular issued to the Heads of Departments such privilege had been recently withdrawn from the Writers, but not from the Higher and Lower Division Clerks; and, if so, whether the Government could hold out any hope to amend the present Regulations, or give such instructions as will restore or extend to Writers employed in Departments in which the Saturday half-holiday is observed, the same privilege regarding such half-holiday as is at present enjoyed by Higher and Lower Division Clerks?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I do not know the cases to which the hon. Member refers, for the Treasury has laid down no Regulations which recognize the principle of the Saturday half-holiday. If the hon. Member will let me know the Departments to which he refers, I will ascertain the facts.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE 9·2-INCH GUNS.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to a letter of Mr. Carbutt, President of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, in last Friday's *Times*, in which he states that the A-tube or liner of every one of the new 9·2-inch guns which has been sent to proof has split; that one of the guns which had passed the proof, and was lying on the wharf for shipment to one of our Colonies, when lifted showed a crack, not in the liner but in the jacket, the whole length of the gun; that a gun was lately ordered from one department, and a carriage (Vavasseur) from another; the size and weight of the gun were given to the constructors of the carriage, so that the carriage might be constructed and balanced accordingly; when the two were brought together it was found that the gun was five tons heavier than had been stated to the makers of the carriage, which had, in consequence, to be re-constructed at a cost of upwards of £500; whether all or any of these statements are correct; and, if not, whether he will state the actual facts; whether it is the case that the 9·2-inch guns were manufactured at Woolwich, and what was their number; and, whether he will prepare and present to the House a statement of the cost of repairing and re-constructing defective new guns manufactured at Woolwich, including the re-construction of the 43-ton guns which have been, or are to be, returned?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Since this Question has been on the Paper I have read the letter of Mr. Carbutt. None of the statements quoted appear to be correct. In answer to the first statement, I may say that 26 9.2-inch breech-loading guns having their liners inside have been sent to proof, of which 25 are being made in the Royal Gun Factory. Of these none have split the A-tubes, as stated; but five have split their liners. This accident is not one of any danger, and many rounds can be fired subsequently without injury to the gun. But the question of these liners is a new one, and is offering to all makers of these guns some unexpected difficulty. In answer to the second statement, no gun ready to be shipped to the Colonies was found to be cracked, still less from end to end, but a crack was found in the hoop over the breech of one gun before the completion of proof. In answer to the third statement, I cannot trace any such occurrence as that mentioned. As my attention has been called to Mr. Carbutt's letter, I should like to say that he is quite in error in describing the position of the Ordnance Factories. The Director General is quite independent of the Military Authorities, and is responsible to the Financial Secretary and to myself. As regards the Return asked for, I may say that no new type guns have been re-constructed; and the 43-ton guns were converted to Army use, having previously been naval wrought-iron guns without trunnions, and were lined and chase-hooped.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked, if the independent testing department had yet been established?

MR. E. STANHOPE: Yes, Sir; it has been established, and will be in full working order almost directly.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DURRUS PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Somers H. Payne, J.P., adjudicated at the Durrus Petty Sessions, County Cork, on the 18th instant; whether Messieurs J. W. Payne, J. E. Barrett, Somers H. Payne, William S. Bird, and Captain Thomas Somerville, Justices of the Peace for the County of Cork, attended to dispose of cases at the Skibbereen Quarter

Sessions; whether Mr. Charles V. Handcock, J.P., Castletown Bere, adjudicates at the Bantry Quarter Sessions; whether these Petty Sessions districts were respectively chosen by the above-named gentlemen when they were appointed to the Commission of the Peace; and, if not, whether they will be prohibited from attending in future to hear and dispose of cases outside of their Petty Sessions districts; and, whether he will state the names of the Petty Sessions districts for which the above-named gentlemen were appointed?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I have not been able to get the information which will enable me to reply to this Question. I would ask the hon. Gentleman to defer the Question until this day week.

BURMAH (UPPER)—OPIUM AND LIQUOR LICENCES.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can now inform the House whether any, and what, licences for the sale of intoxicating spirits, and any, and what, licences for the sale of opium, have been granted in Upper Burmah since the annexation of that country; what action has been taken by Her Majesty's Government of India with respect to these licences, into which they promised, in August last, to inquire; and, when the Returns relating to licences in Upper Burmah for the sale of intoxicating liquors and of spirits, in respect of which Addresses were agreed to by the House on the 19th and 22nd August, 1887, will be presented?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): In accordance with the statement made by me in August last, a despatch was sent to the Government of India by the Secretary of State; but the information asked for has not yet been received. The attention of the Government of India has again been called to the matter.

MR. BRYCE, considering the answer of the hon. Gentleman, gave Notice that he should take an early opportunity of calling attention to the inordinate delay which occurred in obtaining information from the Government of India.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT) — CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE—PROMOTION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Postmaster General, with reference to the system of promotion in the Central Telegraph Office, Whether he can state how many Provincial clerks have been promoted to London since 1st January, 1882; how many of these clerks junior, in date of appointment, have been placed over the heads of London clerks senior, in date of appointment; how many of these appointments have been made since 1st March last; whether he is aware of the continuance of this system of promotion, considering the statement made by him on the subject in March last; and, whether it is his intention to continue this system of promotion?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that since the 1st of January, 1882, 84 telegraphists have been transferred from the country to London; that out of this number eight have been promoted in advance of London telegraphists of equal or longer service; and that all these promotions have taken place since the 1st of March of last year. The 84 telegraphists, most of whom have been brought to London at a time of extreme pressure, and who were all transferred in the direct interest of the Service, were incorporated into the London Establishment according to their qualifications and pay; and in the case of the eight to whose promotion the hon. Member refers, it happened, owing to the fact of their having joined the Department as skilled telegraphists, that both their qualifications and pay were higher than those of their Metropolitan colleagues of equal service who had joined as learners direct from the School of Telegraphy.

SCOTCH BANKRUPTCY LAWS — IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT—LEGISLATION.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, when replying to a recent deputation on the Scotch Bankruptcy Laws, he is correctly reported to have stated—

> "With regard to the [draft] Bill relating to imprisonment for debt he might say he hoped

to do something during the present Session;"

whether the draft Bill re-enacted imprisonment for civil debt in Scotland; whether he is aware that imprisonment for civil debt was abolished in Scotland after careful inquiry at the hands of a Select Committee of this House; and, whether, if he contemplates the re-enactment of imprisonment for debt in any form in Scotland, he will undertake to bring forward his proposal in the form of a Bill avowedly dealing with the subject, and not in the form of an Amendment proposed at a later stage of some general measure?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The quotation of the hon. Member is correct, subject to this—that I distinctly declined to give any pledge. The Bill which was laid before me proposed to authorize the Court to imprison debtors if they, not being able to show inability to pay debt, wilfully disobeyed an order of the Court ordaining them to do so. I am aware that imprisonment for debt was abolished, and that very great evil has resulted from its being absolutely abolished without any safeguard against contumacious refusal to pay debts by persons having means. I can give no undertaking as to what course will be followed when this matter is dealt with.

DR. CAMERON asked, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would bring forward the matter in a Bill, and not slip it in a later stage; because every Bill that he brought forward——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SPECIAL FEES.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether fees or gratuities, varying from £1 to £3, are annually allowed to teachers by the National Board of Education in Ireland for the special extra instruction given to paid monitors; and, did the monitorial year end 30th June last, and, although the Commissioners then intimated by Circular to managers that such gratuities would be paid within three months, is it a fact that many have not yet been paid, and what is the cause of the delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The National Education Commissioners desire me to answer this Question in the affirmative. The delay is due to the fact that a number of paid monitors have failed to pass their examination within the prescribed time. The Commissioners have brought the matter under the notice of the Irish Government, with a view to obtaining the sanction of the Treasury to such an arrangement as will meet the difficulty.

INDIAN CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT (ACT XIV. OF 1868); AND CANTONMENT ACTS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he is now prepared to inform the House as to what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken for securing the repeal of the Indian Contagious Diseases Act (Act XIV. of 1868), and of the similar Regulations in force under the Cantonment Acts?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): A despatch on Indian contagious diseases was, as I stated to the House last Session, sent by the Secretary of State to the Government of India last year. On January 7 a telegram was received from that Government to say that the question was under consideration by them in communication with the Local Governments, whose opinions might shortly be expected, and that in all probability a despatch would be sent home in that month. The despatch has not yet been received, but is expected.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — MILTON ABBAS SCHOOL; BLANDFORD, DORSETSHIRE.

MR. PORTMAN (Dorsetshire, N.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, If he can state whether any progress has been made since the end of last Session towards the re-opening of the Milton Abbas School, Blandford, for boys, in accordance with the wish of the inhabitants of that town and district; and, if he can inform him as to the present attitude of the Charity Commissioners with regard to the matter?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The scheme of the Commissioners in regard to Milton Abbas School has been disapproved; and I presume there is no legal impediment to the re-opening of the school by the Trustees, subject to any new scheme the Commissioners may in future propose.

"MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT"—INDEX TO THE RETURN.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Index to the Return "Members of Parliament," ordered by the House in April last, will be ready?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: I am informed by the Deputy Keeper of Public Records that that portion of this Index which relates to the first volume of the Return will be passed for the press in about six weeks' time. The whole Index is said to be completed; and the printing of the Index to the second volume will be undertaken as soon as the type used for the first volume becomes available. My hon. Friend will find further information concerning this Index at page viii. of the 48th Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper.

SUGAR BOUNTIES—THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Mr. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the International Conference relating to State Sugar Bounties will meet on the 5th of April next; when the Papers which have been already promised relating to this subject will be presented to Parliament, and whether those Papers will include the communications from Foreign Governments received by the British Government subsequent to the adjournment of the Conference; whether he can give the House any information as to the views of the bounty-giving Governments which he has lately visited—namely, France, Belgium, Germany, and Holland; and, whether there is ground to believe that this State bounty system, which has proved so injurious to many industries of this country, is likely to be brought to a termination?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The next meeting of the International Congress on State Sugar Bounties is fixed for the 5th of April, and I have every reason to think it will re-assemble in London on that day. Papers relating to the subject are in the hands of the printer, and will be circulated very shortly. They do not include communications received from Foreign Governments since the adjournment of the Conference, as those communications are not complete. The Minutes of the Conference, together with the Protocol and Draft Convention, were published in a special *Gazette* of the 23rd of December, and will be laid on the Table of the House forthwith. The hon. Member will, I am sure, see that it would not be advisable, in view of the fact that communications are now passing between the various Governments named on the subject of the bounties, and that the Conference is to re-assemble at so early a date, for me to enter into a detailed statement of the personal communications that have taken place between myself and the Ministers of the various Powers referred to, further than to say that the views I conveyed to them have been most fairly received and fully considered, and encourage the hope that a satisfactory settlement of the question may be arrived at when the Conference re-assembles.

NORTH AMERICAN FISHERIES—THE TREATY.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When he will lay the Fisheries Treaty upon the Table.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): As soon as possible after it has been received.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON asked, whether the contents of the Treaty had not been communicated by telegraph?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: Yes, they have reached this country by telegraph; but it is manifest that we could not lay a despatch on the Table which we only know by telegraph.

CRIMINAL LAW — SENTENCES OF FLOGGING AT LIVERPOOL ASSIZES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, If he can state the statute under which Mr. Justice Grantham, at Liverpool Assizes, on

Tuesday, sentenced two men, aged 41 and 34 respectively, to be flogged; and, whether the learned Judge is correctly reported to have stated that he inflicted the punishment "under an old Act of George IV., overlooked by Judges."

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) asked, whether recent legislation did not confine the punishment of flogging to certain offences; and, whether the Attorney General would not undertake to bring in a Bill to repeal the old statute referred to?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The statute under which Mr. Justice Grantham sentenced the men in question was 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV. c. 28. Upon Notice of the Question I communicated with Mr. Justice Grantham, and have just heard from him that the report that he had stated that the statute had been overlooked by the Judges is not correct. He informs me that from inquiries made from the prison authorities he found that short sentences with the application of the "cat" had been most effectual in clearing the streets and the gaols of men who committed robbery with violence; and that he desired to call attention to the fact that this statute could, in his opinion, be used with advantage in the case of habitual criminals of the class to which these men belonged. As, however, there were several other prisoners charged with similar offences, he had the two men in question recalled, and sentenced them to terms of imprisonment in lieu of the sentences previously inflicted. I am unable to answer the Question of the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Powell Williams) without Notice.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, in these cases there was no charge of robbery with violence.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER remarked that he had not stated there was.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—JUVENILE CONVICTS.

Mr. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of children under 17 years of age convicted in Ireland from June 1886, till the present date, stating (1) names; (2) ages; (3) sentence; (4) on what charge convicted; (5) under what Act of Parliament convicted?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government has no objection to give this Return, if the hon. Member moves for it.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any Report has been made by the Royal Commissioners on Education concerning Technical Education; and, if so, whether there is any objection to laying it upon the Table?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I have reason to believe that among other important subjects that of technical education will be dealt with in the Report of the Royal Commission on Education. Whether any Report upon this branch of education has been finally adopted I am unable to say.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE RECOVERY—LEGISLATION.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he is able to state when the Government propose to bring in the Tithe Rent-Charge Recovery Bill; and, whether it is their intention to introduce it into the House of Commons or House of Lords?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Tithe Rent-Charge Bill will be introduced shortly in the House of Lords. I cannot say whether it will reach the Commons before Easter.

THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS—THE REPORT.

Mr. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can inform the House when the Report of the Boundary Commissioners will be laid upon the Table of the House?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must refer the hon. Member to the answer to a similar Question on the 10th instant, and it is not in my power to state when the Report of the Boundary Commissioners will be presented.

MR. R. T. GUNTON, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Mr. R. T. Gunton is the Private Secretary of the Prime Minister; and, whether any Vote for the salary of Mr. R. T. Gunton will be asked in the Estimates for the current year?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Mr. R. T. Gunton, I am informed, is Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, and no Vote for Mr. Gunton's salary has been obtained in the past, or will be asked for in the Estimates for the current year. He is employed, and paid privately, by the Marquess of Salisbury, and has been for some years with him.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he was now able to state when the Government proposed to introduce the most important measure of the Session—the County Government Bill?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): It will be introduced at the very earliest day possible after we have considered the necessary Supplementary Estimates, which must be taken by the 15th of March.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether to-morrow the precedent of last year would be followed, and a general discussion allowed on the New Rules of Procedure, or whether they would go at once to Rule No. 1?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I should be reluctant to enter upon a general discussion of the Rules; because I am under the impression that the general discussion which we had last year sufficiently elucidated the question on which the judgment of the House will be asked by the Government. The introduction of new matter is very small; and I hope it is new matter which will generally receive the assent of the House without much delay.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I venture to put a request to the right hon. Gentleman, that he will not consider that as a final answer. I am under the impression that our general discussion last year was of a very controversial character indeed; and I am not at all sure that it is expedient that it should be treated as an introduction to the discussion of the Rules this year. I think it is almost a matter of necessity that where there are a great number of independent proposals an opportunity, however limited, should be allowed for stating our views as a whole. I should be less disposed to make this representation to the right hon. Gentleman were it not for the fact that I really believe that it will conduce to the progress of Public Business.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I shall be most anxious to take any course which will conduce to the progress of Public Business, and the Motion which I shall have to make at half-past 4 to-morrow will permit, no doubt, of some little latitude in dealing with that question; but I am most reluctant to enter upon a discussion which shall only be repeated when we come to discuss particular Rules.

In reply to Sir Bernhard Samuelson, (Oxfordshire, Banbury),

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.) said, that he was afraid that the Railway Rates Bill would not come on for discussion in that House for some little time.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Speaker, whether, on the Motion referred to by the First Lord of the Treasury, it would be open to Members to go into the general discussion of the Rules of Procedure?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think it would be relevant to go into a general discussion of the Rules on the Motion to give precedence to their consideration; but the House might adopt the course which it adopted last year, and if such should be its pleasure I shall make no objection from the Chair. I would only remark that the Rules are, for the most part, independent one of another.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the case of the recent reversals of the Crimes Act decisions of Resident Magistrates by the Court of Exchequer, the Government will agree to pay the costs of the prisoners? because, if not, those poor people, although they may have escaped some portion of the imprisonment to which they had been sentenced, would be still subject to a very heavy fine in the payment of the costs of appeal. In one of those cases where a man was discharged after a fortnight's imprisonment very heavy costs were incurred, and the Court gave him no costs. In the case of Mr. Walsh the costs of the argument in the Court above were given to him; but the prisoner incurred heavy costs in the Court below, for which no provision had been made by the Crown. I wish to ask whether the Government intend to pay the costs of the defendants in these cases where the decision of the Court below has been reversed, and where the prisoner has escaped the sentence that had been awarded?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): If the hon. and learned Gentleman will give me proper Notice of the Question by putting it upon the Paper I will give him an answer; but it is not a Question I could answer at short Notice.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he intended further to employ, under the Coercion Act, the Resident Magistrates whose decisions had been reversed on appeal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Certainly, Sir.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked whether the Lord Lieutenant was still satisfied with their legal knowledge?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH—THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I wish to ask the indulgence of the House for a very few moments, that I may say a word or two in the nature of a personal explanation. In the debate last week I mentioned the names of five Resident Magistrates, and stated that, so far as my information went, they were gentlemen of whom considerable complaint had been made. My reason for referring to them was in order that I might make an observation which I did add to the words which I have cited—that they were gentlemen not one of whom had been appointed by Earl Spencer. I find that a misapprehension has gone abroad that I had intended to adopt the complaints made of those five gentlemen. I desire to say that I had no such intention. I must leave these complaints to be tried on their own merits. Not having had any opportunity of examining them myself, so as to justify either my affirming or denying them, I wish it to be distinctly understood that they were quite independent of the limited purpose I had in view, which was to observe that Earl Spencer was not responsible for the original appointment of these gentlemen.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.—REPORT.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read for Further Proceedings on Report of Address [22nd February].

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ARREARS.—RESOLUTION.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central), in rising to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, said: My excuse for intervening is that what I am about to say will raise many questions which are not included in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). Before dealing with these special matters, I shall ask the permission of the House to say a few words on the statistics of prosecutions and convictions under the Coercion Act, and their special bearing upon the questions of evictions and arrears of rent. I have in my hand a Return prepared in Ireland, giving details of the various convictions under the Coercion Act. The Return is prepared in the form asked for the other night and refused by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). It gives all the details of the convictions, and also the names of the Resident Magistrates who tried the cases. The Return is not altogether complete, because it is framed on the accounts given in the newspapers of these convictions, and it does not contain a good many cases which were not reported. But, such as it is, it is very interesting, and worthy of the attention of the House. The Return shows, first, what a very rapid progress there has been in the number of prosecutions and convictions under the Act. The Act has been in force about five months. I find that during the first three months the number of prosecutions amounted to 33; during the third and fourth month they were 90 each month; in the fifth month they were 190; and if the prosecutions continue at the same rate during the rest of the present month as during the portion of it that is passed—three weeks—they will have reached the number of 270 for the month, showing, as I have said, the very rapid and progressive increase in the number of prosecutions and convictions, and showing, too, that the Act has not exercised any deterrent effect, but rather the very opposite. On looking at the class of cases, I find one-third could not be considered crimes—that is to say, they would not be considered crimes in any other part of the Kingdom except under the Coercion Act. One-third of the cases also arose out of resistance to bailiffs. Although these would be crimes under the ordinary law, the Coercion Act has withdrawn them from trial by jury and submitted them to the jurisdiction of Resident Magistrates, and I venture to think that if they had been left to juries in a great number of cases no jury in the Kingdom would have convicted. Many women and children have been convicted under the Act in respect of resistance to bailiffs. I have examined most of the cases of resistance to bailiffs, and I find, almost without exception, that they have arisen out of eviction for arrears of rents which had been presumably unjust and excessive, and I do not hesitate to say that if the Land Act, passed by this House last year, had dealt with the arrears question in a just and generous way, not one of these cases of resistance to bailiffs would have occurred. I will go further, and say that if the Act had dealt properly and sufficiently with the arrears question; if it had dealt with the arrears question in the way recommended by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in his speech at Cheltenham; and if Irish Members were left to manage Irish business in the same way in which Scotch Members managed Scotch affairs, nine out of every 10 of these cases of evictions would not have occurred. If the House examines these cases of resistance to bailiffs, it will find that almost every one of them has a connection directly or indirectly with evictions for rents which the agricultural depression of the last few years has rendered excessive. There seems to be a curious sequence in all these cases. They begin with threatened evictions in some districts, then one of the popular leaders goes down and makes a speech, advising to resist eviction, and he is prosecuted for it. Then, again, a batch of people present at the meeting are prosecuted and sent to prison. When the popular leader is sent to prison, the police are gathered from every part to escort him to prison, demonstrations take place on the way, and further batches of people are sent to prison for these demonstrations. Then the police are Boycotted—that is to say, they are not supplied with liquor by the publicans or with turf by the peasants. Then a further batch of people are sent to prison. Then the evictions take place, and a further batch of prisoners is the result. The popular leader or some other of the prisoners come out of prison and there are demonstrations, and a further batch of people are sent to prison for lighting bonfires or for carrying tar barrels. Thus we see that nearly all the cases under the Act have directly or indirectly a connection with evictions. I am sorry to say that we have not yet got near the end of this question of evictions. All the evictions which have taken place during the last five months have been in respect of ejectment decrees obtained before the passing of the Land Act of last year, or in respect of holdings the tenants' interest in which had been sold before the passing of that Act. The effect of the Act has been to delay evictions, and not to put a stop to them. I find from a Return laid before the House of Commons that there were no fewer than 3,325 notices under the Act of last year served on tenants against whom ejectments have been obtained under that Act, and these tenants are, therefore, merely caretakers, for their interest in their holdings has been destroyed by these notices being served on them. They are subject to a right of redemption for a certain period on payment of the full rent and costs, and if they are not able to pay in a very short time the landlord will be able to evict them with the greatest possible ease. How many cases there have been where ejectment decrees have been obtained, but where notices have not yet been served under the Act of last year, and which are ripening into evictions I do not know, but I believe there are hundreds and thousands of them, and taking the two classes of cases together, there must be an enormous number ripening into evictions in a very short time which will give the right hon. Gentleman, I fear, a great deal of trouble and result in other prosecutions and convictions. The provision of the Act of last year, which was intended to give some relief by spreading the payment of arrears over a term, has been completely nugatory and useless. Indeed, it has been so proclaimed by many of the County Court Judges themselves. The great bulk of the County Court Judges have spread the arrears only over one year. That is practically an entirely useless and nugatory proceeding, so far as the tenant is concerned. I will mention one case as an illustration of this. There was a poor widow woman in Mayo whose rent was £40 a-year. She owed arrears of two and a-half years' rent, or £100. She went into the Land Court and got her rent reduced to £25. The landlord took proceedings against her for the nonpayment of £100 arrears. The Judge said that this was decidedly a case in which the claim should be reduced. The counsel for the landlord said he had no power to give an abatement, and the Judge then said he could not give an abatement himself, but he made an order spreading the payment of the arrears over 14 months. What relief, I ask, was that for the poor widow? I find that, generally speaking, the tenants have been reluctant to apply to the Court to have their arrears spread over a term, as they think it is quite useless. I think I can best illustrate the effect of the Act of last year in respect of arrears by dealing with the case of the Clanricarde property. The Clanricarde case is of great importance, not only on account of the enormous area of the property and its large number of tenants—about 1,900—but because it is practically a typical case of a certain class of landlords. It is one which will decide the case of the action of the landlords in a great many cases, and if Lord Clanricarde succeeds in the policy he has now at heart, and is enabled to evict his tenants with the aid of the forces of the Crown, I venture to think it will be an evil day for many thousands of tenants, and will be followed by evictions in other parts of Ireland. The case is also an ideal one—I mean ideal in the worst sense of the term, and not in its best—of an absentee landlord. Lord Clanricarde I dare say may be an exceedingly amiable man in private life and in society in London, but the great mistake he makes is in endeavouring to manage his property in every detail from London without knowing anything whatever of the condition of the people, and without ever visiting the property; for I believe he has not been seen there since he came into possession 14 years ago. He undertakes to manage his property from London in every detail, and allows no discretion to the agent, careless of the danger that gentleman incurs. His Lordship was even unable to understand the legal effect of the offer he made to his tenants, or the legal position of his tenants. For my part my connection with the district does not date from the past few months. I visited it in 1882 at the suggestion of the late Mr. Forster, when it was the most disturbed district in Ireland. A great many most terrible agrarian crimes had been committed in the districts of Woodford and Loughrea. There was almost war between the landlords and tenants. Many of the principal tenants and citizens of Loughrea and Woodford were imprisoned as suspects under the Coercion Act, which was then in force, without, I have reason to believe, a tittle of evidence against them, but because in the opinion of some landlord in the district it was desirable that they should be put out of the way. I myself made a careful inquiry in the district, and I came to the conclusion that, terrible as were the crimes committed on the one hand, there were also great crimes committed on the other; that a great many of the landlords were pressing their tenants most harshly and cruelly in respect of arrears of rent that had accumulated in the bad years of 1879 and 1880; that the Coercion Act was aggravating the position between landlords and tenants and doing more harm than good; that the true way of dealing with the difficulty was to pass an Arrears Act, and so I advised the late Chief Secretary, Mr. Forster, when I returned to this country. Very shortly after I left the district another terrible crime took place. Lord Clanricarde had declined to make an abatement of rent to any of his tenants during the period of agricultural depression. He had stated publicly that he would not press his tenants for their full rents, but that he would take what they could pay and would allow the remainder to go to arrears according to the vicious practice of that estate. In spite of this, I am sorry to say that the agent pressed the tenants severely and cruelly, and the result was that some miserable man took a terrible revenge, and the agent was murdered. The widow of the agent, wishing to vindicate the reputation of her husband, desired to publish his letters for the purpose of showing that he acted entirely on the instructions of the landlord and against his own judgment. Lord Clanricarde obtained an injunction in the Courts of Law to restrain her from publishing these documents. Very shortly after the Arrears Act was passed, and that relieved the district of a great many of its agricultural difficulties. In the years 1883 and 1884 as much as £47,000 was paid by the tenants to Lord Clanricarde, which, I believe, was an amount far larger, in proportion to the rental, than was obtained by any other landlord in Ireland or England during the same years. I must take this opportunity of saying that, from information I have been able to gather, the tenants of this property have had a reputation for honesty and for a willingness to pay their just debts so long as they have been able to do so. In 1886 there arose another serious agricultural depression, and most of the landlords of the better class gave abatements amounting to 25 and 30 per cent. Lord Clanricarde, notwithstanding the recommendation of his agent, Mr. Joyce, declined to give any reduction, and reprimanded his agent for forwarding to him a petition from the tenants. [The right hon. Gentleman then related the proceedings that led up to the resignation of Mr. Joyce and the libel action which followed, and then continued.] Before the resignation of Mr. Joyce, the agent, evictions against the tenants commenced, and the tenants combined for the purpose of resisting the proceedings. I think it is of importance for the House to recollect that this was the first case of combination of tenants in Ireland. It was a purely spontaneous one. I believe I am right in saying the National League had nothing to do with it, and for my part I must repeat here what I said a few days ago at Loughrea in presence of the Government reporter—with a full sense of the responsibility—that I was unable to see how, except by combination, a body of tenants of the class and character of the Clanricarde tenants could possibly protect themselves from a landlord like Lord Clanricarde—a man who was invisible and unapproachable, and who never even answered their petitions asking for an abatement in combination. From that moment the combination began. It is also worthy of notice that since the commencement of this combination the district has been perfectly free from crime and outrage of any kind. I need not tell the House all the story of the evictions which followed, how the houses were barricaded and resistance was offered, how a vast body of police was gathered together at great cost to the State, and how the large number of 75 young men, of blameless character, were sent to prison on the charge of resisting the evictions, and remained there four months before trial; how they were convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from 12 to 18 months with hard labour, some of them losing their health in prison through overcrowding, and one of them dying there, owing, as the Coroner's inquest found, to the neglect and cruelty of the prison authorities. It is necessary to know these things in order to understand the feeling of the people in Ireland. But the resistance to those evictions had its effect, because it roused public opinion and showed the true character of the proceedings of Lord Clanricarde. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, late Chief Secretary for Ireland—now President of the Board of Trade—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, when he heard the details of these evictions, found that he could not any longer use the forces of the Crown to support them; and he wrote a letter to Lord Clanricarde such as no Minister in this country ever addressed to a private landlord before, complaining of his conduct and intimating to him that, unless he was prepared to make abatements similar to those made by other Irish landlords, the forces of the Crown could not be lent to enforce evictions on his property. That letter did honour to the right hon. Gentleman's heart, though at some expense to his candour towards the House, because I understand the right hon. Gentleman to have denied in the House that he had ever exercised any pressure on the landlords in that direction.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I beg to state—as the right hon. Gentleman puts it to me—that I remember that he made a similar statement in a letter to the public Press, but he did not quote the words I used in this House. I deny that I have ever denied anything I have said or done in this House.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I concur in the main with the right hon. Gentleman's conduct. But certainly the impression on my mind is that the right hon. Gentleman disclaimed in this House having exercised any very strong pressure on the landlords or refused to put the forces of the Crown in motion to support evictions. But, however that might be, the House had not been fully informed of the action of the right hon. Gentleman. In consequence of the letter written to Lord Clanricarde by the right hon. Gentleman, Lord Clanricarde did make some offers of abatement. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman was not satisfied with that offer, because he declined to express any opinion whether it was sufficient, and for many months no further action was taken by the Government in support of Lord Clanricarde, or in lending the aid of the forces of the Crown to enforce evictions on his property. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman did not then remain much longer in Office; and, after a time, a considerable change of policy took place. I charge against the present right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that he has completely altered the policy of his Predecessor, who declined to lend the forces of the Crown, or at least said that they would not be lent, to enforce those evictions as long as there remained any other business for them.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman in alluding to me to be good enough to quote the language used by me in my letter to Lord Clanricarde or in this House. I abide by everything I have said or written.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have not got the letter by me; but my strong impression is that if the right hon. Gentleman did not actually decline to lend the forces of the Crown, he intimated that there would be such delay in doing so that it practically amounted to much the same thing. Certainly, that was the effect of the letter on my own mind, and it was also its effect on the Chief Baron Palles, who was the Judge in the recent libel case brought by Mr. Joyce, land agent, against his former employer, Lord Clanricarde. The former policy was changed by the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary. After the passing of the Coercion Act, Lord Clanricarde supplied himself with a new agent, and not only did the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary lend the forces of the Crown in support of Lord Clanricarde in further evictions, but also allowed the Coercion Act to be used in all its force and power in supporting Lord Clanricarde against his tenants. In October last further proceedings were taken against the tenants after an interval of nearly 12 months. The new agent, Mr. Tener, commenced proceedings, and had the houses of the evicted tenants razed to the ground, showing thereby the inexorable determination of the landlord not to give way on that point. He also informed the tenants that it was the intention of Lord Clanricarde to spend any amount of money for the purpose of carrying out all the ejectment decrees, and that he would raze to the ground the houses of any tenants who resisted. Stock was seized here and there for rent, and these matters created alarm in the district. A meeting was announced for the 16th of October to protest against the action of Lord Clanricarde. The Government refused to permit any public meeting to be held. Why, I ask, should there have been a prohibition of any public meeting at that time any more than in the present month? The condition of things in this district in February of this year was even more critical than in October; because in February the campaign of evictions was commenced on a far larger scale than in October. In spite of the Proclamation, a meeting was held at midnight. I do not defend all that took place there. Much, no doubt, was said and done which had better been left unsaid and undone; but when the legitimate expression of public opinion was prevented, it was not to be wondered at if the language used was somewhat strong. It had been stated that the burning of the Proclamation was an act of insurrection. That was a ridiculous exaggeration. I call it a mere assertion of the right to hold a meeting, and a simple determination to hold a meeting, notwithstanding the Proclamation. Mr. Blunt was present, and made a very moderate speech; and it was stated by the Judge who tried the recent case at Dublin that Mr. Blunt was not even aware of the burning of the Proclamation, because he was so placed in the house, from the windows of which he made his speech, at the back of the meeting, that he could not see what was done or hear the speeches. Therefore, he was free from all responsibility. That meeting was immediately followed by fresh evictions, than which there could have been nothing more incredibly mean. About 150 policemen stole down the Shannon in boats during the night and landed on its banks just before daybreak, and pounced upon three or four houses and evicted their tenants. One family, consisting of a husband and wife and nine small children, were, without a moment's notice, and without any warning, evicted and cast out upon the road. That man's family had been on the estate 200 years, and yet, in consequence of their inability to pay and the unwillingness of Lord Clanricarde to make an abatement of 25 per cent, they were evicted. Mr. Blunt had gone back to Dublin after the midnight meeting; but when he heard of those evictions he returned to the district, made inquiries into the circumstances, came to the conclusion which everybody else would have come to, that the evictions were unjust and cruel, and desired to hold a meeting to elicit sympathy with the suffering tenants, to express indignation with the action of Lord Clanricarde, and to bid the people be patient and not to commit crime until the attention of Parliament could be called to their case. For my part, I can conceive no more legitimate subject for a public meeting. I said in Dublin, and I now say with full knowledge of the circumstances which occurred, that if I had been there I would myself have held a meeting for the purpose of expressing indignation, and I should not have felt otherwise than proud at being by the side of Mr. Blunt in the dock on a charge for holding such a meeting. This meeting was to be everything which the previous midnight meeting was not; there was no similarity or connection between the two meetings whatever. It was to be held in the daytime and not at midnight; it was to be addressed by Englishmen only, and Mr. Blunt went further in his assurances, and gave his personal assurances to the magistrates that the language which would be used at the meeting would be moderate. I do not see, therefore, why Mr. Blunt should have been prosecuted and convicted, nor why he should be treated now as a malefactor while I myself, after holding a precisely similar meeting, should be at large. I think it is evident from the judgment of Chief Baron Palles that, whatever the learned Judge may have thought about the legality or otherwise of the meeting, he was of opinion that Mr. Blunt had merely committed a technical offence, and that he evidently regretted that such a severe sentence should have been passed. My contention always has been that no jury in the United Kingdom would have convicted Mr. Blunt. Mr. Blunt was convicted only in consequence of the Coercion Act, which enabled such a case to be tried by two Resident Magistrates. After the recent civil action in Dublin it is absolutely certain that even a Special Jury in Dublin would not have convicted Mr. Blunt. The jury in the civil action disagreed, and were unable to find a verdict for the Crown. I have this very day received a letter from Mr. Walker, Q.C., assuring me that it is notorious, and that the jurors were divided in the proportion of 11 in favour of Mr. Blunt and one in favour of the Crown. Having regard to these facts, I must express my surprise that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has continued to keep Mr. Blunt in prison and treat him as a malefactor. Taking the case at its worst, Mr. Blunt only endeavoured to assert his right to hold a public meeting in perfect good faith; and there was no country in the world except Ireland where he would be treated as a common malefactor. He has been deprived of the means of occupying his mind, and his treatment has been as harsh and as cruel as ever disgraced any civilized Government. I went over to the Woodford district to hear Mr. Blunt's appeal, and I found matters even there much worse than I expected. I found that the offer of abatement which had been mentioned by Lord Clanricarde to the President of the Board of Trade had, in fact, never been made to the tenants at all, but that a very much inferior offer was made to them, which it was quite impossible for them to accept. I also found that the Coercion Act was being used by the Local Magistrates in a manner the most arbitrary and the most unjust, and apparently with the sole object of assisting the landlord against the tenants. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will give an explanation of the facts which I shall now bring before the House. For nearly eight weeks after the midnight meeting no notice whatever was taken of it by the authorities; but all at once orders appeared to have been sent down from Dublin to prosecute a dozen men for attending it. They did not prosecute any of the principal speakers at it, nor any of the representatives of English Radical Associations who were there; but 12 men of Woodford, who were merely spectators and listeners, were prosecuted. All the people of Woodford were present at that midnight meeting, and were known to the police, and I will ask upon what principle were these 12 men selected? I have not been able to find out, but the universal opinion of the district is that the selection was made in the interest of the local landlords, and with the view of putting in prison people who had made themselves disagreeable to their interest. One man who was prosecuted and convicted was Mr. Roche, a miller at Woodford. The only part he had taken in the meeting was to move Father Coen to the chair, without saying another word, and then occupied himself in protecting a few police who were there from the chance of violence, an act for which he was publicly thanked on the following day by the Chief Inspector of the police in the district. Yet this very man was, eight weeks later, on the evidence of this very Inspector, convicted of being present at this meeting, and was sentenced to one month's imprisonment. The others were mere spectators, and had taken no active part in the meeting. When the first batch of eight men were tried, the prisoners were suddenly deprived of their counsel by the arrest of the hon. and learned Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) on a bogus charge; the accused asked for an adjournment of their case for a week to enable them to get another counsel; but the magistrates refused to adjourn the case, and sent the eight men to prison for one month. Another man who protected the police was sent to prison, and when he was liberated he was received with a popular demonstration, and 11 persons were sent to prison for various terms of from one to three months for taking part in it. A house three hundred yards away was illuminated. The police entered the house, extinguished the illuminations, and prosecuted the 11 men for intimidating the owner of the house. They were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from one month to three months, and I am told that the owner of the house in question is coming up to say that he was not intimidated at all. But I would like to direct special attention to the case of Mr. Roche, as showing the tyranny which is carried on in this part of the country. Mr. Roche was first sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment for the technical offence of protecting his brother-in-law from an assault by the police. He was next sent to prison for one month for being present at the midnight meeting. Then he was charged with trespass, because he showed Mr. Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt over an evicted farm, and fined with costs; and, fourthly, he was charged with being present at the meeting held to celebrate the return of another person, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. It appears to me that this person, Mr. Roche, is being pursued with gross tyranny simply because he is the secretary of the Tenants' Defence Association, and one of those men whom it is the interest of the landlords to prosecute, put in prison, and punish. An attempt is being made to ruin the man. I would like to mention one more case. The son of a widow named Coen, who was evicted, advised his mother to ask the bailiffs to show their warrant, and on their failing to produce it advised her to remain in her house. He was sent to prison for one month on the charge of inciting his mother to resist eviction. It is really difficult to believe that these things actually take place. The effect which these cases have had upon my mind is to make me believe that many persons are being subjected to the grossest injustice. There is no doubt that some of these persons have made themselves disagreeable to the landlords. From information that has reached me, I have ascertained that, notwithstanding all these cases of hardship and oppression, the tenants of Lord Clanricarde are perfectly willing to come to terms with their landlord. When I first visited the district I made it a special condition that the tenants should accept any reasonable offer that might be made them to settle the difficulty. During the short time that elapsed between my first and second visits, Lord Clanricarde commenced a new ejectment campaign, and issued, I believe, no fewer than 300 processes against his tenants. It was under those circumstances that I had been called upon by the noble Lord's tenants to fulfil my promise to attend the meeting in question. In the address which the tenants had issued they expressed themselves as being ready and willing to assent to any reasonable settlement which might be suggested on the part of the landlord, and based on the principle of a reduction of rent equivalent to that allowed by Irish landlords generally. That offer on the part of the tenants has been steadily refused by the landlord. In answer to that appeal, I went over to Ireland and attended the meeting which has been referred to. It was not for me to defend the action of the Government in permitting that meeting to be held; but had they proclaimed it, I should have been prepared to have held it notwithstanding. I only received the announcement from the police that the meeting would not be interfered with on the morning of the meeting, and the Inspector then asked my advice as to what course the police should adopt. My advice was that the police should be withdrawn altogether, and should be confined to their barracks while the meeting was being held. That advice was literally followed, with the result that no police were present, and the meeting passed off in a most orderly manner. But the most satisfactory result of the announcement of the intention to hold the meeting was that two hours before it was appointed to be held, Lord Clanricarde's agent issued a notice making very great advances upon his previous offers. The offer was made so late that I was unable to take the opinion of the tenants with regard to it before the meeting was held; but in speaking at the meeting, I expressed a hope that the tenants would meet the offer in a conciliatory spirit. The fact that the offer had been made induced me to moderate considerably the language which I should otherwise have used. Since then I have been able to consider the proposal carefully with legal assistance. I consulted on this point one of the ablest men at the Irish Bar—The MacDermot—who is also a considerable landowner in Sligo, and that learned gentleman told me that, in his opinion, the new offer thus made was a nugatory and a mere "lawyer's offer," made rather for show, and not one which the tenants could be expected to accept. No doubt, on the face of it, it was a considerable advance in the shape of abatement, but it was contingent on the tenants paying the whole of the arrears. Not one out of 50 tenants could do that. It was also to apply only to tenancies under £50 a-year other than judicial rents, and nothing was said on the important subject of the re-instatement of evicted tenants. In these circumstances, therefore, I am not at all surprised that, eventually, the tenants have rejected the offer. What I want now to do is to ask the Government what they propose to do? We have to face a very serious conflict in this part of the country. On the one hand we have this wealthy Peer, not dependent on his Irish property, but with vast means elsewhere. On the other hand we have this vast body of tenantry, willing and anxious to come to a just settlement, who are unable to come to terms with their landlord. I venture to hope that this question may still be dealt with by legislation in this House. My belief is that it is impossible to expect an agreement between the landlord and the tenantry of this district, and it is only to legislation that we can look for the purpose of averting a difficulty of a most serious character. I should like to point out to the House a precedent for dealing with this case. An adjoining property to Lord Clanricarde's has recently come under the Landed Estates Courts in Ireland—not the Land Commission—on the petition of the creditors of the owner for sale. On the estate coming under the jurisdiction of the Court it has power to deal with the question of rent and of arrears. The tenants were three years in arrears with their rents, very much as Lord Clanricarde's tenants are, and they applied in a body to the Court for an abatement of those arrears. The Judge of that Court having jurisdiction in the case, after hearing the landlord and his creditors, has given an abatement amounting to 33 per cent of the arrears due, with time for payment. We have here a judicial system of settling the affairs of a property adjoining Lord Clanricarde's, and my confident belief is that a similar settlement imposed by judicial authority would settle this conflict. I would venture again to allude to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. I would venture to suggest to the Government that they should take him into their counsel and should deal with this case on the principle which he had laid down—that they should deal with it in accordance with the wishes of the great majority of the Irish people, just as, when they dealt with the Crofters' Question, they dealt with it in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the Scotch Members. In the crofters' case the Commission had jurisdiction in the case of arrears, and they have swept away 52 per cent of the arrears. My belief is that that is the true way of dealing with this case. If the Government would act as I suggest, under the Coercion Act the Resident Magistrates would have no more to do, and the Act would become a dead letter. I have only, therefore, to conclude by expressing my hope that the Government will meet my Motion by some announcement of their intention to deal with the question by legislation. If they will do so I shall most gladly withdraw my Motion. If not I shall feel it my duty to press it, and shall leave to the Government the responsibility for the further troubles which I fear may occur in Ireland when the evictions now threatened take place. In any case it is my confident belief that when the people of this country thoroughly understand the case, they will not permit the forces of the Crown, or the taxes of the nation, to be used for the purpose of enabling Lord Clanricarde to carry out such wholesale evictions and disturb the whole district.

Amendment proposed,

After paragraph 11, to insert the words,—"That this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to any measure for Ireland which shall deal with the arrears of excessive and unjust rents which have accumulated in many cases during the last two years of agricultural depression from the inability of tenants to pay them, and which shall prevent the wholesale eviction of tenants which is threatened in the district of Loughrea and Woodford."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Before I come to the autobiographical part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, he will, perhaps, allow me to deal with one or two subjects in his address which appear to me, I must confess, to have very small relation either to the Amendment or to the main body of his remarks. He gave us a short analysis of a Return which, I think, he told us he had privately prepared, or privately printed, with regard to the working of the Crimes Act. From this Return the right hon. Gentleman deduced the conclusion that one-third, at least, of the crime the Government had been punishing in Ireland would, if I understood him rightly, not be crime under any other law than the Act passed last year. If the right hon. Gentleman did me the honour to listen to the speech I delivered last Friday night, he would have found that not one-third but one-half of the prosecutions initiated by Lord Spencer were in respect of offences under the Coercion Act. Therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman's allegations were true with regard to us, the comparison was a favourable one, and need not weigh heavily upon the conscience of the Government. As a matter of fact, I entirely dispute the accuracy of the right hon. Gentleman's figures, and I entirely deny, even if sections 6 and 7 of the Act passed last year created fresh offences—which I do not admit—that one-third of the prosecutions under the Act were directly or indirectly under those sections. On some future occasion I shall challenge the right hon. Gentleman to substantiate his allegation in more detail. [Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Give us a Return.] I have given a Return showing what prosecutions arose directly or indirectly under Sections 6 and 7. It is, however, impossible to distinguish offences which arose under Sections 6 and 7 from those which come under other parts of the Act. The right hon. Gentleman referred to Boycotting the police, which, he said, consisted in refusing to supply them with turf. Has the right hon. Gentleman read the evidence which was given in the Blunt trial? Has he read the evidence of the police inspector showing that he was refused bread for his sick child? If he has not read the evidence in the Blunt trial, considering that has been the main substance of his indictment against the Government, what are we to think of the pains with which he has prepared the case he has put before the House? If on the other hand he has read that evidence, what are we to think of his candour when he tells us that Boycotting the police only consisted in refusing them turf? The right hon. Gentleman went on to refer to the sentences of the Lord Chief Baron after convictions in 1886. I was amazed to hear the right hon. Gentleman speak of the case in the way he did, as the gentleman who tried the case is one of the most distinguished Judges on the Irish Bench. He was fully cognizant of the state of the district, and distinctly referred to it in his recent charge. Moreover, the sentences were passed after trials held with a jury under the ordinary law. I thought we were always being attacked because we had a Coercion Act under which these things were not brought before a Judge and jury, but before Resident Magistrates; yet the right hon. Gentleman gives as the worst instance he can find the sentences passed by the Lord Chief Baron with the assistance of a jury. It seems to me that the right hon. Gentleman ought to hail our Coercion Act as a remedial measure. As regards arrears, the right hon. Gentleman has given us his method of dealing with them. He has alluded to the Crofters' Act passed two years ago, and seems to think that that furnishes an analogy for some proceeding he desires to be taken now. I may remind him that the Crofters' Act really furnishes no analogy with regard to the legislation he wishes to see adopted. Rightly or wrongly, the Crofters' Act provided that when a crofter applied for a revision of his rent, but only then, he could have his arrears dealt with. Like the Arrears Act of 1882, its object was to start the new Land Bill fairly, and to enable the tenants to come into Court without arrears; but not even in the Act of 1882 nor in the Crofters' Act is there any provision under which a crofter should at any subsequent time be relieved of his arrears by the Court. The dealing with arrears is a preliminary process, and the true analogy to what was done by the Crofters' Act is not any new Act which would be passed now, but what was done by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W.E. Gladstone) under the Arrears Act of 1882. That Act gave the tenant a new start before having his rent fixed. The right hon. Gentleman did not contemplate in the Act of 1882 any machinery by which arrears might from time to time be wiped out, nor was any similar machinery contemplated in the Crofters' Act. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman, seven years after tenants have been given the right to apply to Court for fair rents to be fixed, asks for machinery to be created to deal with the arrears which have accumulated under the fair rents so fixed, he entirely departs from the analogy he himself sets up with regard to the Crofters' Act of 1886. The right hon. Gentleman talks as if all arrears which have occurred in consequence of the bad times of 1885-86 were what he is pleased to term them, unjust arrears. He has used that expression over and over again.

His statement is that though fair rents were fixed in 1882 or in 1883, if two or three years after they were fixed an alteration in prices occurred so that for two years farming became unprofitable under those rents, the arrears so accumulated were unjust. ["Hear, hear!" *and Home Rule cheers.*] That statement is accepted by Gentlemen below the Gangway. Is it accepted by Gentlemen above the Gangway? [*Cheers.*] If it is, I ask them under what pretence they ever asked the House of Commons to pass the Land Act of 1881. In that Act they fixed the contract between landlord and tenant, which was described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian as the fairest possible contract, and contracts under that Act were to last, under legislative sanction, for 15 years. Now, when the right hon. Gentleman recommended that measure to the House, did it never enter into his contemplation, did he never conceive it possible, that there might be bad times lasting for two years?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Only 10 per cent of Lord Clanricarde's tenants hold under judicial rents.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am perfectly aware of that. Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman that when you are dealing with judicial tenants the arrears accumulating in 1885-86 are not unjust arrears? Is that the right hon. Gentleman's contention? [No reply.] The right hon. Gentleman remains silent. Then I cannot understand why the right hon. Gentleman thought it worth while to interrupt me. I ask hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway, did they really and truly, when they passed the Act of 1881, never contemplate as within the bounds of possibility that bad seasons or a fall in prices might occur, which for two years in succession would make farming unprofitable under rents which were "the fairest possible," and fixed for 15 years by the Act of 1881? If they did not contemplate that possibility, what do they mean by saying that arrears accumulating in 1885-6 under judicial rents are unjust arrears? If they did contemplate it, how dared they compel landlord and tenant to contract for fifteen years? The right hon. Gentleman has interpolated an observation that 90 per cent of Lord Clanricarde's tenants have never gone into the Court; and that brings me to Lord Clanricarde. I am perfectly ready to accept Lord Clanricarde as the extreme type of the bad Irish landlord. At all events, for the sake of argument, I am quite ready to base my observations on the theory that no worse landlord exists in Ireland than Lord Clanricarde—to assume that he is as hard and as selfish a man as he is represented as being. Let us assume that all the invective directed against him is deserved, and then let us really see whether it be true that all the disorder in Loughrea is due to him, and that, by parity of reasoning, all the disorder in Ireland is due to the other bad landlords. The observation of the right hon. Gentleman that 90 per cent of Lord Clanricarde's tenants do not hold under judicial rents is very relevant; because why do they not so hold? The right hon. Gentleman the other day, in a letter to *The Times*, answered the question when he said that Lord Clanricarde's rents were so little above what the Land Commissioners were fixing that it was not worth the while of his tenants going into Court.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I also added a good many other things. I also stated—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am quite willing to admit that the right hon. Gentleman added other things; but the only admission I want at this moment is that Lord Clanricarde's rents were not materially above the fair rents—the fairest of all contracts—fixed under the Land Act of 1881. That is the material point. Then I understand that most of Lord Clanricarde's tenants went through the years 1882, 1883, and 1884 upon rents which, upon that hypothesis, were fair rents. Then came the bad years of 1885-86; and the right hon. Gentleman has justified all the acts of Lord Clanricarde's tenants on the ground of hard times. If that had been so, I should have thought that the agitation would have been after both these bad years occurred. But the disorders began before that; and I think the House should really have some account of what has happened at Loughrea, in order that hon. Members may fully appreciate how much is due to the landlords and how much is due to other causes. I have not a word to say for Lord Clanricarde. I am not going to utter a single word in his defence; but I think an impartial study of the facts connected with the Loughrea district will show that in that estimable body of men who have conspired together to make that district a hell upon earth and a disgrace to civilization, Lord Clanricarde is not the worst or nearly the worst. If the disorders were due to high rents on Lord Clanricarde's part, I presume the disorders would not have arisen until after the bad times of 1885-86, when it was difficult for the tenants to pay. But when did the disorders begin? As a matter of fact they began in 1881, and they began, not at the instance of persons who wanted rational abatements of rents in these hard times, but they began as a regular agitation against landlordism in the abstract. On the 6th of January, 1880, the hon. Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris) used these words: — "The landlord system is a most unjust one, and anyone paying rent will be a supporter of injustice. It should be put down, even with loss of life." The hon. Member for East Galway was one of the most active members first of the Land League and then of the National League.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what foundation he has for that statement?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Which—the quotation, or the statement that he is a member of the National League?

Mr. HARRIS: The quotation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The quotation is from the official Government report.

Mr. HARRIS: I deny that report most indignantly.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On the 24th of March, 1881, the same hon. Gentleman who has just indignantly denied one report of his speech, in another speech said—

> "Before I conclude I would like to remind you to beware of the land-grabber. I am told there is one named Kennedy. . . Keep away from him, for his very breath is contaminated. He is a disgrace not only to the locality, but to all Ireland."

On the 15th of November, 1885—that is to say before the two years of bad times—the same hon. Gentleman at a meeting at Portumna advised the tenants to demand a reduction of 50 per cent, and if they did not get it to stick to their money.

Mr. HARRIS: I never made use of any such expression.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has been very much traduced by the official reporter.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Did any newspaper report those speeches?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What are the offences which occurred in this district corresponding with the time of the delivery of the speeches to which I have referred?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I rise to Order, Sir. I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but I think what he is doing is a distinct breach of the Rules of this House. The right hon. Gentleman is about to found certain arguments on statements which he attributes to an hon. Member of this House. Two at least out of the three statements he has read have been denied as correct by the hon. Member in your presence and before the House. I wish to ask, Sir, as a point of Order, whether the right hon. Gentleman is justified in founding arguments on the accuracy of statements indignantly denied.

Mr. SPEAKER: No point of Order, as it seems to me, arises.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In 13 months, from May, 1881, to June, 1882, there were no less than six murders in this district

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): What are the dates of the alleged speeches?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The first speech was delivered on the 6th of January, 1880, and the second speech on the 24th of March, 1881, and the first murder was committed on the 12th of May, 1881. Now, I want to point out to the House that these barbarous and horrible murders occurred in the district which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford has taken under his especial protection, before Lord Clanricarde can be accused of levying unjust rents, and that only two of them were connected with Lord Clanricarde's property. On the 3rd March, 1886, another horrible murder occurred—that of a man named Finlay, a process-server, who was not in Lord Clanricarde's service at all. I think that when we are debating how far everything that has happened at Woodford is to be attributed to Lord Clanricarde, these facts ought to be borne in mind. The right hon. Gentleman's speech, as I understood it, was a defence of his recent performance in Galway, seasoned with complaints that he was not treated like Mr. Blunt. He seemed to be under the impression that the Government were afraid to deal with so formidable a statesman as himself. He became quite irritable when he contended that if Mr. Blunt deserved arrest, he should have been arrested too, and he tells us that if he had been in Ireland at the same time as Mr. Blunt he would have done everything that Mr. Blunt did, and would now be sharing with Mr. Blunt in the sweets of martyrdom. But there was a good deal of difference between the right hon. Gentleman's proceedings and those of Mr. Blunt. In the first place, he took every precaution beforehand to explain to the Government and the world at large that his mission was not a mission of indignation, but a mission intended to induce the tenants to come to an arrangement with their landlord. A gentleman who took a prominent part in that meeting indeed took the trouble of going to that centre of corruption, Dublin Castle, to explain to the bloated officials there that the great object of the meeting was to promote a settlement—that if the meeting was held a settlement would be probably arrived at, but that if it was not held there would be no settlement. Now, I am free to confess that no stronger bribe could be offered to me or any one holding my position than the prospect of a settlement on this or any other estate. There is nothing that we more desire, and if the right hon. Gentleman takes the trouble of proclaiming his loyal and peaceable intentions, he need not be disappointed if we take him at his word.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Mr. Dickson had no authority whatever from me to make any communication to the Castle.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I never said he had. But Mr. Dickson was one of the principal persons who took part in the meeting, and he did go to the Castle to make the explanation to which I have referred. But, apart from this, were the circumstances attending the right hon. Gentleman's meeting at all analogous to those of Mr. Blunt? Did the right hon. Gentleman attend a midnight meeting in defiance of a proclamation, in the course of which the telegraph wires were cut and the proclamation issued in the Queen's name burnt and held up to ridicule — a meeting held to celebrate the anniversary of the Plan of Campaign, which has been pronounced by Chief Baron Palles as so illegal in itself that the fact that a meeting is held to promote it renders such meeting *ipso facto* illegal? The right hon. Gentleman attended no such meeting. Would he have taken part in any such meeting? He expresses himself an admirer of Mr. Blunt's proceedings. Would he have imitated Mr. Blunt in that respect? But not only was Mr. Blunt's meeting preceded by an illegal midnight meeting, but there were evictions actually going on at the time at which violent resistance was being offered to the bailiffs. That circumstance constitutes a distinct and vital difference between Mr. Blunt's meeting and the meeting of the right hon. Gentleman. Perhaps he shares Mr. Blunt's views, who, when on cross-examination he was asked whether he felt any indignation at the assaults on the police, and at the throwing of burning turf at them, said that he could not say he did. Gentlemen holding these views may, where resistance to the police is proceeding, be very formidable. Does the right hon. Gentleman hold these views? I notice that, whereas the right hon. Gentleman is ready enough to rise up and make irrelevant interruptions, yet when I ask him for an answer to a plain question he remains silent. The right hon. Gentleman has referred a great deal to his experience and knowledge of this district, and I notice that the right hon. Gentleman appeals to the experience of the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Rowlands) who, with Mr. Blunt, proceeded to Ireland to investigate the merits of the dispute between Lord Clanricarde and his tenants, and whom he described in a letter to *The Times* as "high-minded Englishmen." I have no power of measuring the elevation of their minds, but but I have the means of measuring the depth of their ignorance. It comes out in every word of their cross-examination. They did not know what went on at the meeting at which they were themselves present. They did not know about the proclamation being burnt, and they did not know the meaning of their own speeches. Mr. Blunt was ignorant of what the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) said, and he did not know the meaning of what he said himself, for when Mr. Blunt was asked what he meant by congratulating the people on "their great victory" he said upon oath he did not know. Nor did Mr. Blunt appear to know the character of those with whom he associated. The right hon. Gentleman has told the House a great deal about a person named John Roche, whom he represented as a person who had been persecuted by a brutal Coercion Government. This man, referring to a person who was to be Boycotted, said—"You have a tyrant to crush to-day. Throttle him, and do not let him go until you knock the glass eyes out of his head"—referring to the fact that the man was blind of one eye. He also made a speech directed against the man Finlay, who was murdered soon afterwards—a speech which I can only interpret as a practical incitement to the murder of that man. That is one of the men whom the right hon. Gentleman takes under his protection and with whom Mr. Blunt associated.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman to quote the speech which he said was an incitement to assassination.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will quote from the Charge of the Chief Baron. He said—

> "John Roche, who was one of the leading spirits in Woodford on the 23rd of October, 1887, said they had their Balaclava (a nickname for Finlay) that day, but the people would have their Fontenoy another day."

I must explain that the battle of Fontenoy is regarded as a victory won by Irishmen over Englishmen, and it is therefore always hailed with satisfaction at Nationalist meetings. The Chief Baron went on—

> "I do not know whether they consider it was their Fontenoy, but within a period of two short months that unfortunate man was without a moment's notice sent before his Creator, and within half-an-hour after his dead body had been riddled with shots, his widow was publicly groaned and hooted through the streets of Woodford. Oh, what a lesson for moderation of language!"

That was what he relied on as showing the nature of Roche's speech. I have quoted the opinion of the Chief Baron, and I say that speech was followed by the assassination of the man to whom it referred, which fully justifies me in saying what I have said. Besides Mr. John Roche there was upon the platform with Mr. Blunt Mr. Francis Tully, who appears to have been the host, the *fidus Achates*, the guide, philosopher, and friend of the hon. Member for Finsbury. Mr. Francis Tully in one speech said——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I rise to Order, Sir. I ask you what connection there is between a speech of Mr. Tully and the Amendment before the House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On the point of Order I may say, Mr. Speaker, that I am only following in the footsteps of the right hon. Gentleman, and trying to investigate the circumstances of the district. Tully is a man who recommended "leaden pills" for obnoxious landlords, and on account of that recommendation he has been nicknamed "the Doctor," and is known universally by that name. Of this man, who was the associate of these Englishmen in Ireland, the Chief Baron had said that if there was an indictment against him for incitement to assassination on account of such words, there was not a Judge in the land who would withhold it from the jury. Tully, like Roche, took a leading part in Boycotting Mr. Lewis. The Chief Baron also said with regard to Tully that if Mr. Blunt had been furnished with a report of his speeches, he would sooner cut off his right hand than sit down to table with him or have anything to do with him. These are the men, even more than the Clanricardes, who have made the Loughrea district a by-word, and which, if he knew of them, would, I think, appal even Mr. Blunt. I believe that a complete cure for such things would not be found in any legislation suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech of an hour and three quarters——

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): An hour and 14 minutes.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It seemed to me longer. The right hon. Gentleman spoke for an hour and a quarter, and yet he made no allusion whatever to the Plan of Campaign, though Woodford is in the district where the Plan of Campaign was first started. Not one word indicating condemnation of the Plan of Campaign dropped from the right hon. Gentleman, not one word indicating condemnation of violence towards the police, so I must conclude that he agrees with Mr. Blunt in thinking that violence to the police ought not to excite his righteous indignation. We had a great deal of the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) the other day devoted to the Plan of Campaign; but after all the discussion on the subject the House is but imperfectly acquainted with what it is. Of its illegality we have now ample judicial testimony. Two Judges of the High Court have expressed the opinion not only that it is technically illegal, but that it is a gross violation of personal liberty. The hon. Member for North-East Cork did, indeed, allude, in language not too strong, to the heavy penalties which the defeated had to pay. For the Plan of Campaign, like war, is only less disastrous to those who are victorious than to those who are defeated. The hon. Member for North-East Cork said that when the Plan was successful a vast benefit was done to the tenantry. I absolutely demur to the truth of that proposition. Nothing can be further from the truth. The Plan of Campaign carries in its train a desolation and ruin hard to describe and impossible to exaggerate. A Nationalist newspaper, *The Wexford People*, has described the results of the Plan of Campaign. It said that—

> "Changes many and serious had taken place since the war chest was locked at Coolgreany; the land had become a dreary waste and was fast falling into a wilderness; the bleating of sheep, the lowing of cattle, were no longer heard; no fire burned on the hearth, nor beam of light escaped from the casement."

What had happened on the Coolgreany estate had necessarily come to pass on every other estate in the like circumstances. You compel the landlord to evict; you compel him to drive out the ringleaders of the tenants. Even if they ultimately win, and the landlord gives their terms, these men are kept out of their holdings one, two, or three years. Nature resumes her sway over the fields formerly cultivated; possibly, in some cases, their homes are pulled down, and if one of them comes back he finds his holding so deteriorated in quality that it is impossible to restore it to its ancient condition for years to come. Compare this actual working of the Plan of Campaign with the roseate description of it given by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). That hon. Gentleman said—

> "Would they not be better of with their 30*s*. or £2 a week, with their hands in their pockets, amusing themselves, instead of living in miserable cabins for the benefit of the landlords?"

I believe the vision or bribe thus held up to them has turned out like the money in *The Arabian Nights*, which, when put in the drawer, turned into paper. These men, instead of living with their hands in their pockets, amusing themselves, are now living miserable exiles in hovels on some neighbour's lands; having seen their own holdings gone into a state of nature and their ancient homes fallen into ruins before their eyes. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is a very conspicuous example of one of the most fallacious methods of reasoning which can be adopted in politics. He has chosen a single instance, and deduced from it a general conclusion. Even upon that instance of the right hon. Gentleman it would be folly to base the conclusion that Irish disorder is the result of Irish landlordism. This House has never been in the past, and I think never in the future will be, so foolish as to base on a single instance great projects of legislative change. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Act of last year gave but very little relief in the matter of arrears. I do not think that the House realizes the whole of the relief given to the Irish tenant. The Irish tenant has gone into the Land Court or he has not. If he has gone in, he has had a fair rent fixed, and even that is diminished if originally fixed before 1885. On the other hand, if he has not gone in, it is in his power to go in at any moment and have a fair rent fixed. But this is not all. The right hon. Gentleman speaks as if all these evils had come upon Ireland because we did not take the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). But the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork dealt only with arrears of judicial rents, and, therefore, 90 per cent of the

Clanricarde rents would not be touched. When the right hon. Gentleman points to the notices of eviction now served upon the Clanricarde and other estates, does he forget that the Government introduced a clause last year by which a stay would be put to all these notices if the tenant could not actually pay, except it was through his own fault? Notices of eviction in Ireland now are, therefore, not the result of hardness on the part of the landlord, but are the consequence and the measure of combinations on the part of the tenants not to meet their just obligations. Any man who thinks that the problem we have to deal with in Ireland is one of Home Rule, or a simple question of putting down disorder, is utterly mistaken in his diagnosis of the disease. What we have to deal with is a social revolution under the mask of political agitation. Socialistic objects are being striven for by political methods. I am perfectly aware that hon. Members opposite shut their eyes to this fact; but if they will only examine the speeches of Michael Davitt and his followers, some of whom are far more dangerous than himself, they must see that, under the specious pretence of a political agitation in support of that unstable compromise known as the Home Rule plan of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, Socialistic doctrines are being spread in every direction. The real forces at work are partly the hereditary hatred of England, partly the desire of the tenants for other people's property. I, who believe that the laws of property were not invented for the benefit of the rich, but for the benefit of the poor, who believe what hon. Gentlemen below the Opposition Gangway do not, that a regard for property is the very foundation of all enterprize and all success, I am firmly convinced that unless some steps are taken, and successfully taken, for stopping the canker which is eating into the very heart of Ireland at this moment, it will matter little what Bills you may pass either for Home Rule or Separation, for enterprize and confidence will be extinguished in Ireland, and the people who will suffer most of all are your unhappy dupes—the tenantry and labourers of Ireland.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) on having accomplished an unheard of feat—the feat of having spoken over an hour upon an Amendment, and never having said anything about it. He (Mr. Healy) thought it was high time to recall the House to what was the subject before it, which he took to be the arrears of rent in Ireland; and the right hon. Gentleman, when asked to deal with the question of the arrears of rent, went into certain speeches delivered in 1880, and made a general tirade on the question of Home Rule and Socialism, but never once touched the question before the House. It was established, then, on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that Lord Clanricarde was a man for whom even the Irish Chief Secretary could not say a word.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, in explanation, said, he had expressed his readiness, for the sake of argument only, to assume that Lord Clanricarde was the very worst of landlords.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: If anything could be said for Lord Clanricarde, why did the right hon. Gentleman not say something for him? They had it established, as a matter of fact, that here was a landlord proceeding against a tenant in such a way that he (Mr. T. M. Healy) must repeat that the Irish Chief Secretary, with his inordinate respect for the rights of property, and his declarations on the subject, could not say one word for Lord Clanricarde. It would have been more relevant and germane to the question that they should have heard more about Lord Clanricarde, and less about Francis Tully and 1881. The right hon. Gentleman told them the present agitation in Galway was not the result of the present action of Lord Clanricarde, but was due to an incendiary speech delivered so far back as 1880. Certainly he (Mr. Healy) was surprised the right hon. Gentleman did not go back a little further—back to 1872—when Lord Clanricarde declared he could put his white horse in for Galway, and not being able to put in his white horse, he raised the rent of every man on his estate who had the courage to support the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan), who was returned as a Home Ruler. His fellow-landlord, Sir Henry Burke, did the very same thing, and from the date of the Galway Election of 1872, when scores of tenants were evicted, and scores had their rents raised, from that day the trouble in Galway commenced. The right hon. Gentleman did not understand the causes of the disorder, for he stated that the present state of things was not due to landlordism. What, then, did it spring from? From, he (Mr. Healy) supposed, the double dose of original sin of which they had heard. Had the right hon. Gentleman no other hypothesis on which to work? Surely, if he saw crime, and misery, and disorder in the country, it was only reasonable to attribute that in some degree to the forces working there. Let them assume that every word the right hon. Gentleman had uttered about the speeches he had referred to was true, and that they were incitements to assassination. Did he mean to convey that men would commit assassination for the mere wantonness and fun of the thing? Let them take that most brutal murder of Finlay. Did he believe the people who committed that assassination did it for the mere love of blood-spilling? And then the right hon. Gentleman went on as if there was something inherent in the nature of the people of the County Galway to account for this state of things other than the results of landlordism. The Chief Secretary had stated a number of facts which, in his (Mr. T. M. Healy's) opinion, entirely disposed of any idea that the right hon. Gentleman understood the question about which he attacked other people for their ignorance; and he would say to him if, when he went to Ireland, instead of going to lunch with the Judges in that country, he had sat in their Courts, he would have learned more than he did over the walnuts and the wine in the Judge's chamber. With regard to the case of Lord Clanricarde, to whom the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessor (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would not give the assistance of soldiers to carry out evictions, it was now admitted that he was a man for whom the right hon. Gentleman could not say one word; and the problem he would ask the House to consider was this—Was it a reasonable thing, when a man from his chambers in the Albany could desolate an entire district, that that state of things should be allowed to continue? The right hon. Gentleman was very eloquent on the desolation wrought by the Plan of Campaign, and he waxed pathetic over the misery and distress he alleged it caused. He had read them an extract from *The Wexford People* showing how the Coolgreany estate looked after the Plan of Campaign; but the wonder was that his eyes were not turned to the Clanricarde estate after the evictions, when the agent razed the houses to the ground; or to Glenbeigh, after the agent had applied the petroleum can to the roofs, and where evictions were again proceeding yesterday; and he would ask, was the alleged desolation wrought by the Plan of Campaign to be compared to the desolation and slaughter worked by Lord Clanricarde and men like the landlord of Glenbeigh? What was the alternative to the Plan of Campaign? Eviction pure and simple. They had either to be evicted with it, or without it; and for his part, if he was an Irish tenant threatened with eviction, he would rather be evicted under the Plan of Campaign, with his money in his pocket, than see the house razed by the agent, because the landlord would not accept the portion of the rent he could pay, and which he was willing to offer under the Plan. The utmost that had been claimed under the Plan was 30 per cent; in most cases, he thought, 20, which he believed was asked on the Kingston estate. Was he to be told it was a better thing for the Irish tenants to offer the landlords what they could and be evicted afterwards, or not to be evicted at all, or, if evicted, retain in their pockets such portion as they had offered of the rent which they could still afford to pay? The Plan of Campaign had not been adopted out of lightness of heart. The tenants had not a light heart when eviction threatened, and the gentlemen who were concerned in propagating the Plan of Campaign had not propagated it with a light heart. The hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) recognized the difficulties of the Plan of Campaign, and every speech of theirs told the tenants they were going into a desperate fight; but they asked what was the alternative. And surely, when they had a landlord like Lord Clanricarde, who rejected such a petition for an abatement in time of distress as would be signed by leading men like Dr. Healy, the Unionist Bishop, and the rector, with scorn, he would like to ask what those tenants were to do? What alternative was then open to them? What course was open to the tenants of a harsh and exacting landlord determined to have all the law gave him but to be evicted or to adopt the Plan of Campaign? The right hon. Gentleman said the Courts were open to them. How were they open? He must say, in his opinion, a more worthless Bill than the right hon. Gentleman's Bill of last year to effect the purposes which he proclaimed it would effect in dealing with arrears and evictions, and a more ill-drafted measure, could not have been devised. The right hon. Gentleman said the landlord applied to the Court to serve a notice of eviction, and the tenant might then be heard against the landlord's application. The right hon. Gentleman was in error, for there was nothing at all of the kind; and surely the right hon. Gentleman, with regard to a Bill he himself brought forward, ought to have some elementary acquaintance with what was being done under it. There was no such thing as an application by the landlord to serve his eviction notices. There was no such thing provided for as an application by the tenant to resist an eviction notice. Nothing of the kind could arise under the Act. What happened was simply this. The landlord served a writ on the tenant, claiming possession of the land, and if the tenant could not pay he would have to march. Then the landlord served an eviction notice, and the tenant could not be heard in the least degree. This notice was not issued in the open Court, and personal service was not even required, but it was served by letter. It was not even necessary to apply to the Court for the eviction notice. The landlord, on getting judgment, issued the notice himself. He could go to the stationer's shop and buy a gross of them. They might be ordered at Smith's bookstalls, and filled in *ad lib.* The Chief Secretary had vast legal assistance in Ireland, and he had by his side the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Trinity College (Mr. Madden), whose ability was appreciated in Ireland, and why, then, could he not make himself acquainted with the elementary facts of the case? Again, if the landlord proceeded by way of an action for rent, there was no possibility of having the arrears made payable by instalments. He challenged the Government to deny that. If a tenant owed him rent, and he brought an action for the rent, there was no means of putting a stay upon it in the sense of having the arrears made payable by instalments. That was only possible in actions for possession. It was quite true that in the case of an action for rent they could have a stay put upon the sale of the tenant's interest; but what did that amount to? Although they could put a stay upon the sale of the tenant's interest in an action for rent there was nothing to prevent the seizure of his stock under a judgment, or, without going to the Court at all, they could distrain for every cent that the man possessed; so that the landlords of Ireland at the present moment, the instant rent was due, could seize every cow a tenant had, and the Government lent them their police to aid and assist in the work. He wondered the right hon. Gentleman did not refer to the case of Mrs. Curtin, about whose unhappy bereavement tears almost of blood had been shed on the Treasury Bench. The right hon. Gentleman did not tell them that Lord Kenmare and Lady Kenmare got up a fund for Mrs. Curtin, and, having got up the fund, the noble Lord went with his bailiffs and police, and seized her cows for rent. The Government lent Lord Kenmare their police to conduct the seizure of her cattle, and District Inspector Crane hinted at withdrawing police protection from her and her family, telling her that she did not want it, now that Lord Kenmare had seized her cattle for rent. That was what happened in the case of Mrs. Curtin, a case with regard to which the Government had, through the medium of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, made such capital at every election. Every landlord in Ireland could execute similar distraints, and there was no law to hinder them. He asked, then, where were the supposed remedies under this Act of 1887? In the first instance, it only applied to the tenants of £50 valuation and under, and the right hon. Gentleman said that included the mass of the Irish tenants. If the right hon. Gentleman took the trouble to read the cases before the Court he would find out his mistake. He would give an illustration afforded by the case of the Earl of Desart *v.* Elizabeth Townsend, a widow. That was the case of a leaseholder above £50 of rent to whom the Act of last year did not apply. The Court of Queen's Bench, in its humanity, owing to the piteous affidavit of this widow lady, and the oppression she proved the Earl of Desart had perpetrated upon her, came to her relief. She being a leaseholder, entitled last September to go into Court and serve an originating notice, ventured to serve that to get a fair rent fixed. The landlord had sent a bailiff down to tell her she need not pay the rent until after the Kilkenny fair in October. She owed two years of rack-rent, and, despite the bailiff's message, long before the date was fixed she got a writ for the rent on venturing to go into the Land Court under last year's Act to get a fair rent fixed as a leaseholder. The Court of Queen's Bench, out of which the writ issued, said they would take advantage of a rule in the Judicature Act, and would postpone for a few months the payment of her arrears. The landlord took his case to the Court of Appeal, and there it was solemnly decided by the highest Court in the land that in cases like hers, arising out of want of funds on the part of the tenant, and against whom there was no allegation on the part of the landlord that they could pay, that no power resided in the Courts to give the slighest relief. That being so, with what countenance could the right hon. Gentleman tell the House that all the grievances arising in Ireland were those of cases under £50 valuation? They could never hear of cases of over £50 now in the Courts, because the Courts had judicially decided they had no power to give relief. What was the tenant to do? To grin and bear it and be evicted, or else join the Plan of Campaign. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) stated that the arrears' provision, such as that in the Arrears' Act of 1882, or the Crofters' Act of 1886, was inapplicable to the present state of things, because in 1882 the Arrears' Act was a reasonable thing, as then, for the first time, the tenants got permission to go into Court. If it was a proper thing to give the Act of 1881 a fair start, what was the case of the leaseholders who were admitted in 1887? If there were 200,000 tenants under the first Act, the right hon. Gentleman himself and the First Lord (Mr. W. H. Smith) have boasted that 113,000 tenants could come in for the first time under the Act of 1887. If it was reasonable to give an Arrears' Act for 200,000, it was surely right to give it for 113,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary went on the basis that because it was right to give the Act of 1881 a fair start, because it promulgated a fair rent system, why, then, did he not think it equitable to give the Act of 1887 a fair start as regards the leaseholders who got then for the first time the right to go into Court? Yet the right hon. Gentleman passed the Act of last year, admitting that the rents fixed under the Act of 1881 were not fair rents. He passed an Act to enable the Land Commission to reduce for three years rents which were paid under the Act of 1881, and yet he said that these rents could only be reduced from May or March last, and that he would let the arrears antecedent to that time hang like a millstone around the necks of these unfortunate people. While admitting, therefore, that the present rents were unfair, the right hon. Gentleman said that they would insist upon the arrears of those same rents being enforced, because all previous rents were fair. He (Mr. Healy) had often brought that question to the notice of the House. For his own part, he had never let a year pass, or a debate on the Land Act Estimates pass, without protesting against the character of the men who had been appointed Sub-Commissioners, and the exorbitant rents fixed, and the best proof of the unfairness of the rents and the inequality of their decisions was the passing of the measure of last year; and the best proof that he was right in denouncing the Commissioners was the fact that the Government had been obliged to take action in 1887 to lower the rents fixed up to 1886. The Chief Secretary talked of the Crofters' Act, which had been in operation only a few months, yet the Crofters' Act enabled tenants to wipe out arrears previous to the passing of the Act. Did the right hon. Gentleman conceive it to be a fair thing that at the present moment in Ireland, where rents were being fixed by the Land Commission, that that fair rent should not date back to the antecedent arrears? He (Mr. Healy) claimed for the Irish leaseholders that their revised rents should date back upon every penny of arrears. That was a reasonable and a logical claim. It could be founded on legislative enactments, and it could not be put down to the demands of agitators. Was it not an appalling thing for Irish Members to have the consciousness that they were dealing in that House with Englishmen so ignorant of the laws they were passing, that they were unable to recognize the force and effect of those laws? The House passed a measure for leaseholders giving them the right to have fair rents fixed, but the landlord took advantage of pre-existing arrears, and then by Section 7 deprived them of all benefits of the Land Acts by service of a notice transforming the tenant into a caretaker. To tell a leaseholder that he could go into Court, leaving his arrears untouched and undealt with, and then to destroy his tenancy by one of those miserable notices, was a farce and a fraud which involved the man in law costs without yielding him any benefit whatever. A most interesting document had been issued to Members of Parliament that morning, a Report of the Crofter Commission. There was going on in the North of Scotland exactly the same controversy which had arisen in Ireland. On page 98 was given a Return of the number of tenants dealt with, the present rent, the past rent, the amount of arrears, and how they were disposed of. It appeared the number of holdings dealt with in five counties—Sutherlandshire, Ross, Inverness, Argyllshire, and Caithness—was 1,767. In Sutherland the reduction was 23½ per cent; in Ross, 26; in Inverness, 28¼ per cent; in Argyllshire, 26½; and in Caithness it was very nearly 41 per cent. Would the House believe that on these 1,767 Scotch holdings no less a sum was wiped off by the Commission than £14,418? If that was the case with arrears on 1,700 holdings in Scotland, what would it be in Ireland with 113,000? Why should not they be similarly relieved? He would remind the House of the great reductions made in Ireland. In some of the cases already heard rents of £18 had been reduced to £5, of £60 to £40, of £100 to £40. They had these reductions of rent made by the Commissioners appointed by the Tory Government under the jealous eye of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Isle of Thanet Division of Kent (Colonel King-Harman) and Mr. Wrench. Colonel Davies, himself one of the Government's own Sub-Commissioners, had had his rents reduced by 40 per cent, and many other Sub-Commissioners were also convicted rack-renters. Yet they felt constrained to make enormous reductions. But the arrears of the old impossible rents which they cut down remained undealt with. He (Mr. Healy) contended that the case of the men who got the right to go into Court last year was exactly on all-fours with those under the Act of 1881, who got an Arrears' Act in 1882. The Chief Secretary thought the Act of 1881 a needless one. Did he think the Arrears' Act of 1882 a needless one? His argument seemed to assume that both Acts were needless. Was that his opinion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think not; though I took part in opposing both Acts.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that being so, he could only wish the leaseholders much comfort from the Government of the right hon. Gentleman. The question put to him was whether he regarded them as having been unnecessary? In Scotland, where there were no murders, and agitators, and outrages, and dreadful people as there were in Ireland, the crofters had obtained a considerable reduction of their rents; and their arrears had been reduced 60 per cent. He would be content with men of the calibre of the Scotch Commissioners to decide whether it was desirable that arrears of rent in Ireland should be wiped out. It followed that either the Crofters' Commission was acting wrongly and dishonestly, or else that the Chief Secretary was ill-advised or misinformed. It had not been claimed that there should be a general wiping out of arrears; there had been nothing of the kind in Scotland; but there had been judicial findings that the tenants were unable to pay. The wiping out under the Act of 1882 was a judicial wiping out. Surely it was not unreasonable to ask that there should be a Court appointed to decide whether the arrears were such as the tenant was able or willing to pay, and they pressed the matter no further than to ask that it should be referred to one of the Government's own Courts appointed under their own Administration. Would anyone believe that Mr. Justice Gibson would be likely to lean to the tenant's side rather than to the landlord's, or that Mr. Justice Holmes would not hold the balance evenly, or, if anything, not leaning to the tenant's side? Was it not a reasonable thing that they should require from the Government a Bill enabling the Irish Judges to deal with the terrible question of arrears? Did the House prefer that the tenants of Lord Clanricarde should be evicted, and the county of Galway rendered desolate? It was of no use appealing to the Chief Secretary, who had what was known as a *systême*, but he appealed to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to know whether his demand was not a fair one? The speech of the Chief Secretary seemed directed to the Deptford Election rather than the question directly at issue. He (Mr. Healy) thought it would have been better for him to have addressed himself to the question, rather than to the speeches of Mr. Francis Tully or what was said by Matt Harris in 1880. That would have been better than a miserable *réchauffé* of bitter strife in years gone by, with which the House was quite familiar, because the speeches cited on the Blunt trial had all appeared in the Dublin correspondence of *The Times*. He supposed that even English Members read the Dublin correspondence of that journal. [Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London): I do not.] He was glad to have that admission from the hon. Baronet, because in that case his knowledge would not be the less, nor his bitterness the greater. He assumed, however, that the general body of English Members read the Dublin correspondence of *The Times*, and so they would have seen before the quotations which the Chief Secretary hurled at the House in the course of debate. What did they come to? Suppose he or any other Irishman made a foolish speech eight years ago that was no reason why Elizabeth Townsend should continue to be rack-rented and deprived of the benefit of legislation passed expressly to meet such cases as hers. What had that Government to do with the matter? Let them assume that every word that the right hon. Gentleman spoke about Galway was correct. But Galway was only one of the 32 counties in Ireland. They wanted the question of arrears settled in a reasonable spirit. They wanted to see the grievances of the tenants understood on the Treasury Bench, and the reply the Chief Secretary gave to their request was to read long extracts from the brief of Mr. Peter O'Brien, the Irish Attorney General in the Blunt trial. It was amazing that the Chief Secretary should have assumed such a position, and have used such bitterness of language, which was not alone unworthy of himself, but unworthy of any phase of Irish Administration, because it gave the "go by" to the greatest of all grievances that were now sorely pressing the Irish people. The right hon. Gentleman should have treated the subject in a spirit to give the Irish people some hope that the Government did really appreciate the gravity of this position. He asked the right hon. Gentleman solemnly, what contribution had he made towards the settlement of the question? Lord Clanricarde and his like would be free to operate in Galway to-morrow with their evictions, and if they resolved to do so, the right hon. Gentleman would be bound to aid them in the work with soldiers and police. That was a situation which was not to be met by vitriolic quotations from speeches made years ago. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the desolation caused by the Plan of Campaign, and had drawn a terrible picture; but what was the Government Plan of Campaign? The Government Plan of Campaign to-morrow would be to give that monster, who lurked somewhere in the Albany like a tiger in his lair, the aid of 50,000 soldiers, if he needed it, to destroy the homes of his tenants. That was the right hon. Gentleman's Plan of Campaign; but the reasonable suggestion of the Irish Representatives was to get rid of all Plans of Campaign, to submit the question at issue between tenants and their landlords to the arbitration of the Government's own Judges—men like even Judges Gibson and Holmes. That was his (Mr. Healy's) Plan of Campaign; he went upon the principle that if there was a grievance between Lord Clanricarde and his tenants, the question ought to admit of some legislative settlement, and should not be left to generate into crime and outrage. The arrears represented no solid cash for the landlord. They were irrecoverable; if wiped out, the pockets of the landlords would not lose 1*s*. They were useful for one purpose only, and that was to assist the landlord in driving the tenants from the land; and it was because that was so that the Chief Secretary refused to deal with the arrears. Lord Salisbury had admitted that he was forced to pass the Land Act of last year, because he was on a fatal toboggan slide, and in order to give the landlords an opportunity of rendering the Act nugatory the arrears were allowed to hang over the tenants. The Chief Secretary had asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) for a categorical answer as to whether he approved of the Plan of Campaign. Questions could not always be answered by a Yes or a No; and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford approved of the Plan *sub modo*. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford had received to-night a telegram which showed how the Plan of Campaign worked. It referred to the property of Sir Henry Burke, near that of Lord Clanricarde; the landlord had refused abatement, and the tenants adopted the Plan of Campaign. The telegram was—

> "It is true Burke has given 25 per cent; reinstates tenants; compensates them for crops; pays legal costs, together with £160 for the maintenance of evicted tenants. Your intervention has had its effect."

The fact was, and he (Mr. Healy) was sorry to declare, that it was only by extra legal means that any concession had ever been, or was likely to be, wrung from the Irish Government. The Chief Secretary had fatally misconceived the Irish situation, or, if he had not misconceived it, had acted in a fatal manner so far as the peace and quietude of that country was concerned. No comfort would be brought to the minds of the suffering Irish tenants by the speech of the Chief Secretary. It would have been, he (Mr. Healy) would not say a generous, but a prudent thing if the right hon. Gentleman had given them some crumb of comfort. From the beginning to the end, however, the Chief Secretary's speech had been directed to exasperate still more the people of Ireland, smarting, as they were, under the Coercion Act. He hoped that some responsible Minister of the Crown, like the right hon. Gentleman the new President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), whose letter to Lord Clanricarde did him honour, would endeavour to impress upon the Cabinet that Ireland needed something else than the continual application of the cat-o'-nine-tails. After all, a Government had another duty incumbent upon them besides the enforcement of penal statutes. Even Robespierre told the French Convention when every scaffold in France dripped with blood—"It is not with the Criminal Code in hand you will regenerate your country." It was not "with the Criminal Code in hand" that they would regenerate Ireland, and it was not by such speeches as those delivered by the Chief Secretary that peace would be established in that country. He marvelled much that the Tory Party, the "Party of Order," should have entrusted the right hon. Gentleman unchecked with the destinies of 5,000,000 British subjects. Disorder might exist in Ireland, but admittedly distress existed there, and the Chief Secretary had displayed the most extraordinary ignorance of the very A B C of the Irish Question. If anything was calculated to drive the people in Woodford and Loughrea into still more resolute action it was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The Irish Members were compelled to come to the House of Commons, and when they put the case of their suffering people as well as they could before the Government, they were met with gibes and flouts and sneers. He (Mr. Healy) took England to witness that if the Irish people, under the lash of addresses such as had been delivered by the Chief Secretary, remained peaceful and calm, it was not because they had not many sore troubles and grievances to endure, but because they had a belief and a hope in their present alliance with the Liberal Party. He had himself, in former times, doubted, because of the advantage the landlords took of their efforts, whether the Irish Party should at all times preach calmness, and he was sorry to have to say that even now the fact that men like Lord Clanricarde knew that every nerve was being strained by the Irish Party in the direction of peace, and that anything like outrage and crime was deprecated, and every effort used to repress disorder, was a strong encouragement to creatures of his type. He, therefore, trusted that the English people would not mistake their position. He said to the people that if Lord Clanricarde evicted, and they had no hope from English administration as expressed in the mouth of the Irish Chief Secretary, their hope did not lie in submitting like slaves to the lash of Lord Clanricarde. Their hope lay rather in combination. Aye, and if necessary he would say it, in honest resistance, because he believed that the resistance of the Clanricarde tenants at Loughrea and Woodford to eviction would meet not with the condemnation, but with the sympathy and encouragement of the English people. The Government had abstained from bringing to the consideration of this question one statesmanlike idea. The case of the Chief Secretary was simply a repetition of that *Nisi Prius* fustian delivered on behalf of the Government in Mr. Blunt's trial last week. That was the only argument offered by the right hon. Gentleman. He appealed to speeches of seven or eight years ago. Those speeches might have been foolish or wise, but they had had other effects than that of leading to outrage. It was the speeches of agitators—of whom, he was proud to say, he was one—which led to the passing of the Land and Arrears Acts, which, to a certain extent, constituted the charter of the Irish tenant. Their demands had formerly also been refused time after time, with speeches as defiant as the speech of the Chief Secretary, and yet at last they had to be conceded. He believed, too, that in spite of the Government's refusal to-night to deal with this Arrears' Question there would arise a spirit in Ireland which would sweep from his place the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and that, just as when last year the Government first declared it to be outrageous to interfere with the judicial rents and then passed an Act to reduce them, something like reason would yet be brought to Her Majesty's Government on the Arrears' Question also. But if they refused to deal with it till after crime and outrage and bloodshed had occurred, should they be surprised if the Irish people were to attribute the benefit they at length received to nothing else than outrage and crime? As things went on in Ireland from bad to worse the Government would deeply regret the delivery of speeches like that of the Chief Secretary, a speech as vain in dealing with the question as it was foolish in an administrative point of view, and in the end the very words of the Irish Secretary would be swallowed by him in exactly the same way as Lord Salisbury and his own Colleagues had swallowed theirs with regard to the judicial rents. This was an unfortunate position—that no amount of argument seemed to affect the question; and he (Mr. Healy) called upon the tenants of Lord Clanricarde and the people of Ireland in the meantime to continue the steadfast action which had won for them everything that had been won in the past; and if they persevered in that action they were not only certain of moral victories in Ireland, but certain also to see in that House their demands approved of, sanctified, and solemnized by the very enactments that the Government would yet be obliged to place on the Conservative Statute Book.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) thought that all those who had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland must have been filled with surprise and also with regret, and he had no doubt that the feelings of regret preponderated over those of surprise. It was felt, after the clear and lucid exposition by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) of the facts connected with the Woodford agitation, and connected also with that broader agitation of which the Woodford agitation was a type, that something more was required in reply from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary than sneers and a reproduction of speeches seven or eight years old, having absolutely nothing whatever to do with the present circumstances. The Chief Secretary for Ireland referred to certain speeches that were delivered seven or eight years ago by Mr. John Roche and Mr. Francis Tully. He (Mr. Stevenson) asked the House to consider whether, if the words which the right hon. Gentleman ascribed to Mr. Francis Tully and Mr. John Roche had actually been uttered, they would have any bearing whatever on the charge which was made against the present action of the Government in supporting the action of Lord Clanricarde at Woodford; and whether they were not speeches that ought not to have been relegated to the limbo of those past utterances which ought to be amply forgotten now that a new era had dawned upon Ireland? But there was this to be said further—that they had no guarantee that those speeches were accurately reported. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary referred to a speech which had been ascribed to the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris); but that hon. Gentleman had indignantly denied that he had ever uttered the speech in question. It was very likely that had Mr. John Roche or Mr. Francis Tully been in the House they would have got up and indignantly denied the utterances placed in their mouth by the right hon. Gentleman. But they could not draw any conclusion from speeches delivered in 1881 or 1882, and, what was more, if they were expected to draw any conclusion from those speeches, they must first be certain that the speeches were accurately reported. There was not the slightest guarantee that the shorthand reports placed before the House were at all in accordance with the facts. Hon. Members were also filled with surprise that after the demands for remedial legislation which were put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), the Chief Secretary made no proposal which would in any way meet the necessities of the case. The events of the last few weeks and months exhibited in the clearest manner the necessity of an amendment of the Land Act of last Session, and showed that the *modus operandi* of the Act had not been of a nature to fulfil the expectations of hon. Gentlemen who supported that Act, and had not been of a nature to fulfil the expectation that it would confer great benefits on the tenants of Ireland. The events of the last few months had exhibited that the Land Act of last Session, like many other pieces of Tory legislation, was a measure which merely took away with one hand what it gave with the other. That Act professed to be an Act to stop, or, at all events, to stop within certain limits, evictions. As a matter of fact, it had done nothing of the kind. There was a temporary lull in the carrying out of evictions; but, from a Return which was placed in the hands of hon. Members that morning, he (Mr. Stevenson) noticed that 3,352 notices of evictions had been filed during the four months ending December 31, 1887. No doubt, there had been many more notices filed since the end of December. Let the Government consider what would be the result when the time for redemption had expired, and what would be the result when another wave of eviction swept over Ireland, reproducing all the horrible scenes of Glenbeigh and Bodyke. Unless the Government were prepared with some legislation to step in between the living and the dead, as it were, the responsibility would lie upon their shoulders of having passed an Act last Session under the pretence and on the ground that it was likely to confer certain boons on the tenants of Ireland—namely, the staying of evictions—while events showed that it had merely postponed the evil day, and not only that, but made the process of eviction easier than before. For the two clear and well-defined processes which formerly existed had been substituted two others. The first process was to send a notice of eviction by registered letter transforming the tenant into a caretaker; and the second process was that, after the period of redemption had elapsed, the tenant ceased even to be a caretaker, and was evicted. Those persons who quoted the English system and found in it any analogy to the land tenure of Ireland left out altogether in the calculation the question of dual ownership, which made all the difference in the world between the two systems. One hon. and learned Gentleman on the other side of the House, and one, he was sorry to say, even on the Opposition side of the House, spoke of the act of eviction as if it were simply the taking back by the landlord of what was his own. But it was the taking of more than his own—it was the taking back that tenant right which the law said was the property of the tenant. They were told by Lord Salisbury, and by the Chief Secretary and others, that although a landlord took back by the process of eviction something in addition to that which was actually his own, yet the tenant was entitled to receive compensation for the improvements he had himself effected, which property constituted his tenant right. But those gentlemen who made that assertion were not able to prove in any large number of instances, in five out of 100 cases, that the tenants had ever received compensation. The reason why a tenant had not received that compensation was that what compensation he would have been entitled to was swallowed up by the arrears of rent, which even the Tory Land Commission had declared to be an impossible rent. Surely there was cause, not only for inquiry in the matter, but also cause for active interference. The Chief Secretary for Ireland approached the question, to a certain extent, with a mind already made up. He approached the question having, as he told the House to-night, on two previous occasions opposed an Arrears Bill. That was not a favourable frame of mind in which to approach a question of this kind at a time when arrears were swallowing up the compensation the tenants were entitled to, and were making the working of the Land Commission ineffectual. At such a time as this it ought to be the work of statesmen to devise legislative remedies, and not merely to trust to negative criticism, to sneers, and to vain and idle reproduction of speeches uttered seven and eight years ago. Now that brought him to the second question; there were the two questions, the question of evictions and the question of arrears. The question of arrears was at the present time, perhaps, the most prominent question before the House and the country. It had been made prominent, perhaps, by what had taken place on Lord Clanricarde's estate. He ventured to say, from what he saw recently on Lord Clanricarde's estate, that great as was the misery on that estate, due to the action of the landlord, for whom even the Chief Secretary could find no word of excuse—great as was the misery on that estate, it was no greater than the misery to be found on other estates. The tenants on that estate, when they were fighting the battle against Lord Clanricarde, were also fighting the battle for other tenants in similar circumstances in other parts of the country. It was, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford had stated, that in the case of Lord Clanricarde they had exceptional circumstances, because he derived a considerable income from other sources unconnected with the land, and in that way he was able to bring more pressure to bear in fighting the battle out with his tenants than other landlords were able to do. Lord Clanricarde's case was not, in his (Mr. Stevenson's) opinion, of so exceptional a nature, but it was typical of many estates in other parts of Ireland; and therefore what happened on Lord Clanricarde's estate would, to a great extent, have a direct bearing on the result obtained in other parts of Ireland. It was only to-day that a telegram had been sent—part of which had been read by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy)—stating that Sir Henry Burke had given in to the demands of the tenants. In the part of the telegram which the hon. and learned Gentleman did not quote, it was stated that every landlord in that part of the country, with the exception of Lord Clanricarde and one other landlord, had now given in to the tenants. When they found instances of that kind, when they saw the straits to which tenants had been reduced, then they realized the fact that it was only the stern necessity of self-preservation that had induced the tenants to have recourse to methods which in the abstract it would be impossible to approve, but which in the concrete was the only remedy the tenants had in the absence of remedial legislation. When they came across instances of the success of the Plan of Campaign, he (Mr. Stevenson) asked was it statesmanlike on the part of Ministers to ignore the wants and wishes of the tenantry and of their Representatives altogether, and instead of giving them anything in the shape of legislative amendments and proposals, to take refuge in mere criticism, which the Chief Secretary had indulged in to-night? He had one consolation in the matter, and it was the recollection of the scene which occurred in the House of Commons not so very long ago—the scene at the commencement of 1886. The Members of the Ministry were at that time sitting in the places they occupied now, and the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) brought forward an Amendment respecting the Allotment Question in England. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) rose in his place on the Government Bench and gave a most emphatic negative answer to the demand put forward by the hon. Member. Before the debate came to an end, however, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who was then connected with the Local Government Board, threw over altogether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division, and said the Government were prepared, under certain conditions, and with certain qualifications, to bring in a measure dealing in a modified degree with the question. [*Cries of* "Question!"] He (Mr. Stevenson) earnestly trusted something of the same kind might occur again. He trusted that just as on that occasion, when the debate was being brought to a close, the right hon. Gentleman now the Chief Secretary for Ireland threw over altogether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division, so, on this occasion, they might have, before the close of the debate, an hon. Gentleman rising from the Treasury Bench and throwing overboard the Chief Secretary, saying that although the Chief Secretary had given an emphatic answer to the demands put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford, the Government had in the meantime adopted somewhat different views, and modified, to a certain extent, the opinions that were expressed by the Chief Secretary, and that it was their intention during the course of the present Session—perhaps under cover of those somewhat ambiguous words which occurred in the Queen's Speech in reference to the introduction of measures relating to peasant proprietary — to deal with the question of arrears. They might avail themselves, if they chose, of the words in the Speech to which he had alluded. They might, before the close of the debate, see the uselessness of pure negation, and they might get up and say they had a remedy of some sort or other for the evils which the tenantry on Lord Clanricarde's estate, and on other estates similarly circumstanced, were at the present time suffering. It was clearly shown by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford, with special reference to Mr. John Roche, that a system of petty tyranny and persecution had been going on. That tyranny and persecution might, of course, from one point of view, be connected with the administration of the Crimes Act rather than with the administration of the Land Act; but still what had been going on during the last few months at Woodford had been so intimately connected with the suppression of combination and with the suppression of free speech, that the instances given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford were of the greatest possible value. In the case of Mr. John Roche there were no fewer than four arrests following on each other. He (Mr. Stevenson) happened to be at Woodford on the very day Mr. John Roche was arrested the second time. Mr. Roche was just returning from Galway Gaol, where he had spent three weeks, and on his arrival at Woodford he was re-arrested for having taken part in the midnight meeting which took place at Woodford some days before Mr. Wilfrid Blunt's meeting. He (Mr. Stevenson) thought that when one looked at such facts one could not help coming to the conclusion that the officers of the Constabulary were most indignant that they had been baffled in regard to the midnight meeting, and that the re-arrest of Mr. John Roche was due, not so much to a desire to maintain law and order, as to a desire on the part of the authorities to avenge themselves for the way in which they had been baffled. The agitation upon the estate of Lord Clanricarde was an agitation which could not possibly be put an end to by the mere administration of the Crimes Act. The present state of things was such as to call for urgent remedy, and for stringent legislation, and not for mere negative and barren criticism. He earnestly trusted that before the close of the debate some Member of the Government, say, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), whose re-entry into the Cabinet they all rejoiced at, because, judging from his recent utterances, they expected to see a new departure in the direction of more humane legislation respecting Ireland —he earnestly hoped that from some Member of the Government they might hear some word of hope that might lead them to believe that the policy of exasperation and provocation which was now being carried out in Ireland would come to a speedy termination.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he thought the House ought to be thankful to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) for having put the situation so clearly before them. There was one fact, however, to which he did not think sufficient importance had been attached. It was the fact that in the Return which had been presented this week, there appeared a figure which was little short of appalling—that was the figure of 3,352 notices of eviction which had been filed during the four months ending December 31 last. Now that figure represented 3,300 heads of families, tenants in Ireland, who had been evicted in the sight of the law at a moment's notice, and whose property in the land which had been confirmed to them under the Land Act of 1881 was destroyed, by the very fact of an eviction notice having been served upon them. The Land Act of 1881 created the Irish tenant part proprietor in the soil with the landlord, and that property of the tenants had been confiscated by one stroke of the pen in 3,352 cases by the eviction notices which the land legislation of the present Government had established as one of the processes of the law in Ireland. This was the beginning of a very serious agrarian crisis in Ireland, which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have to face, and face immediately. The right hon. Gentleman would have to decide what he was going to do in the 3,300 cases, and in other cases which, no doubt, had occurred since December. He would have to decide whether he was giong, as he appeared to be going in the case of Lord Clanricarde, to lend the landlords the aid of the forces of the Crown to carry on a war of wholesale extermination in Ireland, or he would have to decide whether he was going to stay that calamity by legislation in that House. If he did not introduce legislation, was he going to champion the Plan of Campaign, for that was the only remedy which the people would have in the present state of affairs? In these cases eviction was rendered a very simple process, and a very cheap process, for the landlord. The landlord had no longer to wait until the Sheriff was ready to attend him, nor was he to pay the fees of the Sheriff, nor to undertake any of that great expenditure which, under the old system, attended the process of eviction. When he had served his notice on the tenants, all he had to do was to apply six weeks afterwards to the Petty Sessions for an ordinary summons for trespass, and he could at any moment subsequently have the people cleared off the land as trespassers. This was the great question of the immediate future which the Government would have to make up their minds about one way or the other in the course of the present Session. He was very glad that in his somewhat rancorous speech the Chief Secretary for Ireland had dwelt upon the condition of affairs upon the Woodford property, and had referred to the midnight meeting on the 16th of October. He (Mr. Gill) was one of those who was present at that midnight meeting, and he desired to say a few words with the view of helping the House to arrive at the truth respecting that meeting. Now, the midnight meeting was held for the distinct and express purpose of allaying the terrible feeling of irritation which was being worked up in the district by Lord Clanricarde and his agent, and his Emergency men, and the police whom the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland seemed to have lent to his Lordship, as if they were his servants. The case of Mr. Joyce, the previous agent of Lord Clanricarde, was a notorious one, the particulars of which had been faithfully detailed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). But the public seemed, as yet, to have but little information as to the manner in which Mr. Joyce's successor had fulfilled his duties upon the Woodford estate. Mr. Joyce's successor was Mr. Tener, and he entered upon his post for the purpose of doing, and was employed for the purpose of doing, the work for Lord Clanricarde which Mr. Joyce refused to do, and which had been described by Lord Clanricarde's own counsel in the Court in Dublin as "this Devil's work." Such was the phrase used by Mr. Atkinson, the counsel who defended Lord Clanricarde in the libel action which his Lordship lost. Mr. Tener was now, and had been previous to the midnight meeting, actively engaged in doing "this Devil's work," and a portion of "this Devil's work" had been sketched to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). In several hundred cases ejectment processes and eviction notices had been served upon the tenants. The whole estate now remained in a condition awaiting eviction—probably awaiting the decision of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to whether he would lend the forces of the Crown to Lord Clanricarde for purposes for which they were refused by the right hon. Gentleman his Predecessor in Office (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). Lord Clanricarde's tenants had been put under notices of eviction. In addition to that they were being harassed by the Coercion Act, which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland appeared to have lent to or to have made a present of to Lord Clanricarde as an appanage to his machinery in his campaign against the tenants. The case of Mr. Roche had been alluded to this evening as a sample of the manner in which the tenants of Lord Clanricarde were being harassed. But the right hon. Gentleman, for the purpose of showing that Mr. Roche was a very bad character, quoted a speech Mr. Roche was alleged to have made. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) had just said that if Mr. Roche were in the House he would very likely have indignantly denied the words attributed to him. He (Mr. Gill) noticed that when that was said the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) cried "Hear, hear!" He perfectly understood the meaning of that "Hear, hear!" It meant that in the hon. Gentleman's opinion every Member of Parliament on the Irish Benches and every Nationalist advocate was quite ready to deny an inconvenient speech whenever it was attributed to him. That was what the hon. Gentleman's cry amounted to. But he asserted that if the prosecutions against Members of the House and against public speakers in Ireland during the last few months were gone into it would be found that the notes taken of their speeches by common policemen and held to be sufficient evidence for their conviction were of the most grotesque character. It was from such notes that the quotation made by the right hon. Gentleman as to what was said by the tenants on the Clanricarde estate was taken; for it was not asserted that any regular stenographer was present at the meetings. It was upon such notes that hon. Members of the House of Commons were convicted. Mr. Roche, so far from being the desperate character he had been pictured, was one of the most respectable men in the whole of the county of Galway. He (Mr. Gill) was happy to have his acquaintance, and knew him to be the kind of man he had described. He certainly was one of the leading spirits among the tenantry on the Woodford estate. He (Mr. Gill) would probably be told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or by somebody else on behalf of the Government, that Mr. Roche was not a tenant of Lord Clanricarde. No; he was not, but he was a tenant of the landlord whose surrender to the Plan of Campaign was reported to the House to-night. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford very properly said that Lord Clanricarde was not the only landlord in that locality who was, as he expressed it, in a conspiracy to disturb this part of the country. There were others there who were in a league—so much worse, unfortunately, for the tenants—because those men, neighbours of Lord Clanricarde, sheltered themselves under Lord Clanricarde's powerful shield, and were encouraged to make war upon the tenants by reason of his co-operation and his great wealth. The case of Mr. Roche had been described. It had been shown how he had been positively persecuted by prosecution after prosecution, how he was summoned for trespass when he dared to show English visitors over evicted farms, and how, finally, he was prosecuted for taking part in a meeting to welcome home from gaol one of the tenants on the estate who had been sent to prison under the Coercion Act. For the latter offence he was now undergoing the terrible sentence of three months' imprisonment. But Mr. Roche's case was only one of the cases on this estate in which the Coercion Act had been used for the purposes of harassing and persecuting the active spirits among the tenants, to whose public spirit and courage and ability the tenants owed their sole protection against this powerful landlord. Mr. Boland, another respectable man in the district, a Poor Law Guardian, had been sentenced to a similar term of imprisonment as Mr. Roche, and had also served other terms of imprisonment for similar kinds of offences, and so had numerous other tenants on the estate. But the prosecution of these men under the Coercion Act was not the only means of exciting the district and of inflicting punishment and oppression upon the tenantry. Mr. Tener, the new agent of Lord Clanricarde, had established himself in Portumna Castle like some baron of the middle ages. He had surrounded himself with police and Emergency men, and he constantly sallied forth at midnight with a band of these Emergency men and an escort of the right hon. Gentleman's police to make raids on the cattle of the tenants. His doings reminded one of mediæval barbarism. Mr. Tener sallied forth when the people were asleep and swept the cattle into Lord Clanricarde's domain instead of into the public pound. Once they got into the domain the owners were not permitted to view them; they were not permitted to see whether they were properly cared for, or whether any loss might have been incurred through neglect or through any other cause whatever. He (Mr. Gill) was in Portumna one morning after one of these raids had been made, and he saw a number of the tenants outside the gates of Portumna Castle begging to be admitted. A policeman was there acting as porter at the gate, opening and shutting the gate, letting in and out the Emergency men, and allowing no one else to cross the threshold; a splendid occupation for the police and the guardians of law and order. In the town of Loughrea the traders had had for a long time to carry on their business with their shops shut in order to escape the seizures that were being made by Emergency men and police, who were in the habit of rushing into shops and making whatever seizures they could. Now, such a state of things ought to be enough to drive the most peaceable district in the world into turmoil. Mr. Tener rode about the country on a high tax cart, and announced publicly that he had in the bank £20,000 as a sort of war fund to enable him to carry on the campaign against the tenantry. Mr. Tener began his career as agent to Lord Clanricarde by levelling some of the evicted houses to the ground, and he had said that it was his intention to level every house of every tenant who was evicted. Such were the scenes that were enacted previous to the midnight meeting. These midnight sallies; these attacks on the traders in Loughrea and Portumna; these announcements of Mr. Tener, were being made, and the patience of the people was becoming strained to a most painful and dangerous state of tension, and in such a state of things it was resolved to hold a meeting. It was announced to hold a meeting in Woodford, the real object of which was to allay this rising feeling of impatience on the part of the people, and to encourage them to have hope in the attitude of peacefulness which they had been able to maintain up to then. The right hon. Gentleman had drawn a very horrible picture of the state of this estate some years ago. He had cited the murders that were committed, the outrages that were committed, the murder of the agent, the predecessor of Mr. Joyce; he had cited the murder of Finlay, the bailiff. If he were to set out to justify and to preach the success and beneficence of the Plan of Campaign in this district, he could not begin with a better homily than that the right hon. Gentleman had given. That certainly was the state of the district until the Plan of Campaign was inaugurated there; until the people saw some real method by which they would be enabled to stand out against the exactions of the landlords, and to protect themselves against them, other than those wild and violent and criminal methods that they had in their distraction been in the habit of resorting to previously. From the date of the inauguration of the Plan of Campaign up to this hour he defied hon. Gentlemen to name a crime that had been committed in the district of Woodford in connection with the Clanricarde estate. That was the challenge he threw down, and he hoped the Government would make some attempt to answer it. There had been no crime and no outrage in all this blood-stained district, as it was before this Plan of Campaign was inaugurated,—there had been no crime or outrage since the Plan of Campaign was adopted. Now, that blessed peace which the Plan of Campaign had inaugurated in the midst of this disturbed district and which had proceeded to October last was beginning to be threatened by reason of the conduct of Lord Clanricarde and his Emergency men, who went swaggering about in the most insolent manner after the verdict at Coolgreaney, when it was established beyond doubt that an Emergency man in Ireland was perfectly free to murder a tenant if he pleased, and that the Government had not only the power but the will to save him from justice. These Emergency men went prowling around exhibiting the coolest impudence with impunity begotten of the fact of that verdict. This blessed peace was threatened, and in order to maintain it and avert the danger that seemed gathering this meeting of Sunday, 16th October, was announced to be held. Originally it was announced that it would take place in the day-time—in the ordinary time that public meetings were held in Ireland. Why, then, was it held at midnight? Because those who were promoting it felt pretty certain that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would proclaim it. The right hon. Gentleman did proclaim it, but its organizers had taken the precaution to hold it at midnight to prevent the bloodshed which seemed to him (Mr. Gill) and to everybody who knew the facts of the case to have been planned for that day. They had had the Mitchelstown affair only a few weeks previous, and Woodford was to have been another Mitchelstown. The proclamation of the meeting was not issued until the very day before—until the advertisement and placards announcing the gathering had been published a week or more. The people dwelt on a vastly scattered estate throughout which it took some days to spread news properly; they had been called together for the Sunday, and only on the Saturday morning or the day previous was the proclamation posted up in Woodford. Why, he (Mr. Gill) and his friends, who were going down to the meeting did not know that it was proclaimed, and began to think that after all it would not be proclaimed, until they saw the proclamation, not in the Nationalist papers of that day, but in *The Dublin Daily Express*. Guessing that such a proclamation would be issued, however, the promoters of the meeting had taken precautions accordingly, and had resolved to hold it at midnight. The Government had then massed at Portumna and Loughrea and had set in motion from Galway an immense number of police, who, if they had arrived and found the meeting going on, certainly would have done as they did at Mitchelstown, and there would have been another bloody day to record to the credit of the Government. But as the meeting was held in the absence of the police—or in the presence of only half-a-dozen—it was perfectly peaceful and orderly, though it was held at the unearthly hour of midnight. Not a hair of the heads of the half-dozen police was hurt, although these men were practically at the mercy of the meeting. That was a true story of the midnight meeting. Well, that meeting was used by the Government to discredit the meeting that Mr. Blunt held on the following Sunday. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had stated to-night that one of the circumstances that rendered Mr. Blunt's meeting a different thing to that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford was the fact that evictions were going on at the time. But when were the evictions commenced? Immediately after the midnight meeting, and as Lord Clanricarde's reply to that midnight meeting. They were commenced after the meeting had taken place and after Mr. Blunt had gone back to Dublin. It was because the evictions were commenced and because he saw, as everyone saw, the vindictive character of the evictions that Mr. Blunt resolved to go back and hold his meeting on the Sunday. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had prosecuted for that meeting a number of the tenants of Lord Clanricarde—prosecuted them for merely standing in the crowd at the meeting. He (Mr. Gill) wanted to know why it was that the right hon. Gentleman had left the speakers at that meeting alone? He (Mr. Gill) was one of them, but he had not been prosecuted, and yet the poor tenants, whose only fault was struggling to defend themselves against a powerful landlord, had been prosecuted and punished over and over again. He could imagine one reason why he had not been prosecuted and why others of the speakers at the meeting had not been prosecuted, and that was because amongst the speakers was the hon. Member for East Finsbury (Mr. J. Rowlands) whom it also would have been necessary to prosecute, and whom it would have been necessary to arrest here in London amongst his own

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constituents, which would not have been a very pleasant undertaking for the Government. There were also other English Radicals at the meeting who delivered speeches and would have been equally liable to prosecution if any one had been prosecuted. It was a most unfair and unjust and rather miserable proceeding to attack the people who stood in the body of the meeting and to prosecute them while the speakers were allowed to go scot-free. He denied entirely and indignantly that there was any criminality in the matter or any purpose save to encourage the tenants to keep the peace, but if there was anything irregular those who spoke at the meeting certainly were guilty in a far greater degree than the men who merely stood in the crowd. That was all he had to say about the midnight meeting. He had mentioned that the real *crux* of this crisis would have to be faced when these 3,300 eviction notices came to be carried into effect—when the landlords came to get these 3,300 tenants which they had transformed into trespassers thrust off their estates. The magnitude of the figure he mentioned should be understood by the House. The average total of evictions for three months in Ireland had been 1,000, but in three months under the existing Act 3,000 eviction notices had been served. Over 3,000 men had been deprived of their tenant right, and over 3,000 caretakers were all at the mercy of the landlords to be put out whenever the landlords chose. On Lord Clanricarde's estate a most singular thing was to be witnessed, and that was these bundles of eviction notices which were nailed up at every police barrack, and which were to be seen as one passed through the district — bundles of death warrants dangling in the winter air. They had heard of oppression in Bulgaria by Turkish Pashas, but for his part he did not think any country could present a worse picture of miserable oppression and of a hopeless sense of ruin and devastation than that presented in the district of Loughrea at the present time. Whether or not the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was going to help Lord Clanricarde to carry out the ruin he had threatened, was a question he hoped the Government would give a frank answer to to-night. He hoped the right hon. Baronet the new President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would say something in this debate, and would give them some answer on behalf of the Government as to the prospects of the Clanricarde estate. The right hon. Gentleman, when he had to deal with Lord Clanricarde, certainly did his very best to prevent him evicting his tenants, and he certainly exhibited the strongest reluctance —to put it in no more forcible language —to lending the forces of the Crown in support of this nobleman. Would the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary do likewise? The right hon. Gentleman had not had a word to say in defence of Lord Clanricarde to-night. The right hon. Gentleman might say "Well, I said nothing against him." But he would challenge the right hon. Gentleman to get up and defend the noble Lord's action. The Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer in Ireland had condemned Lord Clanricarde's action in his Court during the hearing of the libel action, in language quite as strong, if not stronger, than that used by any of the Nationalist Members. Not even *The Times* had a word to say for Lord Clanricarde, whose conduct they described as incredibly base. Would the right hon. Gentleman lend the forces of the Crown to Lord Clanricarde to enable him to carry out what his own counsel had described as his "devil's work?" Would the right hon. Gentleman lend the forces of the Crown to precipitate conduct which *The Times* had characterized by so strong a phrase—would the right hon. Gentleman do that in face of the great crisis that was impending when these 3,000 and more eviction notices came to fruition; or would he—recognizing the crisis —give some guarrantee or hold out some hope that the Government would meet this difficulty both of arrears and of eviction by legislation.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), at the commencement of his address to the House, complained that the debate had somewhat drifted away from the question of arrears and the propriety of dealing with it by further legislation; but I presume that his complaint was rather directed against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) than it was directed against us. Because, although the right hon. Gentleman had most carefully narrowed his Amendment so as to deal with the question of arrears only, yet almost the entirety of his speech was occupied with quite another topic. I will not follow his example in that respect, but I will invite the attention of the House to this question of arrears, and I will do so very briefly. We have been asked by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford what is the alternative to the Plan of Campaign. That is a perfectly fair question to put, and it is a question that demands a plain answer. The alternative to the Plan of Campaign, in my humble judgment, is this—the enactment by the Legislature of fair, just, and equal laws, as it has done; and a fair and temperate enforcement of those laws. What, Sir, let me remind the House, is the position of the Irish tenantry at this moment? The hon. and learned Member for North Longford has asked whether such a state of things as that which now exists should be allowed, when one man can desolate a country. How can one man desolate a country? By the 20th section of the Act of last year any tenant against whom there is a process of eviction for non-payment of arrears of rent can prevent the country being desolated so far as he is concerned. The tenant has the opportunity of going into Court, and if he can satisfy the Court that the non-payment is outside his own fault, he can obtain stay of process, and yet, in the face of that, we are told that it lies in the power of one man to desolate a country. The Legislature has taken very good care already that no such power shall be in the hands of any one man. This question of arrears has been during this debate mixed up with the question of the management of one single estate. Lord Clanricarde has been held up by the hon. and learned Member as a typical landlord, and Lord Clanricarde's estate as a typical estate; but I do not think that any fair-minded Member of the House, no one who has followed events, or who is acquainted with recent affairs, will be disposed to acquiesce in the statement that Lord Clanricarde is a typical Irish landlord. Any man who is acquainted with recent trials will most assuredly not accept the statement that Lord Clanricarde is a typical Irish landlord. In proof of this, I need not go beyond the fact stated to the House that his able counsel, in the action for libel brought against him by his former agent, used in reference to his own client the exceptional language which has been referred to. I would desire to point out what has already been done by the Legislature with regard to leaseholders and arrears. The hon. and learned Member for Longford has advised the Irish tenantry to look for their protection, not to the law, but to a policy of resistance, which he describes as their only hope. I cannot hope that my words will reach the ears of my fellow countrymen, as the words of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford will; if I could I would implore them to avoid those evil and perilous courses that have desolated so many Irish homes, and delivered so many of my fellow couutrymen to a punishment which is none the less lamentable because it is just and inevitable. With reference to the present position of Irish tenants, the Act of last year placed the Irish leaseholders almost on an equality with those tenants who held under the fair rent provisions of the Act of 1881. As to the tenants who have kept wholly outside the Court which is established for the fixing of fair rents, they have done so because their rents are about the average of the rents that are being fixed by the tribunal on adjoining estates. When it is said that the Government refuse to legislate on the question of arrears, I ask—has the history of last year been forgotten? It is forgotten that the Government Bill in its original form contained a proposal for relieving the heavily-weighted tenants of Ireland, not only from arrears of rent, but from their debts generally. Is it forgotten that the Chief Secretary said that the Government had no particular affection for the term bankruptcy, or for the particular clauses embodied in the Bill, and that they were ready to accept more simple machinery and more direct procedure? The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), however, as the Chief Secretary said, put his foot down and insisted that relief should be given only in respect of one form of indebtedness. The Government last Session invited any hon. Member who was anxious to bring forward any proposal with regard to arrears generally to do so, and promised to give any such Amendment favourable consideration. But it was pressed by hon. Members opposite, and pressed most strongly, that relief should be given against one particular form of indebtedness, and one particular form of indebtedness only, and that was against arrears of rent. That is a principle that is rather novel in the application of the law, and the more so as lawyers had been rather accustomed to the exceptional position of landlords in regard to the recovery of rent. It is naturally asked why that particular form of indebtedness should be treated exceptionally. The arrears that are to be dealt with in the case of judicial tenants embrace arrears which have been declared by proper tribunals to be fair rents; and how can it be contended that debts so incurred should be treated as less obligatory than other debts incurred under contracts with tradesmen and money lenders? If there is no provision under the Act of 1887 for the relief of the tenant from his indebtedness, including these arrears of rent, the fault rests with those who deliberately resisted the suggestion of the Chief Secretary. The Government threw out the most clear suggestion that they were willing to give the most favourable consideration to any general scheme of relief to the Irish tenant from his load of indebtedness. Although the Act of last year did not allow any abatement to be made on arrears, yet it contained provisions the substance of which were that, when under notice of ejectment proceedings were pending which would result in eviction or in the sale of the holding under a writ of *fi. fa.*, a tenant might apply to the Court, and, if he could satisfy the Court that he was unable to pay, he might obtain not only a stay of proceedings, but, in respect of arrears of rent, relief by spreading their payment by instalment over any number of years. It is said that protection is not given against seizures of stock under a writ of *fi. fa.* But the object of the Act is to protect the tenant in his holding. By the process referred to any of the other creditors besides the landlord can take his stock and implements. The object is to give him reasonable protection in his holding where he can show that his non-payment of rent is due to no fault of his own; and the most substantial protection is afforded him. If few applications have been made for protection, does not that show that tenants are deterred from going to the Court by the belief that they cannot satisfy the Court that non-payment is not due to their own fault? It is said that the rights of tenants are destroyed by the eviction notice, under Section 7. But a period of six weeks is given to the tenant, in addition to the six months for redemption, and that is a clear gain to the tenant. I again repudiate the suggestion that the landlord of the estate that has been so often referred to is a typical Irish landlord; but I contend that even on that estate the protection given by legislation, and especially by the Act of last year, has been most substantial and most beneficial to the tenants.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): The House and the Government find themselves to-night face to face with two distinct groups of facts. The first relate to the condition of Ireland as it has been exposed to them by the right hon. Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). The second, brought before them by the Amendment, show that the great question of arrears was practically untouched by the legislation of last year, and that arrears still remain a heavy burden upon the tenants of Ireland, and a source of constant mischief and disturbance. I am not going to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) or my right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford into the whole history of the Clanricarde estate. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was a brilliant and eloquent speech; but it seemed to me to be marred by something that was in it and by the absence of something that was not in it. There was the inevitable reference to Lord Spencer; there were the invariable *tu quoques* and long quotations of violent things said by Nationalists in Ireland. But I would really appeal to the Government whether they expect by personal recriminations and quotations from stale speeches to advance their policy or to commend it to the judgment of the House? But the House must have noticed two remarkable omissions in the speech. The right hon. Gentleman did not attempt to explain any part of the conduct of the Executive Government in Ireland in the administration of the law, though the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford mentioned case after case in which explanation is obviously required. I think it is a very unfortunate thing that there should be a suspicion of anything unfair and underhand in the dealings of the Government. Granting everything the right hon. Gentleman said as to the cause of the mischief in Ireland, we are obliged to inquire into the particulars of the methods in which he deals with that mischief. No doubt the Government can produce some technical plea and defence for the steps they have taken. They are surrounded by ingenious lawyers. The Irish Government is, in my opinion, too much in the hands of lawyers; and these ingenious lawyers will be able to furnish, in their triumphant way, some excuse for everything they have done. But I tell the Government that no technical plea will satisfy the opinion of this country or even of this House; and I doubt whether it will satisfy the conscience of the Government themselves. What is the business the Government are about? They are endeavouring to oppose to the best of their power those who seek to alter the system of government in Ireland. They wish to commend the present system of government in Ireland. They wish to reconcile the Irish people to the law; and, therefore, the first thing they ought to do in their administration of justice is to avoid anything like the appearance of partiality or strategy. They should be transparently impartial. They should try to disabuse the public mind in Ireland of the idea, which now possesses it, that the law and the whole administration of justice are worked as a political engine, at the bidding and for the purposes of the Executive. It is their business not only to do right, but to seem to do right. It is thus peculiarly necessary that such cases as have been mentioned to-night should be explained. My right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford has quoted several transactions in regard to these Woodford and Loughrea occurrences, and he asked for explanations; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland did not think it worth while to give any explanation. I should have thought that these were matters worthy of the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. The second omission in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was very remarkable. We do not want to know the past history of that estate nearly so much as what the Government are going to do in regard to it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary went back into its past history. He quoted old speeches, and he denounced old crimes. We are all as ready as he is to denounce crime; but let me point out that though those crimes took place before the recent depression in agriculture, they did not take place before the causes of which we complain existed. There was then, as there is now, an absentee landlord conducting his property for selfish purposes. And what is the difference now? There are no such crimes now in the Loughrea district. Instead of those crimes we have open combination, which you may call illegal if you like, but which has the great advantage of being open. We were all amazed to hear the hon. and learned Attorney General for England (Sir Richard Webster) claiming for the Government as one of the merits of their policy that they would drive the conspiracy underground. Are the Government going to join in the new Campaign of evictions? Are they going to steel their hearts against the grievances of the tenants and use the forces of the Crown for the purpose, not of exterminating—I will not say that—but reducing largely the number of the peasantry in that district, reducing to ruin the country side, and that on the estate of a man for whom the Government have not a word to say? But now as to the second group of facts to which I have referred. The Amendment directs the attention of Parliament to the question of arrears. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said little or nothing as to that, and his silence means, I presume, that he is content to leave the question as it was left by the legislation of last year. Therefore it becomes necessary to inquire how it was left by the legislation of last year. Now, I cannot deny that on this side of the House we have a strong motive for raising that question. We can recall with perfect complacency all the criticisms and predictions in which we indulged last Session on the Bill then before the

House. There is hardly one of them that has not been amply justified by events. I do not believe that the most confident and most ardent admirer of Her Majesty's Government can look back with pride and satisfaction on that measure. We all remember its fantastic course; during which provisions were introduced at one stage only to be dropped at another, and then inserted again. Then lofty doctrines were pompously proclaimed, only to be summarily abandoned, and the Bill was cut about and altered with no pretence of altered convictions on the part of its authors, but merely in obedience to the temporary political necessities of their situation. I was amazed at the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General quoting as something to be proud of the Bankruptcy Clauses of the Bill. Why, they were abandoned amid almost universal ridicule. Then the Government was forced, not by their own conviction of what was right, still less by the arguments of Irish Members, but by the pressure of the Party in the House to which they owe their existence, to concede the revision of judicial rents; but they succeeded in mutilating that concession by two qualifications. In the first place, they prescribed that the alteration of rent should be exactly governed by the difference in prices in recent years; and, in the second place, they withheld from the Land Commissioners and the Courts of Law any power to modify the amount due as arrears of rent. These were both of them serious, and even fatal, blemishes in the scheme, if it was intended to be a satisfactory settlement; but it is with the second only that we are now dealing. The House will recollect that, in what were called the equitable provisions of the Act, the Government themselves practically admitted the necessity of affording some relief with regard to arrears; but they confined this relief to affording in some cases longer time for payment. No power was given to the Land Commission to touch them, but, in the case of the smaller class of tenants, the Court before which proceedings for eviction may be pending, received power to stay execution and order the arrears and costs to be paid by instalments. But no discretion was given as to the whole amount. The Government proceeded on the extraordinary idea—I would even say the grotesque idea—that while the annual rent might be exorbitant, and might therefore demand modification, yet if two or three years' rent were due, and thus became, as it were, consolidated into a sum of arrears, the sum thereby lost its exorbitant quality, it ceased in fact to be rent, and became a mere ordinary debt, of exactly the same nature as a debt due to a tradesman or shopkeeper. Our contention on the other hand is that rent is rent, whether it be due for one year or for half a dozen; and that if the yearly rent is excessive, the multiple of it which we call arrears, and the fraction of it which we call an instalment, are equally, in their proper proportion, excessive. As a matter of fact, the advantage to the tenant from the provision in the Act of last year with regard to arrears has proved utterly and entirely useless. As the House will observe, the tenant must be insolvent before the Court can deal with him at all. This insolvent tenant is expected to pay his rent and at the same time to pay in punctual instalments the accumulations of the very same rent which has caused him to be insolvent; and if at any time he fails in the punctual payment of those instalments he is at once ousted from his tenancy. It so happens that we are not left to conjecture with regard to the working of this provision, because I find that the Judges themselves have informed us of their opinions. The County Court Judge for County Carlow, on the 10th of January, stated that the County Court Judges had been considering this question, and had come to the conclusion that if a man was in a hopeless state of insolvency it was useless to give him time. But it was for these very insolvent tenants that the provision was passed. Another Judge, the County Court Judge for County Waterford, went at considerable length into the case of one claimant. He said—

> "I would be doing the man no service whatever by making an order that the arrears should be spread over the half-yearly payments. His rent is too much already; he is not able to pay it, and if I put an instalment of £4 on it in addition, will that help him? Of course it won't, and the moment he fails to pay any instalment he ceases to be a tenant. It is the next best thing to getting rid of tenants that could possibly be conceived. It is like putting a stone round a man's neck in order to make him more buoyant. If he fails to comply with the order of the Court the stay upon the

execution of the ejectment will be removed, and although he may have paid nine instalments, if he fails to meet the tenth he ceases to be a tenant, and may be put out of possession, and in six months his right of redemption will be exhausted."

I think, therefore, the House will conclude that an arrangement of that sort is not worth much. It is impossible to see with what consistency or logical force the Government can maintain a condition of things such as now exists, while at the same time they have themselves admitted that the judicial rents ought to be revised. Now, I have said that if rents fall into arrears, the arrears may naturally be presumed to be excessive in the same degree as the proportion of the rent. But the case is even stronger, because I am not sure by any means that the precise proportion in which rents are excessive forms an accurate standard by which to gauge the injustice of arrears. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary put aside the case of Scotland and the Crofters' Commission; but though there is some force in what he said, that the dealing with arrears was, so to speak, the first clearing of the ground preliminary to the fixing of new rents, yet the facts which have been disclosed by the Crofters' Commission are very difficult facts indeed to get over. The general result of the Crofters' Commission down to the end of last year is that, while they have reduced rents by nearly 31 per cent, they have cancelled arrears to the extent of 61 per cent. And since the Report which was issued to-day was drawn up—that is to say, since the beginning of this year—the Commission have completed the settlement of a particular estate in Caithness, the estate of Clyth, the figures of which are so remarkable that I will quote them to the House. The rents were reduced by 50 per cent, while the arrears were reduced by no less than 79 per cent; that is to say, the arrears were £1,891, of which £1,495 were wiped out altogether. I do not say that the case is exactly on all-fours with the situation in Ireland, but it intensifies the argument in favour of treating arrears and rents with some similarity of method. Now, the facts with regard to arrears in Ireland to which the Government have persistently shut their eyes during last year have been brought before us in a forcible way to-night. It seems to me to be abundantly clear to anyone who looks with any care into the matter that these arrears really lie at the root, if not of all certainly of a large part, of the agrarian disturbance now existing in Ireland. Arrears lie at the root of the Plan of Campaign, for the frustration of which the Government have invoked, and to a large extent in vain, all the powers of their Coercion Act. Arrears are the cause of that shower of notices, 3,352 in number, by which many a tenant has found himself silently and unwittingly transformed into a caretaker, and deprived of his status and rights. And if arrears form the larger part of the dispute as to agrarian affairs in Ireland, I would put it to the Government whether they would not think it better even at this late hour to acknowledge the necessity of applying some legislative mitigation to the cause of all this mischief? The Government have consented to revise the rents of which the arrears are composed. The Land Commissioners have revised and greatly reduced rents, and yet the Government regard those rents as sacred and inviolable the moment they are crystallized into the form of arrears. Let the House consider what the result of a large and generous dealing with arrears would be. The Government have been engaged for some months in proceedings for which they may think they can produce some justification, but which we condemn as cruel and tyrannical. The circumstances which, in the estimation of the right hon. Gentleman, have called for these proceedings would not exist if this question of arrears was dealt with. Unquestionably there would have been no Mitchelstown, no Woodford, no meetings out of which disorder could be manufactured, and few, if any, cases of the arrest or imprisonment of hon. Members of this House. There certainly would have been no case of Mr. Blunt. Having made the great concession of last year, will not the Government, for the sake of peace and order and the pacification of Ireland, extend that concession to the rents due for past years in addition to the rents already dealt with? Right hon. Gentlemen will say that they are engaged in vindicating the authority of the law. On a broad view of the case, I allege that what they have been doing has tended to discredit the law and seriously to injure its authority. But if they mean that in a technical sense it is their duty to furnish protection to the officers engaged in carrying out evictions, then they are themselves directly responsible for the scenes of disorder which ensue, because though they themselves recognized in the Statute of last year that the rents which compose those arrears were unfair, yet they are content to use the power of the Executive for the purpose of enforcing them. Therefore it is that in the name familiar to hon. Gentlemen opposite—in the name of law and order, as well as on the ground of reason and justice, that I would urge the Government to deal immediately and generously with the question of arrears, and it is on that account that I give my cordial support to the Amendment.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Before I answer certain observations of the right hon. Gentleman, I should like to place, as clearly as I can, in two or three sentences what is the legislative position which the House occupies towards Ireland in respect to the Land Question. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side have said that the one thing which is required to restore peace and order is some settlement of the question of arrears. Now, for the last seven years the time of this House has been continually occupied by the Irish Land Question; and what has been done during that time? I ask the question because no Member on the opposite side has taken full cognizance of the various Acts which have been passed. In 1881 we passed an Act which, according to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), was to be a final Act, in which the power was taken from landlords of regulating their own rents. Within a year of that Act, a further Act was passed which dealt with all questions of arrears in all tenancies in Ireland under £30. And we had a further Act which dealt with the case of tenants whose rents had been fixed, but who, in consequence of the fall in prices, might find a difficulty in paying those rents; and we associated with that Act certain powers which gave the County Courts authority to deal with and spread over a number of years the arrears of tenants who might be unable to pay. Such being the position which the tenant occupies in Ireland—a position immeasurably superior to that of the occupier of land in any other country—why should we be asked to postpone useful legislation for Great Britain in order to pass fresh land laws for the benefit of Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman asked why the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should indulge in personal recrimination. But what did the right hon. Gentleman term personal recrimination? He described by those words simple quotations from the speeches delivered by right hon. Gentlemen opposite when in Office. I know that right hon. Gentlemen admit that nothing which they have said in the past is worthy of credence, and that they do not hold themselves responsible for anything which they may have said or done in former years. But that is a dangerous argument to use, because if right hon. Gentlemen think so badly of their past words and actions, should we be wrong in thinking equally badly of their present utterances and deeds? The right hon. Gentleman found fault with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for not noticing a number of specific cases of alleged harsh treatment under the Crimes Act which were brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). I listened with great pleasure to the speech of the right hon. Member, and I will now tell him something which he does not seem to have borne in mind. England, in past times, conquered Ireland, and, to put the matter coarsely, now holds Ireland in subjection by physical force. Now, Ireland being unable to take a complete revenge, individual Irishmen take their revenge in a very wicked way upon individual Englishmen. The natives of Ireland enjoy nothing so much as befooling a gullible Saxon. With intuitive perception the peasants, especially in the South, find out what it is that an Englishman wishes them to say and what he wishes them to leave unsaid, and they take their cue accordingly. I think that the right hon. Gentleman has been thoroughly gulled. In the past, this plan of individual revenge by Irishmen did little harm; but now it is otherwise, for it seems to be necessary that every Member of the Radical Party who wishes to qualify for Office should make a tour in Ireland, and publish to the world the extent to which he has been misled. When I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford recount the story of the man who was sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labour for intimidating his mother into resisting the law—

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): For inciting his mother to resist the law. I maintain that the case is a true one.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Of course, the right hon. Gentleman thinks that the case is a true one, or he would not have put it before the House.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Does the noble Lord say it is untrue?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have no personal knowledge of the matter. I will answer the question by saying that I believe the statement to be every bit as true as the statement made the other night by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), who described how there had been an elaborate system of voting in a certain suppressed branch of the National League, and how the votes were far too evenly divided for Irishmen ever to have taken part in such proceedings. It appears to me that whenever a right hon. Gentleman goes away for the purpose of collecting materials for a case against his opponents he lends a too willing ear to any nonsense that is told him. But to leave the right hon. Gentleman and to come to the question which is under discussion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in his speech made perfectly clear what is the nature of the conflict between Lord Clanricarde and his tenants. My right hon. Friend made it evident that, however much we may deplore the differences between Lord Clanricarde and his tenantry, Lord Clanricarde is not the main sinner. A series of gross and barbarous atrocities were committed in the neighbourhood of Woodford and Loughrea. They were committed before agricultural prices began to fall, and they were directed against what is known as the landed interest, and those who thus provoked the conflict are to a large extent responsible for the consequences which we now have to face. If Lord Clanricarde has retaliated, I think it may be fairly said that the Plan of Campaign, which has been denounced by Judges of the highest authority in Ireland as illegal, has found in him a very tough customer when fighting with legal weapons, and we are not disposed to do anything which will interfere with the operation of the law. When we are asked to deal, as we have been by hon. Gentlemen opposite, with this question of arrears, I am bound to say that there is upon the Irish Land Question a difference which has grown and developed itself during the past two years between the two Front Benches in this House. Only last week we listened to an eloquent speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in which, while alluding to the Plan of Campaign, he said nothing whatever in condemnation of it, and in reviewing the proceedings of the National League he likewise uttered no condemnation of their past action. Now, Sir, what is the real difficulty in dealing with this question of arrears in Ireland? What has been the object of the National League ever since it has been in existence? Its object has been to depreciate the value of land in Ireland, because they believe that by ruining the landlords they can get rid of those whom they call the British garrison in Ireland and carry out the chief political objects which they have in view. Every move, every speech, no matter whether made by a high official or by one of the humbler members of the League, has been directed to that end and to that end alone. We have heard a good deal about the Plan of Campaign. Now what is the Plan of Campaign? It is a movement by which persons who can afford to pay their rents are forced to combine with those who cannot pay their rents, the whole object of the movement being to compel the well-to-do tenants who are able to pay to combine with those who are not, and the object, of course, is to put undue and improper pressure on the landlords. There has been a great deal of denunciation of land-grabbers. Now what is the main object of what is called land-grabbing? There are two classes of land-grabbers, the landlord and the tenant. I put aside the first class, and I take the class of the tenant land-grabber. A tenant land-grabber is a man possessed of industry, thrift, and energy, and who in consequence of these qualities is willing to take up land and to pay rent for it, which the persons who previously held it were unable to do. The whole object of denouncing land-grabbers and holding them up to public hatred is to take away from men those qualities of industry and thrift, because the landlords are thus put in a worse position than before. These are the two main instruments by which the National League was worked in Ireland. Can any one doubt that among the causes of the large arrears which exist in Ireland are the Plan of Campaign and the denunciation of land-grabbers? If that is so, we can understand why pressure is brought to bear by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway in order to get a settlement of the Land Question. Last year, when the Land Bill was before this House, a general objection was expressed to the bankruptcy clauses, and in consequence the Government withdrew them. The Government then made not only a fair but a most generous proposal to the House, and especially to hon. Members below the Gangway. They stated their willingness to deal with this question of arrears, and to put such clauses in that Bill as might wipe off the indebtedness of the tenant, provided that all other creditors were treated in a similar manner, and my right hon. Friend took a public opportunity of announcing that he was ready to bring in clauses to that effect if hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway would accede to them. But there was no sign or indication of such being the case. Why? Because the doctrine of the National League, from one end of Ireland to the other, has been that the last person whom the tenant is called upon to pay is the landlord; that the tenants have duties towards themselves and towards the shopkeeper, but that it is better to go about with their hands in their pockets than to do anything towards paying the landlord. That doctrine has prevailed through Ireland, and the Government declined before, and they decline now, to assent to any proposal which places the landlord in a worse position than other creditors. The right hon. Gentleman opposite denounced our action of last year, but ignored the proposal which we made and the manner in which that proposal was dealt with. Now, there is one question which ought never to be absent from the mind of this House, and especially of those who sit on this side of it. If you deal hastily and precipitately with the question of arrears, with a view of assisting those who have not paid their rents, what are you going to do with those who have paid their rents? I had a conversation lately with an Irish tenant, a man who had been in arrear, and he said to me, "What will the Government do for me and the likes of me, who pay our rent, if it ever takes up this question?" When this House has placed the Irish tenant in a position so superior to that of an occupier in any other part of the world, it is not too much for us to expect him to respond by making a real *bonâ fide* effort to comply with his legal obligations. The right hon. Gentleman who proposed this Amendment (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) does not pretend that he can distinguish between those who are able and those who are unable to pay their arrears of rent. The result of the teachings and doctrines of the National League is that it is almost impossible in any part of Ireland to distinguish between those who are able and those who are unable to pay. I say that so long as those doctrines are preached, so long as it is impossible to distinguish between those who can and those who cannot fulfil their legal obligations, so long is there a permanent obstacle to the settlement of this question. We were asked to-night to facilitate legislation, to bring in a Bill, because there has been a landlord in Galway, who has made strong, and possibly extreme, exercise of his rights. There are no men who suffer more than Her Majesty's Ministers do from the acts of those who make an extreme use of their rights as landlords in Ireland, and if I am ever asked by an Irish landlord how can he help the Government in the great task they have before them of strengthening the existing union between England and Ireland, I always reply, "By treating as liberally and as generously with your tenants as circumstances will permit, and not only so, but by preaching the same to others." We are asked to generalize hastily from one particular case, and from that to pass a general law. After the Address is voted, Her Majesty's Government will ask the House to consider the Rules for the system of Procedure in this House.

There is one, and probably more than one, hon. Member of the House who may make use of the Forms of the House to obstruct the General Business of the House, but that is no reason why the House should infer that every man who makes use of the Forms of the House is abusing them. Last year Her Majesty's Government said that they were determined—so far as they were concerned—that Ireland should not "block the way" for legislation for the rest of the Kingdom in 1888. That statement we keep to in the main. We offered last year generous terms for dealing with the arrears of rent; they were not accepted, and we now decline for the present—[*Cheers*]—hon. Gentlemen who cheer should wait till I have got a little further—we decline in any way to touch the Irish Land Question—either as regards arrears or purchase—until we have made good our promise to deal first with the legislative wants of Great Britain. That is the undertaking we gave last year; that is the work into which we embarked last year, and to that undertaking we intend to adhere.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, the speech just delivered by the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) was conceived in a spirit which he believed a great majority of that House would consider to be utterly unsuitable to the subject; but, whatever the House might say, he knew perfectly well what the majority of the country would say with regard to the speech when they read it. Because at the opening of his speech, the noble Lord had indulged in what he (Mr. Dillon) must characterize as most undeserved sneers in approaching a subject of the utmost gravity. The noble Lord also declared on the part of the Government that they would stand side by side with Lord Clanricarde in Ireland, and that they would do nothing and say nothing to embarrass him in carrying out the law on his estates in that country. He thanked the noble Lord for that declaration, because he believed that nothing could be said in that House more likely to damage the reputation of the Government. He would make the noble Lord a present of Lord Clanricarde and of law and order. Being as he was an old-standing and determined enemy of maladministration, he would wish his enemies in Dublin Castle a no more unhappy fate than that of carrying on war against the National League in Ireland during the next year. The noble Lord had tried to minimise the specific cases which had been brought forward, but had utterly failed; and he had been asked what the Government proposed to do in this case, and the only answer given was that they were determined to see the law carried out. He himself had been accused of encouraging lawlessness in Ireland. It was possible that he might on some occasions have done what the Judges of the High Court had characterized as encouraging illegal associations; but it was a very doubtful question whether that was unlawful, and he must remind hon. Gentlemen that the juries in Ireland had not agreed with that description. He had been arraigned and stood his trial before a packed jury in Dublin with a most unfavourable panel, and had not been found guilty. But his utmost efforts to encourage lawlessness in Ireland would fade into utter insignificance compared with those of the Government in undertaking to enforce evictions on the Clanricarde estate. There was on the Clanricarde estate, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had admirably explained to the House, an absolute deadlock, and unless that House interfered with legislation, or unless the Executive interfered in a way different from that in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland was now interfering, he saw no way out of the struggle, and nothing except the continuance of this agrarian war in South East Galway on a scale which he could tell the right hon. Gentleman would attract the attention of the civilized world. Did the Government imagine that the people of England or the civilized world would look on quietly and patiently while an Army corps was engaged in clearing a district 21 miles long and 23 miles broad, with a population of 2,000? It seemed to him that the Chief Secretary approached this subject in a spirit as unbecoming as that of the noble Lord, and he deeply regretted that he had gone out of his way at the beginning of the speech to make a bitter and personal attack upon a man who was now a prisoner in Galway Gaol. It had been suggested to the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it would be an ungenerous thing not to exercise the power in his hands to liberate his political opponent, in order that he might take part in the election at Deptford. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that it was in his power to release Mr. Blunt, in order that he might fight his battle in that House, and it seemed to him extremely unwise and ungenerous that he should have refused to exercise his discretion in this matter.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I made no attack on Mr. Blunt, except to accuse him of extreme ignorance of the country in which he was.

MR. DILLON said, the right hon. Gentleman had accused Mr. Blunt of associating with men in the county of Galway whom he proceeded to accuse on grossly insufficient evidence of having committed the crime of inciting to assassination. That was a very serious charge to make, and he (Mr. Dillon) repeated that, in his opinion, an attack had been made on the character of Mr. Blunt. That was the charge brought against Mr. Roche, but for which the Chief Secretary gave no adequate foundation. He knew Mr. Roche as a man of irreproachable character, but he was nevertheless accused of inciting to assassination. The words of Mr. Roche, on which the right hon. Gentleman relied to support the accusation, were—"We have had our Balaclava, and we shall have our Fontenoy." Those words, whatever they meant, and it was not clear what they did mean, were spoken two months before the murder of Finlay, yet such was the impartial spirit of hon. Gentlemen opposite that they accepted these words as amounting to incitement to assassination. Would the right hon. Gentleman stand up and read the Charge of Chief Justice Palles? That Judge did not make any charge against Mr. Roche; he said that the deplorable calamity that followed his speech ought to be a warning to all men against using exciting language in a disturbed district. But it was a very different thing to say that a man had used exciting language, and to say that he had incited to murder and assassination. Probably there was no Member of the House that had not at one time or another used exciting language, and therefore he said that the charge of the right hon. Gentleman was one of the most cowardly things that any man could possibly do. He must say that the sneers levelled by the Chief Secretary in his best style at the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford were, to his mind, peculiarly out of place. He appeared to insinuate that the mission of the right hon. Gentleman was extremely ridiculous. The Chief Secretary for Ireland would pardon him (Mr. Dillon) if he and others who lived in the disturbed district which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) visited took precisely the reverse view of the matter. Whatever might be the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary who now governed Ireland, hon. Members on those Benches believed that the mission of the right hon. Gentleman to Loughrea would entitle him to the gratitude of the people of the district. It was well known that he went with a two-fold purpose, and, despite the sneers of the Chief Secretary, he went at the risk of his position in England. He went there at no physical risk, but there were other reasons which many men did not like to face. He went to Loughrea to bring about a settlement in the district on account of which, had he succeeded, the Government ought to have been his most grateful debtors. One result of the mission had been that on the Burke estate, in connection with which the murdered man Finlay was employed, the right hon. Gentleman had been enabled to effect a settlement at the request of the landlord himself, and the dispute on that estate had been brought to a termination, all the evicted tenants had been restored, and an agreement had been arrived at which would probably not be disturbed. If the right hon. Gentleman had failed on the Clanricarde estate—and he had failed—it was because Lord Clanricarde was a man deaf to the voice of reason. There was nothing that could be considered ridiculous in the mission of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford; and if his feelings had suffered at all, which he (Mr. Dillon) doubted very much, in consequence of the sneers of the noble Lord and hon. Gentlemen opposite, he would find ample compensation in the affectionate remembrances which would remain among the people of South Galway. It seemed to him that the right hon. Member for Bradford had made a speech couched in an extremely temperate tone, considering the subject with which he had to deal. The subject was one on which English gentlemen found it difficult to speak at all in temperate language when they had mastered the history of the business. He had known many Englishmen who, having mastered the circumstances on the estate, had spoken in stronger language even than he had used, and that was giving a large margin. The right hon. Gentleman had made certain specific charges against the Administration in Ireland, to not one of which had a reply been given by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He said it was still possible for landlords in Ireland to commit injustice with regard to their tenants; that, taking the case of the Clanricarde estate as an example of the general state of things, a most monstrous and wholesale perpetration of injustice was about to take place. To the first of these charges the Chief Secretary made no reply, and to the second he gave an answer which was utterly lame and impotent, inasmuch as he made no attempt to touch the point. The third charge was that the Government had used the Coercion Act more actively to support Lord Clanricarde than in any other way, and to that no Member of the Government had attempted to reply. They had listened over and over again to the statement of the Irish Secretary that the law must be enforced. But had the right hon. Gentleman forgotten that the other day at Bodyke 35 families, acting under his advice, broke the law, and took forcible possession of the houses from which they had been evicted? Why did not the Government enforce the law in that case? The fact was that they were afraid to do so, because the Home Rule Party had won three elections in England in consequence of the sufferings of the Bodyke tenantry. The name of Bodyke was a terror to the Government. Would the Chief Secretary stand up and say it was not true that 35 tenants did not hold possession of their houses?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It rested entirely with the landlords to turn them out.

Mr. DILLON said, the right hon. Gentleman had now delivered himself into the hands of the Philistines. It did not rest with the landlords. These people broke the law of the land; they held their houses in forcible possession for six months; and it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman, according to his version of the law of the land, to have punished them for doing so. There was no doubt that the landlord appealed over and over again to Dublin Castle. [Mr. A. J. Balfour dissented.] The Irish Members protested against the insertion in the Bill of the provision relating to the taking of forcible possession; but no notice had been taken of their protests, and now that these families had taken forcible possession of their houses, the right hon. Gentleman did not punish them. What was it that stood between the Government and the enforcement of the law? It was the Election at Spalding, and the Northwich Election, which was, in fact, won partly by the sufferings of the tenantry of Bodyke. The name of Bodyke stank in the nostrils of the Government, and they were determined not to raise the question again; while Colonel O'Callaghan, who was going to resist the Plan of Campaign for 20 years, had fallen back on it and accepted £1,000. In Woodford the Coercion Act had been turned into an engine of the most fearful persecution, and all for the benefit of Lord Clanricarde. He asked the House to consider the excuses put forward by the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman went back when charged with straining the law in the Woodford district, and recalled to the recollection of the House what was the condition of the district two or three years ago; but it was noticed that his catalogue of outrages stopped in March, 1886. No doubt the district was in a very bad condition when the Executive Government had control of it; but as soon as the Plan of Campaign had the control of it, crime and outrage ceased. The Chief Secretary wanted it to be believed that Irish Members were responsible for all the outrages and crimes which occurred. In 1880 he (Mr. Dillon) had gone down to the Woodford district and got up a combination among the tenants; that combination lasted for two or three weeks, during which there were no murders or crime. By the action of the agent of Lord Clanricarde that combination was broken up, and when he was at Portumna the tenants informed him that it was broken up, and in October they came and told him they had paid their rents. Upon that, he told them that he cast them off, and that he left the tenants and the Government to settle the question between them. What was the result? They had evidence that between 1880 and the date of the unhappy murder of Finlay, nine men were murdered in the district, not one of whose murderers did the Executive Government bring to justice. The duty of civilized government was two-fold—first, to protect the property of people, poor as well as rich; and, secondly, to protect the lives and liberties of the people. The Government had had the Woodford district under their charge for five years without interference from Irish Members, and they had done neither the one nor the other. They allowed the tenants to be robbed by the landlords, and they allowed the landlords' agents to be murdered. That was the condition of Woodford in March, 1886; and in the autumn of that year some of the most respectable inhabitants came to him (Mr. Dillon) and asked him to go down to the district and interfere, and he did so. He went down on the 14th of October, 1886, on which day they held a meeting in the town of Woodford. Why could not the right hon. Gentleman produce any crimes after the 14th of October, 1886? His catalogue, as he (Mr. Dillon) had shown, stopped in March, and he was utterly unable to show that the adoption of the Plan of Campaign had brought crime into the district, or to disprove that its adoption had brought peace to the neighbourhood by affording to the people some other means of protection than that of secret societies, to which the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) wished to drive them. To his mind, the idea of the Attorney General and the Government appeared to be to bring back Ireland to the condition in former times of struggles and disturbance in which the country was placed before the formation of the National League and Plan of Campaign. To listen to hon. Gentlemen opposite one would suppose that the Irish Members were a set of foreign mercenaries, who had put an end to prosperity and stirred up dissension in the country. It was amusing—although sometimes exasperating—to receive long lectures from the present Chief Secretary and his Predecessor in Office, for whom he (Mr. Dillon) entertained very different feelings, on the subject of his duty to the Irish people, and based upon his want of knowledge of the people amongst whom he was born and lived. What was the condition of Ireland in times of former agricultural distress? He would use no words of his own to describe it; but, in justifying their present policy, which had been so desperately and, he might say, so ferociously attacked, he would refer to the description given by a traveller in Ireland in 1849, who, after reflecting upon the terrible outrages which were from time to time committed, came to the conclusion that the cause lay in the refusal of the law to do its duty, to the denial of their rights to the people, and to the fierce competition for land. These people, the writer observed, were driven to the laws of Nature, and they believed it was only by those acts of vengeance that they could hold in suspense the hands of the landlord and the agent, and that a fierce and relentless war was being waged between landlord and tenant in Ireland. Those were the words of John Bright, the senior Member for Birmingham. The condition of things which he described in 1849 went on still, and, instead of being mitigated, had grown worse. The crime of Irish Members was that, paralyzed and pained by this condition of things, they had endeavoured to discover some method by which they could bring peace to the people, and carry on this war against injustice without recourse to outrage. He contended that they had discovered such a method, which, whether it was legal or not, had served their purpose, and would continue to serve their purpose. It had served their purpose in several ways. It had withdrawn the peasantry of Ireland from recourse to crime, and afforded protection without those acts of vengeance which Mr. Bright had said were formerly necessary to stay the hands of the evicting landlords, and had opened out a path which the people would be able to follow. With respect to the Clare estate, the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) and the Chief Secretary exhibited the most extraordinary ignorance. They both urged that the tenants could have gone into the

Land Court, and that the fact of their not doing so was proof positive that their rents were reasonable.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, it had been stated by a right hon. Gentleman that one of the reasons the tenants did not go into the Land Court was because their rents were very nearly on a level with those the Commissioners were fixing.

Mr. DILLON said, he would give the House his experience of the rents. As soon as the Land Act was passed, and the combination he endeavoured to get up in 1880 broke down, the tenants did try to go to the Land Court. But no one who had not laboured in East Galway could form any conception of what the influence of Lord Clanricarde with the tenantry was before that influence was broken down by the Plan of Campaign. The tenants found to their dismay that the Sub-Commissioner and their own solicitor were lunching every day at the Castle with the agent of the landlord. The unfortunate tenants withdrew their cases and went home, because they lost all faith in the justice of the Commissioners and in the solicitor they had employed. Every engine of oppression in the hands of the landlords was used to punish those who came into the Land Court. They were served with ejectment notices for the payment of arrears. Every decision was appealed against, and the tenants were brought up to Dublin and put to great expense. He admitted that on that occasion the reductions granted by the Land Court were not very great; but he would draw attention to what happened when a combination arose on the Clanricarde estate. The first combination to demand reductions, after the one in 1880, was formed at Woodford in 1885, and the tenants asked for a reduction of 25 per cent on the rents of Lord Clanricarde. At the same time 50 or 60 tenants plucked up courage and went into the Land Court at Portumna. What was the result? The Chief Secretary said the reductions left the rents very much as they were before. He might have accepted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre); but, if he did, it only proved that the right hon. Gentleman had understated the case of the Clanricarde tenants. When the cases came up at Portumna the first rent was reduced from £30 to £15; and others from £10 to £7; £18 to £11; £30 to £14 5*s.*; £6 10*s.* to £3 15*s*; and £15 to £9 10*s.* The average reductions all round were 35 per cent, whereas the tenants had combined to ask a reduction of 25 per cent. In dealing with this matter, perhaps it would be as well to request the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to get some of the clerks in the Irish Office to make marginal notes in the Blue Books, and give him the facts instead of taking them from anyone.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Not from the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. DILLON: No; for he was not paid £4,000 a-year to govern Ireland. Coming to another part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, he had made a sweeping attack on the Plan of Campaign. He (Mr. Dillon) was not anxious to boast about the Plan, although it had served its purpose very well, and had acquired the confidence of the people of Ireland. Not all the power of the Administration could destroy that Plan of Campaign. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, with his usual omniscience, gave for the benefit of the House an awful picture of the distress caused to all the tenants who had adopted the Plan of Campaign. Well he (Mr. Dillon) would give the right hon. Gentleman some information on this subject, as it was some time since he had had an opportunity of hearing what had occurred in regard to the Plan of Campaign. In all, the tenants on about 95 estates adopted this method of obtaining justice. He had procured a settlement with regardto 42 of those estates, and he found that there had been only two evictions, that no kind of suffering had been inflicted on the tenants, and that they had got what they had originally demanded and had been refused. Thus it appeared that the dreadful picture drawn by the right hon. Gentleman of the sufferings of all who trusted to his (Mr. Dillon's) advice was rather highly coloured. He did not know what kind of authority was to be accepted in that House as to the sufferings of the tenants. The right hon. Gentleman said that the greatest misery prevailed among the Brooke tenants. The Brooke estate was one on which no settlement had been arrived at yet; and the right hon. Gentleman had assured the House that misery and despair were prevailing there. Now, it happened that he received yesterday a letter from the parish priest couched in the following terms:—

"I see in *The Freeman*, Balfour states, that the people here are in a bad way. This, like many other of his statements, is absolutely false. I met most of the tenants to-day and yesterday, and I am able to say they were never in better spirits than at the present moment, and many of their neighbours envy their good fortune in being under the Plan of Campaign. As a matter of fact, the tenants on a neighbouring estate, numbering 30, waited on me to-day, and on three other different occasions, asking me to take their money under the Plan of Campaign, and I refused to do so, because I consider the landlord a fairly good man, and they can get terms from him without having recourse to this policy."

Under these circumstances, he (Mr. Dillon) advised Father O'Neill not to take the money, as he had done in every case where the landlord was a good man. He had received another letter from a priest in the County Clare, who said—

"I am glad to be able to inform you the tenants on the Burton estate have got all they asked for—namely, 7*s*. reduction on judicial, and 10*s*. reduction on non-judicial, rents, the landlord agreeing to pay all costs and to withdraw all legal proceedings. The tenants on the Vandeleur estate are in excellent spirits, and have not the slightest intention of abating their demands."

The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary might say that he knew the condition of the tenants better than the priest of the parish in which they resided. Of course, when they met with a conflict of testimony like that, they would leave the landlord and Father O'Neill to settle it. He (Mr. Dillon) had just received news from the Bodyke tenantry, whom he met two years ago in a state of absolute despair, whose condition was os desperate that it excited the compassion of an English gentleman (who was not a sympathizer of theirs) so deeply that he put his hand in his pocket and offered £300 to appease Colonel O'Callaghan, but Colonel O'Callaghan was fool enough to refuse that £300, and they sent it back to Mr. Tuke, and the landlord never saw it again. They had settled that estate without taking Mr. Tuke's £300. Although they were told that the Irish tenants were beggars and dishonest, they had settled it without that £300, and he had a letter from Father Murphy, who had received high encomiums from Colonel Turner, Mr. Tuke, and many other gentlemen who did not sympathize with their movements, as a high-minded and honourable gentleman. In that letter Father Murphy stated—

"I have met the tenants to-day, and I have been commissioned to thank you on their behalf; but I cannot find words to convey to you what they would wish to say for all you have done for them. I have distributed the money amongst them in order that they may be able to settle down more comfortably and happily than they otherwise would do, and they are well satisfied with their position."

That was his experience of the Plan of Campaign, and he had found as a rule, that time generally justified their statements. It did not justify the statements of the Chief Secretary. That was the condition of things on the estates where there had been a struggle. On the 40 estates where he had effected a settlement he had secured the demands of the tenants without any struggle at all. The right hon. Gentleman selected an extremely bad instance when he sneered at him, because in the town of Ballyhaunis, in his own constituency, he (Mr. Dillon) told the people that if they adopted the Plan of Campaign they would be better off. Let the right hon. Gentleman go down and ask Lord Dillon and Lord De Freyne, and the 10 or 11 neighbouring landlords, covering a district extending over 30 square miles —every single man of whom had yielded to the Plan, and who had dismissed their agents if they were unpopular at his (Mr. Dillon's) request, and who had accepted rents according to the settlement of the Plan. Let him ask them whether the Plan of Campaign had inflicted sufferings on the tenants, as the right hon. Gentleman had alleged. What had been effected in the town of Ballyhaunis and its neighbourhood? He (Mr. Dillon) could take the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary 30 miles around the neighbourhood, in Mayo and Roscommon, over estates where the Plan of Campaign had been successful without a blow being struck. He should think that at the very lowest estimate there were 12,000 families in his own constituency and the neighbouring parts of Roscommon, where the Plan of Campaign had been adopted without the loss of half-a-crown over the whole transaction. By the exertions of his agents in the district and the administration of the Plan they had reduced the rents by many thousands of pounds. And as to crime, how many crimes had been committed in East Mayo? Would the right hon. Gentleman turn to his record of crime and see how East Mayo came out on the list? He ventured to say that even in Ulster they would not find better accounts of the peacefulness of the district than the reports from their Resident Magistrates in regard to East Mayo. They had given the right hon. Gentleman a challenge the other day which he had passed over in silence. They had put it to him to mention a single case of crime arising through the operation of the Plan of Campaign. And what was the answer they received? The hon. and learned Attorney General for England (Sir Richard Webster) produced, out of the whole length and breadth of Ireland, one solitary case of crime, which, he said, was presumed by the police to have arisen out of the Plan of Campaign, and it was an attack on a tenant of Mr. Worthington, in the neighbourhood of Castlerea in Roscommon. There was not a tittle of evidence to prove that, except that the estate of Mr. Worthington was under the Plan of Campaign. The case had not been in Court, and there was no evidence to show that the man had been attacked for anything he had done in regard to the Plan of Campaign. He (Mr. Dillon), when he had heard of the case, had telegraphed over to his agent to make inquiries, and from the answer he had received it seemed that the man was attacked while on his way to market to sell some pigs, in order to get the money to complete his contribution to the organization; so that, if they looked at the probabilities of the case, the injuries were more likely to have been inflicted on the man by the landlord's bailiffs. There had been some insinuations as to where the money taken under the Plan had gone. Let them ask the landlords who had settled under the Plan whether they had lost a single half-crown? Over £10,000 had been paid to the landlords under the Plan of Campaign, and he asked the Chief Secretary to produce the testimony of a single landlord to show that under any settlement made with him under that organization the terms had not been honourably carried out to the last farthing. So much for the Plan of Campaign. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary seemed to gloat over the condition of the estates on which the great struggle was proceeding. He said that war could hardly bring more havoc and desolation on the country than they were bringing by the Plan on these unhappy people. Now, he (Mr. Dillon) had gone into the movement with a full sense of responsibility; but they had learnt by bitter experience in Ireland that they got nothing without fighting hard for it. Indeed, he was free to admit that there were very few things in this world which were worth having to be got without stern and stiff fighting. He knew it was the policy of certain Members from the North of Ireland to avail themselves of every benefit the Nationalist Members won for the tenantry of Ireland, and then boast that they had done nothing to obtain those benefits. They were the law-abiding citizens of Ireland, who generally rushed into the Land Court, and availed themselves of the Arrears Bill which the Nationalists had fought for and won at the risk of imprisonment —yea, at the risk of their lives. This he would say, that it was true that this struggle had on certain estates like those of Clanricarde, Massereene, Brooke, Ponsonby, and Standish, inflicted considerable suffering on the people. To those, however, who, like the Irish Members, knew the true condition of the Irish peasantry, the sufferings of the tenantry, mitigated as they were by the fact that they had at their back a mighty organization which had secured for them the shelter of a roof and a comfortable meal on their table, were but as a drop in the ocean compared to the sufferings and misery of generations of Irish tenants who, for the want of such an organization as now existed, had been driven out of their homes. Hon. Gentlemen sneered at £1 a-week, but many people would have been unable to keep a roof over their heads but for such grants. Great as the sufferings of the people were, they were but as a drop in the ocean to the sufferings of generations of other people. Were the Irish to be alone amongst all the nations of the world when they saw a great object before them—the emancipation of the country—who were to submit to the slavery and degradation to which they had been condemned? Were they to slink back and be terrified by some little suffering which stood in the way while other nations were willing to spill their blood and see their children lay on battle fields in mangled heaps in the struggle for emancipation—were they to hang back because men at such places as Bodyke had been driven from their homes? He told the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the people of Ireland—and he spoke the sentiments of the Irish peasantry when he said this—the people of Ireland counted these sufferings as a light thing in the great struggle they were carrying on, and that if the right hon. Gentleman imagined he was going to make a successful appeal for the confidence of the people of Ireland against the Nationalist Members by exaggerating the sufferings of these tenants he would find himself sadly and painfully mistaken. For his part, if he found that the people of Ireland were frightened or turned back from this struggle by the knowledge of the few evictions which had taken place under the Plan of Campaign he would utterly scorn them. He should say the Government had done right to deny the Irish people liberty, because they were unworthy of liberty. He assured the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that unless he could devise a much stronger Coercion Act than he carried through the House last Session he would find the Plan of Campaign was a great deal too strong for him. Let them consider for a moment what was the condition of affairs in Ireland. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) stated just now that the House of Commons had for seven years been passing legislation in regard to land in Ireland. That was perfectly true, and why so? Because the Government would not take the advice of Irish Members seven years ago, and would persist in doing the business piecemeal, inch by inch, as the Irish Representatives dragged it from them by fierce agitation. If the Government had taken the Irish Members' advice in 1881 they might have earned the gratitude in some measure of the Irish people. That they had ignored that advice was the secret of their failure. They had passed four Land Bills, and in every single instance the Irish Members said that the Bill would not cover the whole of the ground, and in no single instance did the Bill cover the whole of the ground. He detected in the speech of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) a partial admission that they were right, for the noble Lord said the Government declined at present to deal with this question. Would the noble Lord kindly inform them how high they must make the pot in Ireland boil before the Government would listen to them? If he would, he would save a great deal of time and trouble and anxiety to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, for believe him it would come up to the required boiling point yet. The people of Ireland had learned the lesson well, and they knew what refusals of Ministries like this were worth. About 30,000 or 40,000 families in Ireland could not obtain the benefits of the land legislation, and it was idle and absurd and a mockery of statesmanship to be quibbling and casting *tu quoques* across the Table when the fate of 30,000 or 40,000 families was involved. That was a serious factor in the case, and no amount of rhetoric or quibbling argumentation would change the case. These thousands of families had learnt the secret of agitation, and would continue to agitate until they got the protection which had been afforded their more fortunate neighbours. So long as the Government kept these men out of the benefits of the land legislation they would have disturbance and disorder in Ireland. The Government had got two roads open to them. He admitted frankly and openly that he could point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—if he were taken into the right hon. Gentleman's confidence, though he did not mean to give him any instruction—he could point out to the right hon. Gentleman a Coercion Bill by which he could put down the Plan of Campaign. But what would be the result? The old system of murdering landlords and agents would be resorted to by desperate people in Ireland, and they would be just exactly where they were 15 years ago and would have gained nothing. The Government had before them the choice of dealing either with an open organization which would do everything in the light of day and which would act with care, because its leading men would have to account for their acts, or, on the other hand, they could adopt the policy suggested to the House by the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) of compelling the branches of the National League to meet in holes and corners. If they adopted the latter policy he did not know but that after great industry and after some time they might succeed in turning some of the branches into Ribbon Lodges. If they wanted to try that policy let them try it. If they did, he could tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the present Coercion Act would not suit his purpose: he must have something a great deal more stringent. In conclusion, let him say he earnestly hoped the Government would apply their minds in a more serious and different mood to the case of the Clanricarde estate than they had up to the present. They had on that estate an epitome of the situation in Ireland. It was false to the agrarian situation to say that Lord Clanricarde was an exception to the rule of Irish landlords. He was a bad specimen, but he (Mr. Dillon) knew worse. He said, without hesitation, that Colonel O'Callaghan of Bodyke was worse in the respect that his rents were more exorbitant. Lord Clanricarde was a specimen of the Irish landlords, and it was only because his private character was so unpleasant that he was looked on as worse even than others of his class. What made his case so important was that it affected nearly half the county—it affected 1,500 families. Lord Clanricarde was a man of large means, a man of desperate resolution, a man who had announced the deliberate intention of turning Eastern Galway into a desert unless the tenants paid their rents to the last farthing. The tenants would not pay unless they got fair terms. That was the task the Government had got before them in Ireland, and they ought to realize it as it was? If they made up their minds to stand by Lord Clanricarde, they would have to march an Army Corps into Eastern Galway, desolate the country, and exterminate the inhabitants. The Nationalists had great resources; and if the Government carried out a policy of that kind, their resources would be quadrupled and quintupled. The National Party would appeal on behalf of the Clanricarde tenantry to the millions of the Irish race all over the world; and allow him to tell the Government—great and mighty as it was—that they were prepared to carry on this war for two, three, four years, and even longer. They would support these people, and they would see how long the public of England would stand patiently by while English soldiers and the Executive in Ireland were engaged in this glorious war.

Question put.

The House *divided*: — Ayes 186; Noes 261: Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 11.)

Address *agreed to*:—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

MOTIONS.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty." —(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, upon what grounds the Motion was moved without any Notice? He could not help thinking that a very bad precedent was being established. He understood it would not be regular to make this Motion until after the Report of the Address had been agreed to; but, in his opinion, it was a very strange thing, an unconstitutional thing, to make the present Motion without Notice. He should like the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) —who, he understood, had made the Motion—to tell where there was a precedent for the Motion. If the Government intended, as he saw they did, to take to-morrow, surely there was no necessity for them to make this Motion in this peculiar way. He knew there were cases in which Motions had been made without any explanation whatever by the Government; but if the Standing Orders compelled the Government to put down Supply to-morrow, surely they should give Notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman seems to think this is an exceptional proceeding. The Standing Orders require that Committee of Ways and Means should be set up immediately after the Address is voted.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If the Standing Orders require this, there is no need of a Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a Motion to carry out the Standing Orders.

MR. T. M. HEALY: My point is, that if the Standing Orders require it there is no need of a Motion. I think the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury should give us some explanation——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I cannot permit that. This is merely a formal proceeding, and I am acting under the obligations of the Standing Orders.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PAUPER LUNATICS ASYLUMS (IRELAND) (OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION) BILL.—[BILL 135.]

(*Mr. Johnston, Mr. Chance.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he did not think it was necessary to take up the time of the House by making any observations in explanation of the provisions of the Bill. The Bill passed through the House of Commons last year, and would have passed through the Upper House but for a misunderstanding. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) had backed the Bill, and both sides of the House were agreed as to its advisability.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Johnston.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I merely rise to assert my right as a Member of this House to address the House upon any Question put from the Chair, whether the Question is called formal or not.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not in Order in making that protest, nor do I know what he refers to.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. SPEAKER called upon Mr. JACKSON.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I should like to ask if this is a formal Motion?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! This is a usual Motion to make.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I understand there are——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think the hon. and learned Gentleman is now disputing the ruling of the Chair, and he is out of Order in doing so. This is a usual Motion to make. The hon. and learned Gentleman can take exception to it, if he thinks proper.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I did not complete my sentence.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. and learned Gentleman challenged the ruling of the Chair, and I told him—and I tell him again—that that was disorderly.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think it right to say I had not concluded my sentence when you spoke.

Committee *nominated* of,—Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Barran, Sir Walter Barttelot, Sir George Baden-Powell, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Lane, Mr. Mason, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Salt, Sir Richard Temple, and Mr. Wodehouse.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

EAST INDIA [PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS].

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That to-morrow a Committee be appointed to consider of authorizing the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise money in the United Kingdom for the purchase of the Oudh and Rohilcund Railway, and for the construction, extension, and equipment of Railways in India through the agency of Companies (Queen's *Recommendation* signified)." — (*Sir John Gorst.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he should like to know upon what grounds the Motion was made without Notice? Would the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India (Sir John Gorst) say whether this was a formal Motion?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, it had been the practice for a great number of years to make this Motion. It was merely a Motion for setting up to-morrow a Committee in which he should move that a Bill be brought in. When the Committee was set up the hon. and learned Member would have the opportunity of discussing the matter if he thought fit. The practice of setting up Committees in this way was one which had been pursued possibly for centuries.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 24*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Pharmacy Acts Amendment (13).
Select Committee—Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services * (3), *nominated.*

THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST, AND THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS.—QUESTION.

The Earl of STRAFFORD asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether the recommendations made by the Board of Visitors in 1887 at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, have been or are in course of being carried out? The points to which he drew special attention were the desirability of making provision for the cataloguing of the library at Sandhurst, the insufficient accommodation at Woolwich, where there were 232 students, or 32 above the normal number, and the urgent need of establishing at that Academy some sort of hospital for infectious diseases.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Lord Harris), in reply, said, that the question of the cataloguing of the library at Sandhurst had come before a Departmental Committee, and after reading their Report he must say he was not of the same opinion as the Board of Visitors. He thought that there was an ample staff at Sandhurst for carrying out the cataloguing there without calling in extraneous aid. As to providing hospital accommodation at Woolwich in case of infectious disease, he understood there was no room available for that purpose. With respect to the suggested alterations and additions to Woolwich Academy, including hot water apparatus, it was estimated that they would cost £24,000; and the Secretary of State, looking at the requirements of other Public Services at the present time, did not consider the alterations of a character sufficiently urgent to justify so large an expenditure.

PHARMACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

(NO. 13.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that one or two alterations had been made in its provisions since it was introduced last Session. Public hospitals and dispensaries had been put in the clause as places where the qualification of three years' apprenticeship might be obtained. The discretionary power of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain to dispense with that qualification, provided they were satisfied with the efficiency of the instruction which the candidates had obtained elsewhere, had been done away with. Another alteration was that the Bill should not come into operation until three years after next January, the object being that no wrong should be inflicted upon those who were now going through their apprenticeship course. But power would be given to make bye-laws which would come into operation next January. The Bill had received the unanimous assent of the Pharmaceutical Society, and it was entirely approved by the noble Viscount the Lord President of the Council (Viscount Cranbrook), who was unable to be present that evening.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

TRURO CATHEDRAL FABRIC AND SERVICES BILL [H.L.]

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee :—

L. Abp. Canterbury.	L. Bp. London.
D. Richmond.	L. Bp. Truro.
D. Bedford.	L. Sudeley.
E. Mount Edgcumbe. (*L. Steward.*)	L. Northbourne.
	L. Lingen.
E. Stanhope.	L. Grimthorpe.
E. Kimberley.	L. Magheramorne.
V. Halifax.	L. Basing.

The Committee to meet on Monday next, at half-past Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 24*th February*, 1888.

QUESTIONS.

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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — TRIAL OF REV. J. M'FADDEN, P.P.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state the cost of the Military and Constabulary on the occasion of the trial of the Rev. James M'Fadden, P.P., at Dunfanaghy, County Donegal, on 27th January?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The cost of the Military throughout the period they were employed on the duty referred to, including the expenses of the return journey to barracks, was £615 9*s*., and of the Constabulary £480 14*s*. 2*d*.

MR. BLANE: What was the daily cost?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: This extended over a period of about three weeks.

POST OFFICE AND INLAND REVENUE—STAMPS FOR CHEQUES, &c.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can give any Estimate for the year ending 31st March, 1887, or that ending 31st March, 1888, of the value of the Post Office stamps which are used as Inland Revenue stamps for cheques, receipts, agreements, &c.; and, if he can, whether he will lay the Estimate upon the Table; and, if he cannot, in what way he can satisfy the House that the Post Office produces a large annual surplus, or any surplus at all?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The value of the postage stamps used as Inland Revenue stamps for receipts, agreements, &c., during the year ending the 31st of March, 1887, was estimated at £488,120. This amount was paid by the Post Office to the Inland Revenue Department, and is not included in any published statement of Post Office Revenue. The stamps sold for Post Office purposes during the year ending the 31st of March, 1887, amounted to £10,213,000.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE—USE OF INK IN TRANSCRIBING.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is true that literary men engaged in the Public Record Office have been prevented from using ink in transcribing, on the ground that the public have damaged the records; whether he is aware of any actual case of such damage; whether the Master of the Rolls last year received an influentially signed Petition on the subject; and, whether any decision has been arrived at on such Petition?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): It is true that all persons using the public search rooms in the Public Record Office, either as taking extracts from or making notes of, or transcribing, the public records, are by Rules forbidden to use ink. Indelible pencils are now directed to be supplied to every person using those rooms, to be used by them instead of pens and ink. The Master of the Rolls has, after careful consideration, resolved to adhere to those Rules; because he has himself seen many valuable ancient rolls which have been injured by ink, and has, after inquiry, come to the conclusion that serious injury has been caused by accident, or want of care, while the rolls were being used in the public search rooms—the Master of the Rolls has no means of ascertaining by whom? Anxious as he is to afford every safe facility to the frequenters of the public search rooms, the Master of the Rolls, after carefully considering the safety of the records on the one side, and inconvenience to the public on the other, and after having personally visited the rooms and conversed with various frequenters of them, has thought himself bound to adhere to the Rules; he has received a Petition, signed by 64 persons, advocating a return to the use of ink; and a Petition, signed by 84 persons, in favour of continuing the existing Rule.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—CORK DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM — APPOINTMENT OF REV. MR. KERR.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the authorities in Dublin Castle have refused to sanction the appointment of the Rev. Mr. Kerr as Presbyterian chaplain to the Cork District Lunatic Asylum; and, what reasons have been given for the alleged decision?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council made an Order on the 1st of February authorizing the appointment of a Presbyterian chaplain to Cork Asylum. They have not refused to sanction the appointment thereto of the rev. gentleman named.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — MACROOM UNION—PROTESTANT INMATES.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What were the number of Protestant inmates of the Macroom Union in the past 12 months; and, whether it is true that the Protestant chaplain receives £10 per annum for ministering to the religious wants of one poor old woman?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: There were now two Protestant inmates of the Macroom Union, and that number has not been exceeded during last year. The salary of the Protestant chaplain is £10; and the duties of the chaplain are not confined to the workhouse, but he has to visit any Protestant patients who may be temporarily admitted into the workhouse hospital.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask, as there are only two Protestant persons in the Macroom Union, how there can be any extra attention to any other Protestant persons?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: There are only two persons on the regular number of inmates in the Union; but it may be possible that persons may be brought into the workhouse hospital as temporary inmates.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION (COUNTY DONEGAL) — UNION OF STRANORLAR.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state when the Sub-Commission for County Donegal will hear the fair rent applications entered from the Union of Stranorlar; and, whether he is aware that a large number of tenants residing in this Union had their originating notices served on the Land Commission before the gale day at November last, and, although entitled to the benefit of the reduced rent in respect of the half-year expiring on the gale day next previous to the passing of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," they will be obliged to pay the old rent up to the date of the decision of the Commissioners?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners have promised to supply me with a detailed answer to-morrow.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—ARREARS OF INSTALMENTS OF THE PURCHASE MONEY.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What was the sum of arrears of instalments of purchase money under "The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885," on the 31st January, 1888?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The total amount of instalments due up to the 31st of January last was £50,910. Of this amount £2,702 was uncollected on that day; but £417 has since been collected, and the balance is in course of collection. The arrears on account of gales due before the gale day in November last are under £70.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—RETURNS OF THE JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Returns of Judicial Rents decreed since August, 1887, will be distributed?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Returns in question were laid on the Table the day before yesterday.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—TREES IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to the condition of the trees in and round St. James's Park; what steps he proposes to take with reference to them; and, whether he intends to remove those which are dying or have lost their leader, and replace them by younger and healthier trees?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): It is, unfortunately, true that some of the trees about Birdcage Walk and the Mall are not in a healthy condition. As we see occasion we remove those which seem to be dying, and replace them by younger and more vigorous ones. But the soil is not very favourable, and the trees when originally planted were not skilfully treated.

In reply to Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) as to the cutting down of trees on Constitution Hill in 1880,

MR. PLUNKET said, he could not answer it, as he was not an ædile at that time.

COLONIZATION—COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have taken into their consideration the question of holding another Colonial Conference, for the purpose of discussing matters of Imperial interest, and especially the question of Colonization; and, if not, whether they will do so at as early a date as convenient?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that to hold another Colonial Conference at an early date would put the Colonies to very great inconvenience, which could only be justified by the necessity of discussing urgent questions not capable of being otherwise dealt with. Colonization, though a subject of great importance, is one which can be conveniently dealt with by correspondence; and, therefore, Her Majesty's Government do not consider that a Conference should be summoned for the purpose of discussing this question.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS ACT, 1875—AMENDMENT—EMIGRATION.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he intends to introduce the Bill, promised last Session, to amend the Industrial Schools Act of 1875, so as to give greater facilities to the managers of Industrial Schools for emigrating those children whose cases appear to be suitable for emigration?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I intend to introduce a Bill to consolidate and amend the Industrial Schools Acts, and have now under consideration the provisions of that Bill. I am not prepared to state what those provisions will be until the Bill is presented to the House.

ARMS (IRELAND) ACT—REFUSAL OF GUN LICENCE—MR. W. COTTER.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. William Cotter, who resides at Breenymore, near Bantry, County Cork, has been refused by Mr. Warburton, R.M., for a licence to keep and carry a gun on his farm, though recommended by a local magistrate; whether he is aware that Mr. Cotter holds a farm of 170 acres, and requires a gun to protect his crops from vermin; and, on what ground Mr. Cotter was refused a licence?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Resident Magistrate has been absent from the district on duty, and I have not been able to get materials of a detailed answer to the Question. I hope to be able to answer the Question in a day or two.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE SORTING OFFICE, DUBLIN.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Why the Rule of the Service was not carried out in the recent promotions in the Sorting Office, Dublin, when a second class sorter was promoted to the first class over 28 seniors, some of whom are at the maximum of their class for years?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Question implies that on the occasion to which the hon. and learned Gentleman refers the Rule of the Service was departed from; but such was not the case. I think the House will agree that I am always extremely reluctant to supersede seniors by their juniors in cases of promotion unless there is good reason for so doing. I was assured, on this occasion, that not one of the second class officers senior to the one promoted was fully qualified to perform the different duties which had to be provided for.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The expression "was not fully qualified" has, doubtless, reference to the suitability of such persons; but do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that out of the large number of persons of the same rank not one of those persons was so qualified?

MR. RAIKES: That was declared to be the case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How was the qualification to be tested?

MR. RAIKES: The superior officers have always to make a Report to the Postmaster General with a view to these promotions; and, of course, in so large a Service it is impossible for the Postmaster General to be personally acquainted with the particular qualification of every clerk. He must be guided in a great measure, almost entirely, by the advice of those who are responsible to him. But I am always ready to investigate any of these Questions if there appears to be reason to do so.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE MAGISTRACY—REFUSAL OF BAIL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether Irish Resident Magistrates have power to refuse bail, as they have done to the hon. Members for West Waterford and West Cork; would an indictment lie against Justices for refusing bail in the case of prisoners entitled under section 16, sub-section 2, of the Petty Sessions Act, as of right to bail; and, is it the law, under the sub-section quoted, that any ordinary Justice of the Peace of the county may attend the gaol and take bail for prisoners awaiting trial, except in cases of the serious offences therein specified?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): In the cases referred to by the hon. and learned Member, the granting or refusing of bail was in the discretion of the magistrates, and this was recognized by the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of the application to that Court of the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly). The Court, while admitting the hon. Member to bail, stated that the magistrates had a discretion in the matter, and that they had exercised it rightly. The section of the Petty Sessions Act referred to in the Question deals with the case of committal to trial for an indictable offence, and has no reference to remand or adjournment before committal or sentence, in which cases bail is discretionary with the magistrates. The legal questions contained in the second and third paragraph do not arise in relation to the particular cases referred to; but, in reply to the hon. and learned Member, I may say that a Justice illegally refusing to accept bail in the case of a prisoner entitled to bail does not commit a misdemeanour if he acts under a *bonâ-fide* mistake of the law. The law is as suggested in the third paragraph of the Question in the case of persons committed to trial for indictable offences; but not in the case of prisoners committed to gaol under remand.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether these cases were not indictable offences capable of being tried by juries, but which, instead of being tried by juries, are tried by Resident Magistrates; and, whether the hon. and learned Gentleman is aware that bail up to £5,000 was offered and refused in the hon. Member's (Mr. Pyne's) case, and that the same magistrates who refused bail afterwards dismissed the charge as unsustainable?

MR. MADDEN: Even if the case came within the category of indictable offences, and came under the section referred to, in cases of remand bail is always discretionary. I know nothing as to the amount of bail tendered.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CECIL ROCHE, R.M.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Has his attention been called to the fact that, on charges where Resident Magistrates have no special jurisdiction (such as the preliminary hearings at Tralee into the murder of Quirke), the police are bringing prisoners solely before Resident Magistrates; did the Quirke investigation at Tralee begin in Petty Sessions; if so, has he any information to show why all the unpaid County Justices were absent; has his attention been called to the statement of Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., at Tralee, to the unpaid Justices sitting in Court there, that he would direct the notice of the Lord Chancellor to their conduct, in refusing to give priority to the hearing of cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; on what principle was this demand made for the postponement of the ordinary Court business; has Mr. Roche, R.M., made any representation in the matter, or will any notice be taken by the Government of the language reported to have been used by Mr. Roche; how long has Mr. Roche been himself a Resident Magistrate; can he state the circumstances under which Mr. Roche went to Tralee Gaol and obtained from a prisoner the statement to which he deposed in the Quirke case; had Mr. Roche previously sat in this case as one of the Resident Magistrates before whom the prisoners were originally brought; did he adjudicate thereon, refusing remands, &c.; if so, how does it occur that Mr. M'Dermott, R.M., now sits alone in the case; is there any precedent for an adjudicating magistrate becoming a witness before a Court of which he is a member, as to matters occurring between remands; how many different Resident Magistrates have dealt with this case since the crime was committed; and, in what way, and by whom, is it decided that cases cognizable either by Resident Magistrates or Justices of the Peace, such as an assault on a policeman, are to be tried by Resident Magistrates to the exclusion of the unpaid Justices?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): I cannot find that there is any ground for the allegation contained in the first paragraph of this Question. With reference to the Quirke case, it appears that Mr. Roche, having held a magisterial investigation, and having satisfied himself that the case was one for further inquiry as against the accused, remanded them to Petty Sessions, where the case was heard in the usual way. It was open to the unpaid magistrates to attend, and I am unable to say why they did not do so. As to the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs of the Question, Mr. Roche never had any controversy whatever with the local magistrates at Tralee as to the priority of cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; but a question of the kind did arise at Rathmore. If this be the matter referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman, I shall be happy to make inquiries if he repeats this portion of his Question. Mr. Roche was appointed on the 23rd of October, 1886. With reference to paragraphs 7 to 11, I have to state that it was at the urgent request of the prisoner, conveyed to him through the Governor of Tralee Gaol, that Mr. Roche visited him and obtained from him the statement that had appeared. Mr. Roche had previously heard some of the evidence; but after his interview with the prisoner he took no further part in the case, except to take the prisoner's depositions. Three magistrates acted in the case. The Attorney General for Ireland decides before what tribunal important cases should be tried; and in less important cases the directions are given by the Divisional Magistrates.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who gave the direction in the case of the Mayor of Cork?

MR. MADDEN: The prosecution in that case was directed by the Attorney General for Ireland.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—"BLUNT *v.* BYRNE"—PRISON CLOTHING.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on coming to Dublin for his recent trial, permission to wear his own clothes while attending Court was (unasked) offered to Mr. Wilfrid Blunt; by whose instructions, and on whose authority, this offer was made; why a similar permission (though asked for) was refused to the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy) when brought up as a witness on Mr. Blunt's trial at Portumna; and, whether it is true, as stated in the Press, that the hon. Member was driven six miles between Birr and Portumna (a distance of 12 miles) bareheaded, on an open car, during inclement weather?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The General Prisons Board inform me that, at the instance of the Attorney General for Ireland, they accorded to Mr. Blunt the privilege of wearing his own clothes; but that he declined to avail himself of it, with the exception of wearing his private overcoat. The Governor of Clonmel Prison states that the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy) did make application to him for permission to wear his own clothes on the occasion referred to; but that he did not consider that he had authority to sanction it, and accordingly refused the request. The Governor, however, permitted him to wear his private overcoat. The allegation referred to in the last paragraph is not true. The hon. Member was driven each time in a covered carriage. He was also provided with a cap.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say why the Attorney General for Ireland interfered in one case and did not interfere in the other?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I cannot say.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say whether it is the invariable practice in England to bring up prisoners who are witnesses in cases in their own private clothes?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: That Question should be put to an English Minister.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Arising out of the answer of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, would the Chief Secretary for Ireland be able to tell us whether the Governor of Tralee Gaol in my case applied for permission to send me in my own clothes down to the Court House; and whether an answer did not come back that if I resisted going in the prison clothes I was to be bound hand and foot and forcibly taken down?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: If the hon. Gentleman will give me Notice of that Question I will answer him.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that in this country, and in London especially, prisoners undergoing their sentences, and brought up as witnesses at trials, are invariably brought up in their own private clothes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am not able to answer the Question with precision; but I do not think the practice is invariable.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Are we to understand that the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy) was driven out with a cap; because I saw him carried by the police, and he was without a cap?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

POST OFFICE—MAIL CONTRACTS—SUBSIDIES TO STEAM COMPANIES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, If it is approximately true that the Peninsular and Oriental Company receive a subsidy at the rate of 6*s.* 8¾*d.* per mile for carrying the mails to India at the average rate of 12·50 knots per hour, and the Royal Mail Company a subsidy at the rate of 5*s.* 4½*d.* per mile for carrying the mails to the West Indies at the average rate of 11·87 knots, and the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient lines together a subsidy at the rate of 3*s.* 8*d.* a-mile for carrying the mails to Australia at the average rate of 11·3 knots per hour, whilst the Union and Castle lines are only paid at the rate of 1*s.* 8*d.* a-mile in the new contract, now practically concluded, for carrying the mails to the Cape at the average rate of 12½ knots; and what is the explanation of this great discrepancy; and, whether ocean postal rates could be very much reduced if all the mail services were paid at the same rate as the Cape Mail service?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The hon. Member's figures are approximately correct as regards the first three Services he mentions; but as regards the new Cape Mail Contract, which is stated to have been made by the Government of the Cape Colony, I have no official information. I really do not see how it would be possible to fix a standard scale of speed and price for all ocean mail contracts alike. The Post Office makes its contracts after open tender; and has no more power to prescribe universal rates for the carriage of mails to all parts of the world than merchants have to fix a universal tariff for the conveyance of goods. I think this must be obvious to the general intelligence of the House.

POST OFFICE — AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACTS — PRIVILEGES TO FOREIGN STEAMERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, during the discussion on the Mail Contracts to and from Australia, Was the attention of the Government called to the fact that the Messageries Maritimes (French) and North German Lloyd (German) Steamers have privileges allotted to them in the Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney Harbours not granted to the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Companies; and, has any, or is it proposed to take any steps in the matter in order to remedy the anomaly?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The point referred to by the hon. Member was duly considered in making the new Australian Mail Contracts; and it has been arranged that the two British Steamship Companies carrying the mails shall be placed on equally favourable terms with the French and German Companies as regards the privileges conceded to them in Australian ports.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Will the Postmaster General state if any steps are being taken in regard to giving the same privileges to English mail steamers at Ceylon and other Crown Colonies as are given to foreign semi-Government vessels?

MR. RAIKES: Yes; the matter is now engaging the attention of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Colonial Office.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SALARIES—DELAY IN PAYMENT.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, If it is a fact that Postmasters and letter receivers in Ireland were not paid the salaries due to them for money order business for the quarter commencing 1st September, 1887, until the 21st instant; and, if the Government intend to adopt any means by which this great delay will be avoided, and which will insure the payment of their salaries when due to these hard-worked officials?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that sub-Postmasters and letter receivers in Ireland, as well as in other portions of the United Kingdom, are paid for money order business by commission, and that the computation of the commission, applying, as it does, to a very large number of transactions at several thousand offices, necessarily occupies a good deal of time; but I will see whether the interval between the end of the quarter and the payment of the remuneration can be shortened in any way.

ADMIRALTY — COASTGUARD STATION ON BERE ISLAND.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the preliminaries for the erection of a Coastguard Station on Bere Island have been completed; and, if so, when the building of the same will commence?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing), in reply, said, the negotiations which commenced some time back for the purpose of removing the Coastguard Station from Bere Island to a more convenient situation had not yet much advanced; and until the conditions which the Admiralty considered necessary were fulfilled he could not undertake that the building would be commenced.

MR. GILHOOLY was understood to ask, was the noble Lord aware that the delay arose owing to some objection on the part of the landlord to the granting of the proposed site for the new Coastguard Station?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON repeated that the negotiations were proceeding.

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, SESSION 1887.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury Minute, by which the recommendations and decisions of the Committee of Public Accounts, Session 1887, are rendered operative, has been issued; and, if not, what is the reason of the delay; and, what is the ordinary date of issue?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The Treasury Minute dealing with the Report of the Public Accounts Committee of 1887 is dated the 23rd of January, 1888; the decisions contained in it have been communicated to the Departments concerned; and it will, according to custom, be laid before the Public Accounts Committee of this year at its first meeting. The last two Minutes bore the dates of the 3rd of November, 1885, and the 27th of December, 1886.

ADMIRALTY — MR. F. W. SMITH, A LOWER DIVISION CLERK.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether Mr. F. Werter Smith, the paid Secretary of the Conservative Association and Secretary of Mr. Darling's Committee, is a Lower Division clerk in the Admiralty; and, whether the only difference between Mr. Werter Smith and Mr. C. H. Andrews is that the former is paid for his services to the Conservative Party, and the latter acts in an honorary capacity?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Mr. Werter Smith is the Secretary of the Conservative Association in Deptford, and he is also a Lower Division clerk in the Admiralty. The second part of the hon. Gentleman's Question shows that he did not understand the answer which I gave on Tuesday last in reference to certain Dockyard Regulations laid down for the guidance of officials employed in those Departments. The object of the Rule which I then read out is not to prevent persons in the employ of the Government from voting or taking part in political contests. It is to restrain officials who are placed in positions of authority over *employés* in Government establishments from taking such a part in political elections as would enable them to politically influence those over whom they have official authority.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the noble Lord would be prepared to proceed against such a Head of a Department who unduly used his political influence?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Undoubtedly. Any official connected with the Admiralty who infringes the Dockyard Regulations will be liable to punishment, quite irrespective of political Party.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) wished to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in reference to the last answer, whether the same Rules obtained in all the Departments of the Public Service as obtained in the Admiralty?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must have Notice of that Question. I can only say, from my general knowledge, that the same principle absolutely and impartially prevails in all Government Departments.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: In the Inland Revenue?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I believe so.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—WINCHESTER ELECTION.

MR. MOSS (Winchester) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that, at the recent election for Winchester, the Conservatives were allowed to canvass the military at the barracks, while the Liberals were prevented doing so?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The officer commanding the troops at Winchester reports that the Service Rules regarding the admission of strangers to barracks were strictly carried out at the last election, and that no distinction was made between one political Party and another.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked, whether it was not the case that when the orderly sergeant came to him with orders from the Commanding Officer not to canvass the soldiers, and he desisted from doing so, the Conservative Party had already canvassed every soldier in the barracks?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I am aware that certain persons, both male and female, of both political Parties obtained entrance to the barracks, and began canvassing. The Commanding Officer thought that they were a great nuisance, and gave orders that they should be kept out without distinction.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): The right hon. Gentleman has said that certain persons, both male and female, were allowed——

MR. E. STANHOPE: I did not say "allowed." I said certain persons "obtained" entrance.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that all the persons who obtained entrance represented the Tory Party; and that the prohibition to further entrance of strangers did not begin until that Party had completed their canvass?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I am not aware of it.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. E. STANHOPE: The officer commanding makes no inquiry with reference to political Parties; but excludes them indifferently.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, That since it appears that the Government do not propose to make the free grant towards the cost of the drainage of the River Barrow more than about one-fifth part of the cost of the works recommended by the Royal Commission on Public Works in Ireland, how is it proposed that the balance is to be provided; and, what is the estimated sum per acre per annum which will be assessed upon the lands to be benefited?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I do not think any public advantage will be gained by entering into preliminary statements of the estimated expenses of carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—KANTURK PETTY SESSIONS COURT.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If it is a fact that a young man named Patrick Hongan, within the past fortnight, applied for a summons to the Petty Sessions Clerk at Kanturk against Constable Egan of that town, and that the clerk refused to issue a summons without the directions of a magistrate; whether Hongan then applied to Mr. Crawford, J.P., who refused to grant a summons until Hongan went before the Petty Sessions Bench and formally there applied for same; whether Mr. Crawford, at Kanturk Petty Sessions, on Saturday last, the 18th instant, stated from the Bench that it was always the custom not to issue summonses against policemen without the sanction of the Bench; and, whether there is any legal foundation for such a custom?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): I have caused inquiries to be made; but I have not yet received a Report. I would, therefore, ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone his Question.

STATE-AIDED EMIGRATION (IRELAND—CHARGES AGAINST MR. STONEY.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has inquired into the charges against Mr. Stoney, who he stated in September last was guilty of gross dereliction of duty, or something more, in connection with the money entrusted to him in carrying out the Government emigration scheme; whether Mr. Stoney is still on the Commission of the Peace; and, what steps the Government are taking in the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the charges against Mr. Stoney were fully inquired into by a Local Government Board Inspector, who found that the irregularities were attributable to a want of administrative foresight on the part of the committee. In one case, however, he attributed personal misconduct to Mr. Stoney for having permitted a girl to emigrate with a family to which she did not belong, contrary to a Rule of the Local Government Board. The Lord Chancellor then inquired fully into the case and all its circumstances, and has censured Mr. Stoney for having yielded to the girl's entreaties, thereby transgressing the Rules laid down by the Local Government Board, and also for not having taken sufficient steps to prevent the irregularities which had occurred. The Lord Chancellor saw no reason for removing Mr. Stoney from the Commission of the Peace; and the Government did not contemplate taking any further action in the matter.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he would like, as he now saw the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in his place, to refer him to the extraordinary language he used last year in reference to Mr. Stoney in the debate on the Estimates; and when his hon. Friend the Member for West Mayo was dealing with the question the right hon. Gentleman had said, interrupting his hon. Friend (Mr. Deasy)—

> "Perhaps it may shorten the hon. Gentleman's case if I say that the evidence he has quoted is admitted, and that it is not my intention to make any defence."

And he continued—

> "I cannot pledge myself to go as far as the hon. Gentleman"

—who wished to institute a criminal prosecution—

> "but I am quite ready to admit that Mr. Stoney has been guilty of grave dereliction of duty, and possibly, in some cases, of something more."—(3 *Hansard*, [320] 794.)

He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he, when that gentleman had been guilty of gross dereliction of duty, and something more in some cases—namely, peculation of hundreds of pounds—transmitted to the Lord Chancellor, with the Report of the Inspector of the Local Government Board——

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is not my function to convey anything whatever to the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: You promised to do it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman, in the last part of his Question, appears to have misquoted me—[Mr. T. M. Healy: I quoted from *Hansard.*]—because in the last part of the Question he said that I had expressed a distinct opinion that the gentleman in question was guilty of peculation. I beg to say that I never accused him of peculation. I do not understand the quotations which he has read from *Hansard*, and which I have not had an opportunity of looking at.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that perhaps, as the matter was one of great importance to the persons concerned, the House would permit him to repeat the quotation for the right hon. Gentleman. [The hon. and learned Gentleman again read the quotations, pointing out that the right hon. Gentleman had twice interrupted the hon. Member for West Mayo in order to make the statement which he had read.] He asked the Chief Secretary, whether he expressed to the Lord Chancellor, as the Chief Law Administrator in Ireland, an opinion that Mr. Stoney was "guilty of grave dereliction of duty and something more;" and, whether he would state what "the something more" was?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I again say that it is not my duty to give my views as to Mr. Stoney to the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor is perfectly capable of drawing his own deductions from the Report; and I maintain that the hon. and learned Gentleman will now see that it is so—that I never went the length of accusing the gentleman in the House of peculation. It has been already stated that the only charge sustained against Mr. Stoney was that he allowed a young woman to be emigrated as a member of a family to which she did not belong.

Mr. DEASY wished to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman, whether one of the charges which he admitted was brought against Mr. Stoney was that he used the public funds for the purpose of evicting his own tenants, and in order to get possession of their farms; and whether, under the circumstances, he considers Mr. Stoney a fit and proper person to hold the Commission of the Peace?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Give Notice of the Question.

Mr. DEASY: I beg to give Notice that I shall move a Resolution on the subject of Mr. Stoney upon the House going into Committee on the Supplementary Estimates.

CHARITY COMMISSION—CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether any steps are being taken to give effect to the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into matters connected with the Royal Foundation of the Blue Coat School, presented more than 10 years ago, and which concluded with the unanimous recommendation that,

> "For a thorough reform in the management and discipline of Christ's Hospital, we think that its removal from London is indispensable;"

whether it is true that the Charity Commissioners have satisfied themselves that the funds of the Charity are sufficient for the education of 1,300 boys, 900 girls, and 120 infants, in all 2,320 children, 1,320 of them as boarders, or more than double the number at present benefited; whether it is true that the opposition to the official scheme, issued two years ago, is, in a large measure, due to the action of the Aldermen of the City of London, and others, in respect of their "vested interests" in such Charity; and, whether he can state to the House when the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and of the Charity Commission, providing increased accommodation for more than 1,000 children, urgently needing such educational advantages as Christ's Hospital affords, will be carried into effect, so as to facilitate increased accommodation being provided at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which is so sorely needed, and which has been so long delayed?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The scheme of the Charity Commissioners, involving the removal of Christ's Hospital from its present site, and largely extending, as the hon. Member correctly states, the benefits of the Institution, is now engaging the attention of the Department with a view to progress being made with it. The scheme can scarcely be said to be opposed on grounds so restricted in their character as the hon. Member seems to suppose; but I hope before long to be in a position to make a definite announcement in regard to it. The increased accommodation of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, though depending, no doubt, upon the removal of the School, does not come within the cognizance of the Department.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—5TH LANCASHIRE ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in September last, the 5th Lancashire Artillery Volunteers applied for permission to raise a second battery at Blackpool, and a battery at Morecambe; and, whether, in view of the fact that further delay in enrolling recruits would probably involve the loss of the capitation allowance for this year, he can yet conveniently state whether the required permission will be granted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Applications from Volunteer corps for increase of establishment can only be considered together when the Estimates are in preparation. Having in view the greater requirements of other districts under the general scheme for the defence of the country now being worked out, I am sorry to say that it will not be practicable at present to grant an augmentation to the 5th Lancashire Artillery Volunteers.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—BANTRY PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to *The Cork Herald*, in which appears a report of a case heard at Bantry Petty Sessions on Saturday, 18th instant, where four men were charged with attacking a dwelling house; whether Mr. Warburton, R.M., refused to allow evidence for the defence unless the defendants or their solicitor would pay, or guarantee to pay, for the depositions about being taken; whether it is customary to require this; and, by what authority such a demand was made?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The case referred to was heard at Bantry Petty Sessions on Saturday. The Petty Sessions Clerks' Act requires that all depositions must bear a 1*s*. stamp; and the whole of the evidence tendered by the defence was received on the solicitor undertaking to pay the Stamp Duty. The course taken by the Bench was fully justified by the statute to which I have referred.

POST OFFICE—DISMISSAL OF SAMUEL HARVEY, A LETTER CARRIER.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Postmaster General, If his attention has been called to the case of Samuel Harvey, a letter carrier, who was dismissed from the Public Service on the 14th of January, 1882, on the charge of having obtained admission to the Agricultural Hall on false pretences; and, whether he has considered the fresh evidence that has been brought forward; and, if so, what is his decision?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): My attention has been called to Harvey's case; and, after considering the additional statements which Harvey has put in, I can see nothing to impugn the justice of my Predecessor's decision.

MALTA—CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have received the Report of the Royal Commission for arranging the electoral districts of Malta; and, whether they intend to present such Report when received to the House?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth), in reply, said, the Report had been received, and was included in the collection of Papers relating to the Constitution of Malta which were presented yesterday. The printing of these Papers was nearly completed, and he hoped that they would be distributed in a very few days.

CROFTERS' COMMISSION—HOLDINGS.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government will request the Crofters' Commission to report on the causes which have led to the circumstance that no holdings have been enlarged under the provisions of the Act of 1886?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Yes, Sir.

Mr. Madden

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—TENANTS OF THE LORD LIEUTENANT.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Lord Lieutenant, with a view to make a settlement with, or to sell their holdings at 20 years' purchase, to his County Down tenants, extended the time within which they could make applications to have fair rents fixed and be entitled to the reduction on the half-year's rent due at 1st November last, as provided by the 5th section of "The Land Law (Ireland Act, 1887;" whether he can state how many originating notices to fix fair rent were served on the Land Commission by the tenants of His Excellency between the 31st October last and the 1st February instant; whether notices were served on the tenants who had not made application to the Court, offering 20 per cent reduction on the old rents; and, whether, considering that there are upwards of 4,000 applications at present entered for hearing in the County of Down, and that one Sub-Commission could not dispose of all these cases for years, he will now consider the desirability of having a new Sub-Commission appointed for the County of Down?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he had not had time to get the information sought by the hon. Member, and he would, therefore, request him to ask it again.

ARMY CONTRACTS—SUPPLY OF LEATHER.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, When the Evidence and Report of the Committee, presided over by the Judge Advocate General, to inquire into the supply of Leather by Army contractors will be published; whether Messrs. Ross and Company, of Bermondsey, will be required to make good anything wanting in past supplies; whether the greater proportion of defective leather already supplied has been issued; what will be done with the hides remaining in store; whether it was at one time decided to rescind Messrs.

Ross's contract; and whether that decision has been reversed, and why?

MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey) asked, Whether some of the experts called were not of opinion that the leather supplied was equal to the pattern; whether the contractors had proved that a large number of the hides rejected were sold in the trade at a price considerably above the contract price; and whether Messrs. Ross and Co. did not express themselves ready to do anything that the Department thought right when a complaint was made?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am informed that the Report of the Judge Advocate General on the supply of leather to the Army, with the evidence, will be issued to-morrow. As regards hides, Messrs. Ross and Co., who have placed themselves in the matter entirely at the disposal of the Department, will be required to make good anything wanting in past supplies. All defective hides remaining in store have been returned to them, and they will replace them at their own cost. There are no standing contracts for hides, and, therefore, none to rescind. Hides are bought by competition as required. The greater part of the hides had been issued; but a large number have been returned from out stations, and will be treated in the same way as those in stock.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, Whether it was not the case that the contractor in question and the Director of Contracts both belonged to the local Conservative Association?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I consider such a question a public disgrace.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he considers that no disgrace attaches to a refusal to answer the question?

[No reply.]

ARMY—CHAPLAINS' DEPARTMENT.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Why the commissions in the Chaplains' Department, vacant by the retirement of the Reverend W. C. Magill and the Reverend J. F. Browne, have not been filled; whether it is a fact that a Catholic chaplain to the forces in Egypt is to be withdrawn and not replaced; what is the number of troops now stationed at York; and, why there is no Catholic chaplain there?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The only vacancy not filled among Roman Catholic chaplains is that caused by the retirement of the Rev. J. F. Browne in December last. It is not proposed to fill this vacancy at present, as there is no station at which there are sufficient Roman Catholic soldiers to justify the employment of a commissioned chaplain. No order has been given for the withdrawal of the chaplains of this denomination from Egypt. The Roman Catholic soldiers at York are only about 160; and an officiating chaplain has been appointed.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT—SULLIVAN, THE KERRY BLACKSMITH.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that in order to obtain the release of Sullivan, the Kerry blacksmith, from the sentence of Resident Magistrates under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, no less than nine applications on different days had to be made to the Superior Courts in Dublin; that though the Court of Exchequer decided that there was no evidence on which the man could be convicted, yet they held there was no power to give costs against the Crown on *habeas corpus;* is it the fact that in the case of the sentence on Mr. Walsh, of *The Wexford People*, of three months' hard labour for publishing the reports of suppressed branches, which the same Court quashed, the costs of the argument of the "case stated" will not include the heavy costs in the hearing below before the Resident Magistrates; and, whether, as these convictions were held illegal and unwarrantable, the Government intend the prisoners to be left charged with the costs involved, thus involving practically the infliction of a heavy sum on men declared innocent by the highest authority?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Chief Crown Solicitor reports as follows:—

"In the case of Sullivan proceedings were at first taken for *certiorari* before the Queen's

Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, and the Court, composed of four Judges, unanimously refused the application of Sullivan. Proceedings were then taken for *habeas corpus* to the Exchequer Division; and the Court being composed of three Judges, two of them ruled in Sullivan's favour, and he was accordingly discharged, but no costs were given. I am unable to state the number of days on which these applications were made."

The Attorney General adds—

> "In Sullivan's case, which was an application for a writ of *habeas corpus*, the Court of Exchequer decided that there was no power to give costs; but in Walsh's case, which was a case stated by the magistrates, the Court decided there was power to give costs. This was the decision of the Court of Exchequer, which decided both cases."

As to the release of Sullivan on the ground that there was no evidence, this arose from the accidental omission of not entering in the particular case of Sullivan the evidence of Mrs. Curtin, which had been previously recorded, and which applied to all the cases heard on that day, including Sullivan's. The Government have no intention whatever of paying Sullivan's costs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Apart from the argumentative matter which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has thought fit to introduce into his answer, I have to say that the latter portion of his answer is grossly inaccurate.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION—SUSPENSION OF WRITERS.

MR. GENT-DAVIS (Lambeth, Kennington) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that a communication from the Civil Service Commissioners has been sent to three writers—namely, Mr. Brattle at the War Office, Mr. T. Knighton at the Custom House, and Mr. Franklin at the Admiralty—informing them that—

> "Further proceedings in connection with their promotion have been suspended for the present;"

and, whether he will state what essential difference exists between the position of these gentlemen, under the provisions of the Treasury Minute of December, 1886, and that of M. A. J. Rothon, notice of whose promotion to the Lower Division was given in *The Civilian* newspaper of the 18th instant?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The four copyists named in the Question were recommended for appointment to the Lower Division, in the belief that they had passed the age at which they could compete in ordinary course. It was subsequently ascertained that this belief was erroneous, and that these copyists are still of age to compete; the appointments were therefore cancelled. In one case, however—that of Mr. Rothon—the appointment had been completed before the error as to his age was discovered; and the Treasury have that case under consideration.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ATTACK ON A BELFAST FUNERAL PROCESSION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Whether it was a fact that the workmen engaged at Sir William Ewart's mill assaulted the funeral procession of a priest in Belfast yesterday; whether an attempt was made to upset the hearse; whether they threw stones; and, finally, whether the crowd had to be dispersed by the police; whether in view of these occurrences, and the Report made by the Committee which inquired into the Belfast riots, and of the amendments made by the Select Committee when passing the Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill, he proposed to take any steps to promote legislation for the better government of Belfast?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I have telegraphed for a full report as to the truth of the allegations made in the hon. Member's Question, which was only received at the Irish Office at 3.40 this afternoon. Since I came to the House I have recived the following telegram from the Town Inspector of Belfast:—

> "Referring to the alleged attack upon funeral procession published in *The Freeman's Journal* to-day, full report goes by post. Newspaper report is greatly exaggerated."

I do not consider, having regard to the peaceable condition of Belfast and its neighbourhood, one isolated outrage would in itself be sufficient to induce the Government to introduce legislation of the nature contemplated by the hon. Gentleman in the present Session.

Subsequently,

MR. M'CARTAN said, with reference to the exaggerated case in Belfast to which reference had been made, he wished to ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether he was aware that a similar outrage was perpetrated last year at the very same place; and whether, under these circumstances, he does not consider that some legislation for the preservation of the peace of that town was required?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I have no information on the subject.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, What is the course of Business for the coming week?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I should have been glad to have arranged to take the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Charles Russell) with regard to public meetings in Trafalgar Square on Monday; but I can only do so on the understanding that the remaining days of Supply between Thursday in next week and the 15th of March would be sufficient to vote the Supplies necessary for the Public Service. As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, there are only five days when it is possible to put down operative Supply after Monday next. We have to obtain the Supplementary Estimates which have been presented to the House, and we have also to take a Vote for the Army and Navy, and a Vote on Account for the Civil Services. If the right hon. Gentleman is in a position to intimate his belief and to give us his assistance to secure that those Votes shall be passed by the 15th of March, I will gladly surrender Monday next for the discussion which it is desired to raise. The question is one on which the Government are anxious to obtain the judgment of the House with the least possible delay; but if there is any doubt as to the time that would be taken by the Estimates I shall be compelled to take Monday for them, and in that event I would give Thursday for the Motion.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: When that sort of question is put to me, perhaps I am justified in rising to reply. I entirely agree as to the reasonableness of the object that the right hon. Gentleman has in view; but he will not be surprised when I say that it is not in my power to give him the assurance that a certain number of days will be sufficient for Supply. I cannot give that assurance; therefore, I think he would do wisely to take his own course.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Under these circumstances, I am only discharging my duty in fixing the Supplementary Estimates for Monday. I hope and believe that that will suffice, so that Thursday may be given for the Motion.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, the Estimates had not been issued.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, they were laid on the Table that morning, and were now in the Vote Office.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) inquired whether, in the Constabulary Estimates, any sum had been put down for the additional money required for the services of the police?

MR. W. H. SMITH: None.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, whether there was anything in the Estimates referring to magistrates in Ireland?

MR. W. H. SMITH: There is.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, whether there was any Vote in the Estimates on which they could raise the case of Mr. Stoney?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I rather think not.

MOTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

RESOLUTION.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move a Resolution on the subject, said, he was aware that in making the Motion he was trenching on the rights of private Members, but neither the Motion or the Rules concerned the Government alone; it concerned the whole House as regarded its convenience and its capacity to perform its Business in a satisfactory manner. They were Rules which the House as a whole was most desirous of adopting. In these circumstances, he regretted that the only course open to the Government was to ask that the whole time of the House should be given to the consideration of these Rules until they were disposed of, and he trusted the prolonged discussions which occurred in the last Session of Parliament would not be repeated in the present. It appeared to him that they had already disposed of the principles of the great questions which then occupied the time of Parliament, and that the questions which remained to be discussed on these Rules were questions upon which the House and the country had made up their minds and arrived at a judgment upon almost every material point, and that the House only required to deal with matters of detail rather than matters of grave and serious principle. He trusted that the Government would have the assistance, not only of their Friends, but of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who would do wisely to accept the arrangements proposed, which were intended for the promotion of Public Business, the facilitating of the discussion of questions in which they themselves took much interest, and the securing of greater order and despatch for the discharge of the duties of the House. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by making the Motion of which he had given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Consideration of the proposed Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion on every day on which the consideration of those Rules may be set down by the Government."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, that with respect to the points on which he differed from the conclusion at which the Government had arrived, he would give the best evidence he could of his desire to promote the rapid progress of Public Business by refraining from arguments, and simply stating those differences in the briefest and most inoffensive and least controversial manner. At the same time, he deeply regretted the Resolution of the Government to give precedence to Procedure Rules over the regular Business of the Session. He believed, after what occurred last Session, that that course would not conduce to the progress of Business or the legislative efficiency of the Session, and that more time would be lost in the discussion which such a question was sure to raise than could possibly be gained during the course of the Session by the amendment of their Rules. He was also sorry that the right hon. Gentleman deemed it his duty to demand the whole time of the House; because the right hon. Gentleman must himself feel that, after the singular history of last year in this respect, when the voice of the House was almost entirely silenced until the months of August and September, of which there was so sore a recollection, it was a great pity that such soreness should be revived. He was certainly inclined to hope that as two proposals had been made by hon. Gentlemen on the right hon. Gentleman's side of the House, not quite against, but in mitigation of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal, so that the independent portion of the House should not be entirely shut out from public discussion on their measures when the question of Procedure was before it, the right hon. Gentleman would accede to one or other of these proposals, if it should turn out that it was agreeable to the sense of a large portion of the House. Having thus stated his objections to the course proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, he would give what assistance was in his power to shorten the discussion on these Rules, and to avoid whatever might lengthen it. He himself had at all times, whether in or out of office, entertained little faith in what might be called penal legislation on the subject of Procedure. He had always looked to devolution as the only really effective and hopeful method of bringing about an essential change in the capacity of the House of Commons to perform its Business in a more satisfactory manner, and to diminish the enormous, extraordinary, and exhausting calls that were now made, not only on the time, but on the health and constitution of hon. Members, as well as of Her Majesty's Government. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had re-opened the door on the subject of devolution. Taking the whole proceedings of last year as one measure, the fundamental objections they on that side of the House entertained was that the dignity of the Speaker's Chair and that of the Chairman were compromised and were endangered. But he was not now going to say a word in support of those objections. The measure was there, and they must take it as a fixed fact, at any rate, for the present. That being so, he was disposed to make the admission that these proposals, as a whole, had not been conceived in any spirit of Party ascendancy, and that they were partly to be regarded as in the nature of a sequel or complement to the measure of last year. He drew from that the important conclusion that it would be for the public advantage on the whole if, on both sides of the House, they approached the discussion of details of the subject in the shape in which the Government had laid it before them, without having recourse to the machinery of Party and without conducting the debate in the spirit of Party. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would meet what he had said in a corresponding and reciprocal spirit. For himself, he was disposed to go a considerable length in accepting the proposals of the Government, or, at all events, to make very few exceptions; but, all the same, he thought time would be wasted by the course the Government proposed to follow.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith)—whose enmity he much preferred to his friendship—had done more to destroy the rights of private Members since he became Leader of the House than any Minister who had preceded him. Last year the right hon. Gentleman said his sole object in proposing new Rules of Procedure was to preserve the freedom of the House and to facilitate the progress of its Business, and he disclaimed any intention or desire to use the Rules in order to accelerate any legislation to which objection was made on the Opposition side of the House. But the right hon. Gentleman had scarcely got the new weapon in his hands when he frequently and almost invariably put it to the very use which he had disavowed. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) felt sure that these new Rules would be used as the others were for the suppression of the liberties of a certain section of the House. As far, however, as the shortening of the hours of the Sittings was concerned, he thought a universal and cordial assent would be given to that part of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, he thought the whole time of the House which the right hon. Gentleman had asked them to give the Government, would be occupied in the discussion of these Rules, with the Supplementary Votes and Supply intervening, until Easter. That would amount to a surrender of the entire rights of private Members. He himself had a Motion on the Paper challenging the conduct of a Minister of the Crown, and the action of the Prime Minister in connection therewith, and he had always understood that it was the object of the Government to meet Motions of that kind at the earliest opportunity. If the present Motion were carried he would be practically prevented from bringing the subject under the notice of the House. He would put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether by taking so strong a measure as asking for the whole time of the House he was not likely to introduce unnecessary friction, which would tend to retard rather than accelerate the objects which they all had in view.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he intended to move as an Amendment to the Motion that Wednesdays be excluded from its operation. He submitted that he was entitled to this concession because last Session he gave up his opportunity of reading the Bill which he now had on the Order Book—the Oaths Bill—a second time for the convenience of the Government, and having obtained a favourable place on a Wednesday, he thought that he should be afforded the opportunity of bringing it forward, which might be destroyed if the Motion were adopted without Amendment. He would, therefore, move as an Amendment the insertion of the words "except Wednesdays" in the third line of the Resolution.

Amendment proposed, in line 3, after the word "day," to insert the words "except Wednesdays."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he thought that some consideration was due to private Members in this matter. Last Session, while every day was taken from them, there was a tacit understanding that when the Session was over private Members' days would not again be taken by the Government. It seemed, however, that the Government were again to have the whole time of the Session given to them. Under the proposal made, no private Members' Bills would have a chance until after Easter. Already in this Parliament private Members had made large concessions; but even the worm would turn at last. It was the private Members on the Ministerial side who had suffered most; they were placed, as it were, between two millstones; for the Government managed to find time for private Members sitting opposite to them. It was much to be regretted that great social questions, which in the opinion of some of them were more important to the welfare of the people than many other measures which were disposed of, should by this action of the Government not to be able to be dealt with on days set apart for private Members. He had been interested in a subject which he considered of great importance for a long period, and for years past had been doing his best to get a day for its consideration. In the year 1886 he had the misfortune to get the first place on a day which was memorable in the history of the House, for it was the day upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) moved the second reading of a Bill which some of them might probably remember—the Home Rule Bill. He (Mr. Bartley) had to give way. But he might remind the House that the Home Rule Bill was dead, and that his Motion was still alive. Last year, of course, he had not a chance of moving it; but this year, amongst 200 competitors, he had been so lucky as to draw the first private Members' day available this Session—namely, next Tuesday. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laughed at the "self" coming out—they all of them had a little "self" at the bottom he supposed. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) had now pounced upon his (Mr. Bartley's) one ewe lamb, and was going to take the day away from him. He was inclined to agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) when he said that the Government would be likely to get on with these Rules much more rapidly and satisfactorily if they refrained from irritating hon. Members by making them give up their time. If the rights of private Members were not recognized, and private Members did not succeed in carrying the Amendment, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House would find that the support of the House in getting these Rules of Procedure through, and in enabling the House to rise at a reasonable time, would not be so readily obtained. He thought some consideration to private members would be a better course than forcing this somewhat drastic measure upon the House. The Amendment claimed Wednesday as an exception to the Rule the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House wished to lay down. But he (Mr. Bartley) was under the impression that there was some objection to Wednesday, and he would propose that Tuesday be the exception: He had noticed that on Wednesdays, if any Bill was brought forward on that—the Ministerial—side of the House, there were one or two hon. Members opposite who deliberately set themselves to work to talk it out. Even if a Bill came on as an unopposed measure after a quarter to 6, someone opposite was always sure to stop its progress by merely taking off his hat. Considering his own private position, he (Mr. Bartley) thought Tuesday preferable to Wednesday. At any rate, he would plead hard that the right hon. Gentleman should give them one day a week. He did not wish to claim it in any formal manner; but, as an humble and obedient and loyal follower, he wished to protest against the private rights of hon. Members being entirely taken away; and he sincerely trusted that at this, the last hour, the Government would think with them, and spare one day a-week. If the Government could do that, they might be sure that their side would reap the greatest advantage from it.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he rose to support the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). It would be understood that he also was not to be regarded as altogether unselfish. He had had the privilege out of the ballot to secure the first Order for Wednesday, the 29th, for a measure applicable to Scotland. Now, he could appeal with confidence to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) to give him his attention for a moment on behalf of

Scotland. It was within the recollection of the Government that last Session the Scotch Members gave every assistance possible in the passing of measures relating to Scotland—measures which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) brought in. Scotch Members were contented at the end of a very long Session with two Wednesdays for Scotch Business. He would still further urge the case of Scotland in this respect—that the other day they dealt with two Scotch measures; that was to say, they gave the Government an opportunity of rejecting two Scotch measures within half-an-hour. He would undertake on behalf of his hon. Friends from Scotland that they would do everything in their power to shorten the discussion of the Rules of Procedure if the Government would concede to them one day in the week, either Tuesday or Wednesday; but, of course, preferably the Wednesday. If the Government would do this they would have nothing in the nature of a factious opposition to fear from the Scotch Members; but, on the other hand, would receive every possible assistance from them. He hoped the Government would not force on Scotland the desire for Home Rule by taking away the privileges of her Members—the very moderate and inconsiderable privileges which they at present possessed. He was sure that if the right hon. Gentleman would listen to this appeal he would have no cause to regret a concession made to Scotland, and that Scotland would not forget the favour.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he wished to add his voice to the petition of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and of those who had been successful for getting a day for Motions which they thought important. He (Mr. Staveley Hill) had been able to secure a Tuesday for a Motion which a great many people in this country considered of great importance. He accepted most loyally anything the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) might demand in the conduct of the Business of the House, and would merely say that he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would find it possible—if not to give next Tuesday, at any rate, to give a day to those who now stood out of the way to enable him to carry his Motion.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that it was only natural and reasonable that Private Members at this period should desire to preserve for themselves the favourable positions which they had obtained for their Motions or Bills, and he earnestly hoped that they would find an opportunity of bringing those subjects, which they, no doubt, thought of great importance, before the notice of the House. If, however, he made the concessions which hon. Members desired, it would be impossible for him to ask the House to consider the Procedure Rules at all before Easter. It was necessary that the Government should get some money, therefore Supply must occupy the ensuing month practically up to the 17th of March on ordinary Government nights. It appeared to be thought by hon. Gentlemen that in asking for the time of private Members to consider these Procedure Rules he was asking for private Members' nights beyond Easter; in fact, up to Whitsuntide, if not for the rest of the Session; but that was not the case, for if the consideration of the Rules was entered upon by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and others, had spoken, he believed that the Rules could be disposed of in the course of three days in next week, and if not, certainly within a day or two of the following week. In that case the position of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) would not be interfered with. If the recommendations of the Government were adopted private Members, he believed, would be the gainers, because Procedure would be improved and the transactions of the House would be greatly facilitated. The views he had expressed were, he thought, shared by right hon. Gentlemen opposite as well as hon. Members behind them, and under these circumstances, feeling that the facilities for the consideration of the Business of the House would be increased by the proposals he was about to make, he felt compelled to adhere to his original proposition. He was sure that the hon. Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Esslemont) would find that under the arrangement proposed there would be many facilities for the consideration of Scotch Business. He thought the hon. Member underrated the time the Government had given for the disposal of Scotch Business last year, but he would not enter into a controversy upon that matter. If the Rules were disposed of in the way he suggested, and as there was reason to anticipate they would be disposed of, the Government would spare no effort to afford private Members facilities for the discussion of those important topics in which they were interested.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he thought it was to be very much regretted that the opposition to the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had been based on strictly personal grounds. No doubt the Bill in which the hon. Member for Northampton was so much interested was an important Bill, and no doubt the Bill of the hon. Gentleman beside him, the Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Esslemont), was even of greater importance. He did not know anything about the Motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite, but as that was not intended to end in legislation no doubt it was a subject which would be acceptable to Members on the Benches on which the hon. Gentleman sat. This was a private Members' question, and it ought to be left in the hands of private Members. He hoped that private Members on both sides of the House would unite in maintaining their right to a fair share of the time of the Session for the discussion of matters in which they took an interest. He did not see why the burden of these Rules, which were to be for the benefit of the House at large, should fall upon private Members alone. He failed all the more to see it because, not only last Session, but ever since the question of Home Rule was mooted in the House, private Members' rights had been almost extinguished. Why, new Members of the House actually did not know what private Members' rights were, because they had had no experience of them. The vast majority of hon. Members came in at the General Election of 1885 or since that, and, with the exception of about three weeks before the Home Rule Bill was matured and presented to the House—with that slight exception—the whole time had been taken up by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, on the one hand for Home Rule for Ireland, and on the other hand for Coercion for Ireland. It appeared, therefore, to him (Mr. E. Robertson) quite time that private Members on both sides of the House united and stood up for their rights. As this was to be a question relegated to the consideration of hon. Members without regard to Party ties—as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had followed the example of the Prime Minister in declining to stake his position on the result of debates in the House—he hoped the private Members on their part would have the courage to take advantage of the opportunity afforded them. He trusted the private Members would insist upon having the time which was usually devoted to them, notwithstanding the demands of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) made upon their time. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had said that neither the hon. Member for Northampton nor the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Aberdeen were in danger, because the Procedure Rules would be disposed of in a very short time. If that were the case it was a reason, not for hon. Members yielding, but for the right hon. Gentleman yielding. If the consideration of the Procedure Rules would not occupy a long time why was the right hon. Gentleman so anxious to deal with them at the cost of the time of private Members? Why did not the right hon. Gentleman leave them the small opportunity that they were allowed for the discussion of matters they were bound to promote? The right hon. Gentleman, believing as he did that the discussion of these Rules might be concluded efficiently and sufficiently within a few days, and holding as he did in his hands the power of closure, it rested with him to make the best use of the facilities he had for making rapid progress with business without interfering with the rights of Private Members. Why did he not make a more courageous and efficient use of the closure than he did last year to bring the discussion on the Rules to an end within a reasonable time? He (Mr. E. Robertson) held that, possessing the powers he did, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had no right to call on private Members to give up their time in order to enable him to carry a measure which was necessary, not for facilitating private business, but business that at any time might come before the House.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he rose to make a conciliatory proposal. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) said that in all probability these Rules would be carried next week. Well, he (Mr. Labouchere), for his own part, did not see why they should not be carried next week. At any rate, he did not think there would be any lengthy discussion upon them on that—the Opposition—side of the House. But it would simplify matters if the right hon. Gentleman would bear that in mind and would limit his demand, say, until next Friday. Either the right hon. Gentleman did or did not believe what he said. He (Mr. Labouchere) believed it, and the suggestion he now made was based upon that belief. The only Gentleman who would be shut out would be the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley), and who had described himself as a crushed worm sitting between two millstones. Without wishing to go into the intricacies of the Procedure Rules, it seemed to him (Mr. Labouchere) that practically, if they passed the Rules in their present position, private Members would to all intents and purposes be shut out from carrying any of the Bills which they might bring forward in the House. As the right hon. Gentleman very well knew, a great many Bills which were not blocked were carried in the early hours of the morning, and it was proposed to give for those measures only half an hour. It would be impossible to discuss them in that time. Only a few short words on one or other of them would stop the whole of the business in regard to them. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would consider the matter, and see if he could not give the reasonable facilities which were asked for in order to enable private Members, who had passed their Bills through the second reading, to get them through their further stages. Another reason why the right hon. Gentleman should yield to them on the Opposition side was because they were exceptionally magnanimous with regard to these Rules of Procedure, for the reason that they were anxious to see them passed, notwithstanding that they would tell more against them than the Conservative Party. In support of that view he had the evidence of a Gentleman whose opinions he was sure the right hon Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would not controvert—he meant the noble Marquess the Prime Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury). In a speech the noble Lord had made at Oxford, alluding to his intention to frame some new Rules of Procedure, he said—

> "I know there are many Conservatives who will say that this obstruction, bad as it is, is a way to prevent bad measures from passing; and they will say 'After all, the greater number of measures that are proposed are bad, and anything that prevents all measures from passing prevents more bad measures than good ones.' I have no doubt that the result of a considerable amendment in the Rules of the House of Commons will be to send up from time to time, when there are bad Houses of Commons"—

that was to say when there were Liberal Houses of Commons—

> "A considerable number of objectionable measures to the House of Lords, and I hope that the House of Lords will not shrink from acting upon its conscientious convictions."

That was to say, when from time to time a bad Government was in power—that was to say when the Radical Party was in power—a number of bad Bills would be passed and sent up to the House of Lords, and the House of Lords would not shrink from acting upon its conscientious convictions and would refuse to pass them, but that when measures were passed by the Conservatives the House of Lords would unhesitatingly accept them. He (Mr. Labouchere) thought he had clearly proved the magnanimity of the Opposition with regard to the Procedure Rules.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he wished to address a few words of appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), because he had stated his willingness to do justice to Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman by his proposal was going to do the greatest injustice to Scotland. The first Order for Wednesday next was the Returning Officers' (Scotland) Bill. What had been the history of that measure? Two years ago they passed that Bill through the House of Commons, five-sixths of the Scotch Members supporting it. The measure was lost in "another place." That was no fault of the Scotch Members. In the following year they got a good place for the Bill; but the Government took away all the Wednesdays. At the beginning of the present Session a number of Scotch Members had met and decided that the prospects of legislation for Scotland in the House were so scanty of character that it would be inexpedient to bring many Bills in. They, therefore, concentrated their attention on this one Bill, which was of the greatest possible importance to the Liberal Members for Scotland. They had got it down as the first Order of the Day. It was the only Scotch Bill that was promoted during the present Session, and yet the Government came immediately and took away their opportunity for dealing with it. He had often heard it stated that the Scotch Members were allowed to manage their own affairs in this House; but his opinion was that Scotch Members were treated as badly as Irish Members, and that Scotch Business was neglected even more than Irish Business. The Scotch people would understand what all this meant if the Government refused to give them such legislation as they desired—would not permit them on those rare occasions when, by the fortune of war, it was in their power to bring on a great measure to use that power in legislating for themselves.

MR. PARNELL (Cork) said, he wished to ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith). There were two kinds of Rules of Procedure—those proposed by the Government, and those proposed by private Members. The present Resolution referred to all Rules of Procedure which were set down on the Paper without any distinction, and he wished to ask what was the intention of the Government in the matter. He wished to know whether when the House had disposed of the first description of Rules—namely, those proposed by the Government, the Government intended to put down the Rules of Procedure standing in the names of private Members, and apply the present Resolution to them; or whether they would follow the precedent they had set on previous occasions and get rid of the whole matter when their Rules had been disposed of?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he could only answer the question by the indulgence of the House, as he had already spoken. It appeared that the questions raised by the hon. Gentleman as to the Rules of Procedure which they had put down on the Paper were questions which would probably arise on the Rules he (Mr. W. H. Smith) had the honour to propose to the House, and that, therefore, the necessity would not arise for considering the Rules put down by private Members at a later stage. He certainly should not feel justified in asking the House to surrender its time for the consideration of matters made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, unless there was a general feeling on the part of the House that it was desirable that they should be introduced.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he would confine his observations to a couple of sentences. He hoped the Government would take into consideration the grievances of private Members who had Bills down for the next few Wednesdays. He and his hon. Friends believed and hoped and trusted that these Procedure Rules would not only pass, but pass quickly; but the first two Wednesdays, and probably the third Wednesday, would be swamped. It would be a serious thing if hon. Members who had Motions down for Tuesdays and Fridays to lose their opportunities—he knew this from personal experience, having suffered in this way himself on similar occasions. But the loss of a Tuesday or Friday was not necessarily fatal, as an hon. Member might succeed in securing a day later on for the discussion of his Motion; but the loss of a Wednesday was absolutely fatal to an hon. Member's Bill for half a Session. It so happened that the first two or three Wednesdays were all occupied by extremely important Bills—Bills which ought, undoubtedly, to receive the judgment of the House, and which—judging from appearances in their favour—were Bills which would be of considerable advantage to the country. He must say he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House could make an exception in favour of Wednesdays during the progress of a great debate which otherwise would have occupied the whole week.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 150; Noes 247: Majority 97.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Biggar, J. G.
Blane, A.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buxton, S. C.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Collings, J.
Conway, M.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crossley, E.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Evershed, S.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Flower, C.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gourley, E. T.
Haldane, R. B.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, M.
Healy, T. M.
Hooper, J.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Joicey, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. J. G. S.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
MacInnes, M.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Arthur, W. A.
M‘Cartan, M.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Donald, P.
M‘Ewan, W.
M‘Laren, W. S. B.
Marum, E. M.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Neville, R.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Kelly, J.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, H. F.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Power, P. J.
Pyne, J. D.
Redmond, J. E.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, E.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Watson, J.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Webster, R. G.
Williams, A. J.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.

Bradlaugh, C.
Burt, T.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Baring, T. C.
Baring, Viscount
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Biddulph, M.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, Sir W.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forster, Sir C.
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Giles, A.

Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grenall, Sir G.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, F.
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jardine, Sir R.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Lagan, P.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Manners, right hon. Lord J. J. R.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Reed, H. B.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Round, J.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waring, Colonel T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he did not propose to divide the House again upon this matter; but as the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) had told them that the Procedure Rules would in all probability only occupy one week, he trusted that even now the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider the matter and limit the application of the Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman might limit it to one week, for if the Rules of Procedure were not likely to take a longer period, then hon. Members ought not to have this compulsion indefinitely put upon them.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the consideration of the Proposed Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion on every day on which the consideration of those Rules may be set down by the Government.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—I. SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice relating to the Sittings of the House, said, he thought the House would perceive that this rule was designed for the convenience of the House and in the belief that an arrangement of this kind would conduce to the better discharge of Public Business. He pointed out that the prolonged Sittings of the House during the last two or three years had had a serious effect not only on the health of hon. Members, but on the mode in which the Business of the House had been conducted. During last Session the House sat 277 hours after midnight, and there must have been many hon.

Members—probably a large majority of the House—who had duties to perform before coming to the House in the afternoon. In these circumstances it was clearly impossible for an ordinary human being to continue to devote his powers of mind and body to the discharge of his duties in the House. Hon. Members were practically too exhausted to do so. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) said nothing of those who had to conduct the Public Business of the country, and who were responsible not only for the duties of Government, but for the working of the various public offices. It was, however, highly desirable that Ministers should be in a condition to devote the best of their intellect and physical powers to the discharge of their onerous duties. At present, owing to the prolonged Sittings of the House, it was practically impossible for Ministers of the Crown to be in that condition; and therefore the Government had framed these Rules with the object of meeting earlier in the day and rising earlier at night. In recommending this Rule to the consideration of the House it must be understood that the Government did so on the understanding that the question of half-an-hour later in meeting or half-an-hour earlier in separating was not one of principle nor a matter to which the Government were so wedded as to persevere against the general feeling of the House. This Rule had been framed by the Government to meet to the best of their ability the interests of all Parties in the House; and, therefore, on matters of unimportant detail they were prepared to make such concessions as were generally desired. Reference was made in the Rule to certain proceedings which were to be exempted from its operation. It was often practically impossible to put those proceedings down for the early consideration of the House; and even if it were possible, they would be blocked altogether by the operation of the Rule of Adjournment, and hence serious public mischief might arise. It rarely happened, however, that there was any serious difference of opinion upon those Orders; but if there was it was necessary that the hour of closing Debate or Adjournment should be made with reference to those proceedings. He thought also the House would agree that the House should not be counted precisely at 9 o'clock; and he trusted the provision made in the Rule would meet with the acceptance of hon. Members. But this, again, was one of the provisions upon which the House itself must express an opinion. The Government recommended it for the consideration of hon. Members as one which had been generally represented to them as a provision for the convenience and conduct of Business. With reference to the paragraph as to the Speaker ascertaining by the preponderance of voices that the majority of the House desired that Business under discussion should be deferred until a later day, he stated that some public inconvenience had arisen on days on which opposed Business finished, say at 10 minutes to 7 o'clock on a Morning Sitting or a quarter to 6 o'clock on Wednesday. The Bill opposed in these circumstances did not come on next day, but there was no knowledge as to the particular day on which it would come on; it was therefore proposed to give this preponderance of voices in order that a day might be named for the consideration of the Bill. He concluded by moving the adoption of the Rule.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, unless the House otherwise order, the House shall meet every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, at Three of the clock, and shall, unless previously adjourned, sit till One of the clock a.m., when the Speaker shall adjourn the House without Question put, unless a Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means, or unless proceedings made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, or otherwise exempted from the operation of this Standing Order, be then under consideration:

That at Eight of the clock the Speaker or Chairman, as the case may be, shall suspend the sitting by leaving the Chair until Nine of the clock. If, after the resumption of business, at Nine of the clock, and before a quarter-past Nine, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until a quarter-past Nine, when he shall count the House or Committee.

That at half-an-hour after midnight on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, except as aforesaid, and at half-past Five of the clock on Wednesdays, the proceedings on any business then under consideration shall be interrupted; and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the business then under consideration, and any business subsequently appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit, unless the Speaker ascertains by the preponderance of voices that a Majority of the House desires that such business should be deferred until a later day;

Provided always, That on the interruption of business the Closure may be moved, and if moved, or if proceedings under the Closure Rule be then in progress, the Speaker or Chairman shall not leave the Chair, until the Questions consequent thereon, as provided in the Rule 'Closure of Debate,' have been decided:

That after the business under consideration at half-past Twelve and half-past Five respectively, has been disposed of, no opposed business shall be taken; and the Orders of the Day not disposed of at the close of the sitting shall stand for the next day on which the House shall sit:

That a Motion may be made by a Minister of the Crown at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate to the following effect. 'That the proceedings on any specified business, if under discussion at half-past Twelve this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, "Sittings of the House:"'

Provided always, That after any business exempted from the operation of this Resolution is disposed of, the remaining business of the sitting shall be dealt with according to the provisions applicable to business taken after half-past Twelve o'clock."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he begged to put a question to Mr. Speaker on a point of Order. He wished to know whether the Rule would be put as a whole, or paragraph by paragraph?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Rule will be put as a whole, and it will, therefore, be competent for hon. Members to discuss the general questions which it involves. The first Amendment will be taken in its order.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that, with reference to the general provisions of the Rule, he should in discussing them be able to rely upon a personal experience of some 30 years. In criticizing the Rule he should endeavour to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) in the same spirit as that in which the right hon. Gentleman's statement had been conceived. The House had heard with pleasure that Her Majesty's Government did not desire to thrust these Rules as they stood down the throats of hon. Members without considering the various Amendments to them of which Notice had been given, or which might be proposed. As to the Rule generally, it could not be denied that the experience of the last few years showed the necessity of its main principles being adopted. In his opinion, there ought to be a fixed time when the Business of the House should be brought to an end, because it was impossible that the House should go on in the future sitting night after night till two, three, or four o'clock in the morning. The cardinal object of the Rule appeared to be to put an end to the late Sittings which had so long prevailed, and as far as it went in that direction, he should cordially support it. With regard to the proposed adjournment of the House for an hour, or an hour and a quarter, at 8 o'clock, he thought that the present custom of the dinner should be followed, and that the Speaker should leave the Chair without Motion at the end of a speech for some 20 or 30 minutes only. That would be better than the Speaker leaving the Chair at any fixed hour, regardless of whether an hon. Member was in the middle of his speech or not. If the course he suggested were adopted, the House would have more time for the transaction of its Business, and might perhaps be able to adjourn for the night at half-past 12 o'clock, instead of at 1 o'clock, so that the opposed business should cease at 12. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] He gathered from the cheers from all sides of the House that his proposal in that respect was not an unwelcome one. He quite agreed, however, in the suggestion that it would be necessary to modify the half-past 12 o'clock closing Rule to the extent of empowering Ministers to move, in the case of an important debate, that the time for closing should be extended, but notice of this should be given, and appear in the Order Book. It would be too much to lay down a hard-and-fast line that would require a Minister, who was engaged in making an important speech on some great question, to sit down suddenly in the middle of his speech at 12 o'clock. He took it that such an Amendment as he suggested would not be opposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He assumed that as the House now met nominally at a quarter to 4 o'clock, under the new Rule it would meet nominally at a quarter to 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but this was a mere detail, and 3 o'clock would probably be satisfactory. But what he most cared for was the continuance of the present practice as to dinner, and opposed business ceasing at 12.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he was

afraid that the Rule as it stood would kill the dinner hour, as it was called, when younger Members had an opportunity of addressing the House. He hoped that the nature of the Money and other Bills, which were to be excepted from the Rule requiring all contentious business to cease at a fixed hour, would be more clearly defined, and that it should not be sufficient for a measure to contain one money clause to enable its mover to proceed with it at any hour. As the Rule stood, somebody was sure to count the House on its re-assembling at 9 o'clock; and as it could not resume Business in such a case until a quarter past 9 o'clock, the Speaker would be kept sitting uselessly in the Chair for a quarter of an hour every night. He, however, regarded the present dinner hour as very valuable, and as being in accordance with the traditions of the House, which encouraged young Members to speak. With respect to that part of the Rule which gave a Minister of the Crown power to move the suspension of the Standing Order as to the termination of a debate at 12.30, he saw no objection to it if there were any safeguard for its being carried out in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke. But other Ministers might take different views, and he should suggest that such a Motion should require the assent of either the Leader of the Opposition or of some Privy Councillor who had filled certain important offices, so that practically it had the assent of both sides of the House.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he rose in consequence of a remark which had been made by the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh opposite (Mr. Childers). He took exception to the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, that there should be no alteration as to the period during which the Speaker or Chairman of Committees should leave the chair, so that the House might be able to adjourn half-an-hour earlier than was proposed under the Rule they were now discussing. Every hon. Member must feel that these Rules would make a very great change in the habits of the House. Last Session they used to rise at 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning, and he thought it would be sufficient at all events to provide that the proceedings should come to an end at 1 o'clock It would be apparent to every hon. Member that a provision of that kind would bring about a very great change. It would, in future, be possible for the House to adjourn at 1, which would bring about a very great change, and he thought a sufficient change, without introducing any further modification. At the present moment there was a Rule which prevented the counting of the House before 4 o'clock.

An hon. MEMBER said, there was no Rule in existence to that effect; only a custom.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) would remember that, in the Parliament of 1848, the same custom prevailed in reference to the Sittings of the House at 9 o'clock, when there had been a Morning Sitting, as the House was never counted until a quarter past 9.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, he was sorry that he was unable to agree with the hon. Baronet who had just spoken, especially in regard to the dinner hour; but he congratulated the Government on having brought the sittings of the House within the power of the human constitution. Those who had experienced any sitting up to all hours of the night knew that after midnight a great difficulty arose in regulating the debates. Hon. Members became irritable, and the difficulty of preserving order in the House always arose after midnight, when Members were tired. He thought the Government had made a little mistake. It would have been better if they had fixed half-past 12 instead of 1 o'clock as the hour at which contentious Business should end. The greater proportion of hon. Members could then leave, and only those hon. Members would remain who had special business to attend to. With regard to the proposed adjournment for an hour for dinner, he wished to point out the danger of that Rule. In the first place, by saying that there should be a dinner hour there would be a great temptation to leave the Precincts of the House, and some difficulty would be thrown upon the Whips in keeping a quorum at 9, or after 9 o'clock. If the Business were allowed to go on as at present no time would be lost. Moreover, there were other and even more important dangers than that. They all knew that the House could be prevented by certain tactics, such as keeping hon. Members in the Lobbies and persuading them not to come into the House, from proceeding with Business and preventing certain measures from being discussed. This Rule would give Members full power to carry out those tactics, and it would frequently be found that at a quarter past 9 o'clock the whole of the Business of the House was stopped. He hoped the Government would see the advantage of closing all contentious Business at 12 o'clock, and having no dinner hour at all. It had worked well hitherto, and was of great use to young Members. He therefore trusted that the Government would be prepared to consider favourable Amendments to carry out the changes he had indicated.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, that the criticism of the hon. and learned Member for East Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) showed that he had not read the Rules with which he found fault. They were clearly expressed, and carefully guarded against the evils which the hon. Member deprecated. He (Mr. Gedge) strongly objected to the proposal to adjourn the House from 8 to 9; but as he had put on the Paper two Amendments dealing with the matter, he would not now discuss it.

Mr. BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, he was grateful to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) for allowing the Resolutions to be discussed, not as a Government measure, but as a matter which was introduced in order to suit the convenience of hon. Members. He suggested that when no Private Business was under discussion the House should proceed at once to Questions, instead of wasting half-an-hour in doing ing nothing. Day after day—as Mr. Speaker was well aware—they sat there doing nothing between 4 o'clock and half-past 4 o'clock. Even then the hours fixed during which hon. Members would have an opportunity for speech would be short. As a private Member, he would make an appeal to right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches to somewhat curtail their remarks. There was a tendency on the part of right hon. Gentlemen to imagine that if one right hon. Member spoke for an hour, it was necessary for them to speak for an hour and five minutes, followed by some other right hon. Member, who spoke for one hour and ten minutes. If right hon. Gentlemen would more fully consider what they were going to say, he was sure they would be able to put their speeches in a much smaller compass. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House always spoke with commendable brevity. He put what he had to say into a short compass; but it was impossible to say the same of other right hon. Gentlemen sitting on both sides of the House. The question really was whether they should end all contentious Business at half-past 12. Under the Rules, as they were at present drafted, there would be an automatic closure at the end of the Sitting. It would, however, mean that if they were not to close contentious Business until half-past 12, very few hon. Members would be able to get away until near 1 o'clock, and many hon. Members would find it impossible to get to bed until a quarter to 2 or 2 o'clock. It was these last half-hours that really told upon the constitutions of hon. Members. He thought it would be of great advantage if the Members of the Government were able to obtain a good night's rest, and by that means be ready to attend to their office work in the morning, He believed that the late hours last Session had been disastrous to some Members of the Government, as they were bound to be in regard to any Member who had to remain in attendance until the end of the Sitting, in order that they might devote their attention to the Business of the country.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said, that the Rule greatly diminished the chance of private Members' Bills and Motions. It was quite true that the system of blocking which had come into practice much interfered with the chances of private Members nowadays. Their measures were invariably blocked; but still there did remain some opportunities for them, and occasionally a private Member's Bill was brought on without a block having been attached to it. If, however, the closure was absolutely applied by the rising of the House at 12 o'clock, or half-past, it would be impossible to find time for private Members. It not unfrequently happened that a useful discussion arose on a Motion of an hon. Gentleman which did not stand first on the Notice Paper, and the debate went on until half-past 1 o'clock; but under the proposed new Rule, as the House would rise at half-past 12, any Member who disliked a Motion would only have to extend his remarks a little in order to defeat the Motion. He believed that this year there were some 200 Bills introduced by private Members, but practically only one each Wednesday could be brought on for discussion. He was quite ready to admit that Bills of first political importance ought to be blocked, in order to secure that they should be properly discussed; but there were other Bills which did not involve matters of controversy or Party considerations which were desired by the country, and which might be satisfactorily passed. He believed that a great deal of good had been effected in the past by Motions introduced by private Members; and he asked whether it was quite right to diminish the slender opportunities which private Members now possessed in reference to measures of an important character, which nevertheless had strong claims to be commended to an over-pressed Government? He would appeal to the Government to give way on this point, and to prevent the evil from which private Members would otherwise suffer. There were three methods by which the evil might be avoided. The first was, to appoint a Committee to make a selection of the Private Bills and Motions which ought to be proceeded with, to determine which of them were deserving of discussion. The second was, to give the House power to vote as to what Bills should be advanced and fixed for a particular day. And the third method was, that hon. Members should be enabled to express their preference for certain Bills and Motions in the Order Book by subscribing their names to them. In that way it would be shown what Bills and Motions ought to be taken, and the legislation of the House would be increased. He hoped that before they came to the end of the Rules the Government would meet that difficulty, and that they would exercise their power as to the time which was to be given to private Members.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University) said, he did not propose to follow hon. Members who had taken part in the debate in a general survey of the new Rules. He had only risen to follow the observations of the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce), who had just sat down. He (Mr. Raikes) thought that the hon. and learned Member, in his desire to promote the interests of private Members, had drawn rather a gloomy picture of the effect of the proposed new Rules. The hon. and learned Member had spoken as if no half-past 12 Rule had been or was still in existence. At present there was a Rule in existence which prevented opposed Business from being taken after half-past 12 o'clock. The hon. and learned Member had spoken as if opposed Motions were never talked out in order to prevent Motions from being brought on. The New Rules would not prevent that. They did not appear to him to inflict any injury on private Members. This Rule would not impose any more effectual stopper on private Members than the present half-past 12 Rule, nor would they alter the Order of the House in regard to Business on Wednesday, except in directing that a discussion upon a Bill should cease at half-past 5 instead of a quarter before 6. The case of unopposed Bills which were discussed after half-past 12 was one which undoubtedly required consideration. He much doubted whether the suggestion with respect to the precedence of private Members' Bills would find acceptance in the House. It was not clear how any such plan would work. Was each Member only to have one vote for one Bill, or to vote on each of, perhaps, 140 Bills? He was inclined to support the proposal that, after Whitsuntide, the order of private Members' Bills should depend upon the stage which they had reached. He agreed also with the remark of the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) that the words "otherwise exempt" required further elucidation. If the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce), to whom he always listened with respect, would put down one of his alternative suggestions, the Government would give it every consideration. At the same time, he did not see how they could discriminate between the Bills of private Members except by drawing a distinction in favour of those which had already been considered by a Select Committee. He thought that a Bill which had gone through the ordeal of a Select Committee ought to have preference given to it over another Bill which had not gone through that ordeal.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he desired information upon a variety of points which he thought were better raised upon the general Rule rather than in discussing Amendments. He wanted, in the first place, to know what would be the position of Committees sitting upstairs if the House met at 3 instead of 4 o'clock? Did the Government propose to alter the time at which Committees upstairs should meet? Twelve o'clock had been the hour for meeting, and 4 o'clock for adjournment. Surely four hours a day were not too long, although they were certainly long enough to bestow on Business which involved such an enormous outlay and such large interests. The cost of Private Bill legislation was increasing day by day, and it would be unwise to impose upon suitors an extra burden which would be involved in limiting the hours from four to three hours. The hon. Member for the Poplar Division of the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Buxton) had called attention to the fact that a considerable waste of time took place after Mr. Speaker took the Chair. That was a matter which was well deserving of consideration. It would be much better that the House should meet at 3.30, and Public Business to begin at 4. The proposal to allow from half-past 12 to 1 for non-political matters was unwise; but many non-political Bills were of vital importance to the country. He was of opinion that half-an-hour was not sufficient for Bills to be discussed which, like the Merchandize Marks Bill, were not of a political character. That Bill was in Committee for a considerable time late in the evening. He had a strong sympathy for the Rule that they should close the Sittings of the House at a particular hour, say 1 o'clock; but he greatly doubted whether that time was sufficient to carry out the machinery of the House in regard to what might be called political polemics. He supported the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) to do away with the proposed adjournment of one and a quarter hours, which was neither one thing or another. It was not the dinner hour. Hon. Members could not go to their residences, dine, and come back again within that time. The suspension of Business at a Morning Sitting from 7 until 9 was quite intelligible. It would tend to augment the number of Counts, and would spoil the tone of the House at the time Business was resumed. Then, again, he protested against interfering with the vested rights of young Members who were anxious to train themselves in the art of speaking, and availed themselves of the dinner hour for that purpose. He thought that the Speaker or Chairman should be able, as at present, to retire at any hour. It would be an admirable understanding that, when the Speaker or Chairman retired, the adjournment should only be for a fixed period; but he did not see that it was necessary, when a Speaker or Chairman left the Chair, that the whole Business should be suspended for an hour and a quarter. He thought it would be far better to say that the Public Business should begin at 4, and that any contentious debate should close at 12.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that a great majority of the younger Members in the House were of opinion that the dinner hour should not be lengthened, and the House suspended from 8 to 9.15, as was proposed by the present Rule. It was their opinion that the proceedings should go on during the dinner hour. If it was considered desirable that the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees should retire for a certain time, that could be easily arranged. An adjournment from 8 to 9 would render it absolutely impossible for a young Member ever to have a chance of speaking in the House, and it was well known that the present dinner hour was invaluable to Members addressing the House for the first time. He agreed with the remarks of the hon. Member for the Poplar Division of the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Buxton) as to the length of the speeches which were delivered from the Front Benches. They were, unfortunately, growing longer and longer; and if, in addition, private Members were to have the dinner hour taken away from them, it would be perfectly impossible for them to speak at all and to make the voice of their constituencies heard. That was, in his opinion, an important fact to consider.

It must also be remembered that obstruction, if it could be so called by the legitimate talking of a yearly increasing number of Members, had developed to a great extent, and could not altogether be prevented. More hon. Members spoke now than ever they did before, and their constituents expected them to speak. As they were limited to those hours in the evening when the great guns were not going off, it was important that there should be no adjournment of the House for dinner. It was also desirable that there should be neither Counts or Divisions during the dinner hour, so that no scratch Division might be taken.

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) desired to comment upon the remarks of his right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) on two points. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the proposal that the House should meet at 3 o'clock instead of 4, on the ground that in that case the Select Committees would sit for three hours only instead of four. That objection could be met by the Committees meeting an hour earlier. He saw no serious difficulty in Select Committees meeting at 11 o'clock in the morning instead of 12, now that the House was going to adjourn at or about midnight. As to Private Bill Committees, he hoped that the House would have some proposal from the Government for dealing with them, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) would be good enough to inform the House what the proposal of the Government was in regard to Private Bill legislation. In reference to the dinner hour, he would suggest that the time during which the Speaker or the Chairman should vacate the Chair should be limited to an hour, or, if it were preferred, to half-an-hour. He quite agreed that there should be no fixed Rule. He congratulated the House upon having come to the consideration of these Rules with an unbiassed mind, and he trusted that there might be an early prospect of transacting the Business of the country in the middle of the day instead of, as hitherto, in the middle of the night.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he wished to draw attention to the Report of the Select Committee of 1886, which recommended that 40 Members should have the right to challenge a Division; and he approved this security for the publicity of the votes of Members for the information of their constituents. The principle was also affirmed by the practise of other Legislatures, and of Municipal Corporations. He would point out that the present opportunities of private Members were very limited, and under the new Rules they would be still more so. He knew the Government had a great difficulty in keeping a House during the dinner hour; but, speaking the views of a large number of young Members, he was certainly opposed to the House adjourning for dinner. An objection had been raised by the right hon. Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), who said that after an adjournment there would be great difficulty in making a House again, and that on some occasions the House might be taken by surprise and counted out. No doubt, under the proposed Rule, there might be a tendency in that direction, unless a time were fixed for making a House. He would venture to suggest that if, on the re-assembling of the House, attention was called to the fact that there were not 40 Members present, Mr. Speaker should suspend the Sitting for five minutes, or for some limited period, in order to prevent the House from being taken by surprise. He was of opinion that the debates might be profitably closed at 12 o'clock, and he trusted that their knowledge of that fact would induce hon. Members to be more economical in the use of the time at their disposal, and they would certainly be more readily detected by their constituents if they wasted the time of the nation.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he should like to say a few words before the discussion closed. He thought the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter), that the House should relegate to a Committee to be nominated by the Speaker the advancement of measures, would, if adopted, be very dangerous. He was astonished that such a suggestion should have been made by his hon. Friend, who was thoroughly acquainted with the system which prevailed in the United States. In that country the Committee had absolute control, not only for the advancement of Business before the

House, but of the fate of measures, which meant that the House did not control its own Business, but that a small Committee, or the Chairman of the Committee, controlled it, and did what the House itself should do. That the House should part with all control over legislation was altogether unsuitable to the genius of the House of Commons, and altogether dangerous. There was great danger in too much devolution. If anyone wanted to understand the dangerous tendency of devolution, he could not do better than study the history and practice, not only of the American Congress in that respect, but of the State Legislatures. The lesson to be learned was that great danger would surround any proposal on the part of Her Majesty's Government to part with any of the powers of the House of Commons in order to relegate them to a Select Committee. Another point he wished to allude to with all possible respect was the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the Poplar Division of the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Buxton)—namely, that the Leaders of the House had absorbed, and were absorbing, a great deal too much time of the House. The object of all these proposals, and all these new forms of Procedure, was to get more time in which to transact the Business of the country. The present complaint was that the House had not sufficient time to do the Business that came before them, therefore the great object was to economize the time of the House. Speaking with all respect and deference to the Leaders of the House, and in a spirit of perfect impartiality, he was bound to confess that they would get no economy of time until right hon. Gentlemen consented to speak with the same limitations the House expected from private Members. Last year the average length of speeches of right hon. Gentlemen was at least an hour. That average had risen during the present Session until it had reached one hour and and a-quarter. Private Members meekly submitted to this usurpation on the part of those who ought to protect their rights. They would, in the end, come to this—that, no matter what Rules of Procedure might be adopted, private Members would have no rights to protect. Right hon. Gentlemen should bear in mind the bad example they were setting their followers. He regretted to say that that example was spreading. Only a week ago two private Members and two official Members occupied the whole of one day's Sitting—one of them, the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis), having occupied an hour and a-half. He was afraid that it was the overweening vanity of hon. Members which had led to this abuse. He thought they ought to be animated by a desire to make the most of the limited time at their disposal, so that they might give all their time to the advancement of Business.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, that as an independent Member he hoped that the Government would consent to alter the proposed Rule, so as to secure to private Members the few privileges which they now possessed. He thought that if the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was to throw his suggestions into the form of an Amendment, it would meet with considerable support. The right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) had spoken of the present practice of blocking Bills to prevent their coming on after half-past 12 o'clock; but he (Mr. Vincent) ventured to remind him that many useful Bills—though blocked—became law which were called on at 20 or 25 minutes past 12. Under the present automatic closure of contentious Business at midnight this advantage would be taken away, and nothing, so far as he could see, put in its place. The proposed adjournment of an hour for dinner would, in his opinion, be almost valueless. It would be altogether impossible for the majority of Members to leave the House at 8, go home, dine, and return to the House in time to take part in any discussion that was resumed at 9 o'clock.

Mr. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he would not detain the House for more than a minute or two. The officials of the House would be perfectly satisfied with half-an-hour for dinner, and it was immaterial to them whether it was a fixed interval or not. He might say for himself, and he thought he might say for the Speaker, that there was no desire on their part to ask for an adjournment for an hour. It was quite sufficient that a Rule should be laid down for the retirement of the occupant of the Chair from the House for a short period without fixing a period for that retirement to take place. It would be quite sufficient if it were understood that half-an-hour, or whatever time might be fixed, should be allowed for the retirement of the Chairman. Hon. Members would then know precisely when the Business would be resumed. He agreed with the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that the experiment which the House was about to make might not be free from difficulty, but certain of the difficulties attached to the experiment could be foreseen. Will regard to Private Bill legislation, for example, why could not Commitees sit at 11 instead of 12? He certainly felt the difficulty as to the transaction of minor Business after midnight, and he thought it might be necessary to reconsider that matter. One point to which attention ought to be drawn was the scandalous custom which permitted a great deal to be done in the House which ought not to be done in it. He referred to the arrangement of private Members' business. It was a scandal that so much time should be wasted in balloting at the beginning of every Session, with the result that the order of subjects was settled by chance, without any regard to their importance. He suggested that Members originating Motions and Bills should inscribe them in a book, and that the supporters of such Motions or Bills should then subscribe their names to them, each Member being only allowed to put his name to one such proposal. The Motion or Bill after which there was the greatest number of signatures would then be taken first, and the others in their order according to the support given to them. He did not foresee any difficulty in carrying out that plan. All the arrangements might be made in a bureau, and the system could be put in practice periodically through the Session.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that, apart from the question of suspending Business during the dinner hour, it would be a great convenience if the Chair could be vacated at an approximately certain hour. It might be that a Member of the Government, or a private Member, took a close interest in a Bill in Committee, and did not wish to be absent for a moment, and, in view of that circumstance, a suspension of the Sitting for a definite period might be of very great value. Perhaps sufficient consideration had not been given to the very arduous duties of the occupant of the Chair in that House; and he thought it would ease the labours of the Chair if it were possible to give the Deputy Speaker and Chairman greater powers than they now possessed for dividing the work between them. With reference to the argument of some hon. Members, who said that he opposed the suspension for the dinner hour because in that time inexperienced Members were accustomed to address the House, he thought it would be a serious danger to the progress of Business if it were to go forth that two hours—from 8 to 10—were for the special advantage of inexperienced speakers, because it would simply lead to an aggravation of the existing waste of time. He hoped, therefore, that if the proposal for a dinner hour suspension was rejected, something would be said in deprecation of the idea that after a certain hour none but in experienced speakers should address the House.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, there was no doubt that the constituents of Members expected them to take some part in the Business of the House, not merely by voting, but by expressing their constituents' opinions. It had been almost impossible for private Members during recent Sessions to lay their views before the House. A great deal of time was wasted; and he thought that it would be well to commence work from the time when Mr. Speaker took the Chair. He knew that many Members incurred great fatigue in consequence of having to remain in their places so long before Business commenced, and there were many on that side of the House who considered that 12 o'clock was a proper time for terminating the proceedings of the House. A great deal of time was, under the present arrangements, taken up by long speeches of one or two individuals; and he and his hon. Friends thought it was only reasonable that the ordinary hours of rest should be secured to everyone connected with the House. The Members of the Government had not only to attend the House for many hours, but also to do the very hard and important work which had to be gone through at their various Offices; and anyone who watched the Members of the Government during the last Session must have seen how much the long hours of attendance had told on their health.

Mr. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.) said, he gathered that the result of the proposal of the Government would be that private Members would have no opportunity of taking part in the Business of the House. That, he thought, would constitute a great danger; because, even at the present time, private Members had no exaggerated powers, and to adopt the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House would be practically to extinguish their rights altogether. There certainly seemed to be a considerable waste of time between Mr. Speaker taking the Chair and the commencement of Public Business. It was seldom the case that the Private Business of the House occupied 30 minutes; and yet that space of time was devoted to that purpose. He could not see why Private Business should not be put down amongst the Orders of the Day, and taken in its proper place, and the Public Business commence directly it was concluded. In that way they would save 20 minutes in each Sitting, or almost two hours every week. He was in favour of that arrangement, which would in no way interfere with the course of Business or with those in charge of the Administration.

Mr. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, he hoped the Government would pause before changing the hour of meeting to 3 o'clock. There were in the House upwards of 120 Members of the Legal Profession, besides many members of other Professions, and men who were connected with the commerce of this great country. Three o'clock was an unusually early hour at which to ask those Members to come down and legislate on public affairs; and it was more in behalf of the latter class than of Gentlemen of the Long Robe, who were quite able to defend themselves, that he pleaded. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon those men were actively engaged in their business matters, which were then in full swing; and it would be to them a great inconvenience to be required to come down at that hour. It should also be borne in mind that an hon. Member who wished to secure a seat must arrive some time before the House met on the occasion of a debate of an important or interesting nature. Members, under these circumstances, would, therefore, have to reach the House at half-past 2 to secure seats. He thought the Government would do well to reconsider the proposal to allow the House to adjourn for an hour or an hour and a-half. He certainly considered it necessary that Mr. Speaker should have a period of rest afforded him. To ask him to take the Chair at 4 o'clock, and remain uninterruptedly until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, was more than could be expected. But he thought an arrangement might easily be made that when Mr. Speaker was out of the Chair his place should be taken by the Deputy Speaker, and in that way there would be continuity in the Business of the House, which would not be interrupted. He thought it hard that new Members, who were diffident in laying their views before the House, should be deprived of the dinner hour which was found to be convenient for their purpose, and he should not like to see it taken away from them. He ventured to think that the hour for terminating Business should be 12 o'clock; and that Members who came down at 4 o'clock and remained till midnight devoting themselves to Business had done as much as the country could expect of them. It was only last night that two Members, who had to go to Woolwich, and could otherwise have gone by train, were obliged, owing to the late hour to which the House sat, to go that distance of 12 miles by carriage. He suggested that when midnight arrived the House should adjourn.

Mr. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) said, it was his intention to support the Amendment which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had put on the Paper, if it were moved, because he thought it would be a great advantage to those Members who had to leave town to do so on Friday instead of on Saturday. With regard to the question of the dinner hour, he thought that one hour would be of no use whatever. If they were to have any cessation for this purpose, two hours would be necessary; but that would be a serious inroad on the time of the House, and he should, therefore, strongly support the suggestion that for the purpose of relieving Mr. Speaker in his very arduous duties the Chair should be taken in his absence from 8 to 10 o'clock by the Deputy Chairman. He was also of opinion that the Business of the House should terminate at 12 o'clock rather than at half-past 12. With those slight alterations he should support the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, that if the dinner hour were abolished, the rights of private Members would be altogether extinguished. Those rights had been lately in a state of suspended animation. Even if private Members were sometimes considered to be bores, they were bores whom their constituents expected to address the House, and their only chance of speaking was to get up in the dinner hour. Speaking as a medical man, he thought it very important that the House should cease Business at 12 o'clock, because no human constitution could stand the strain of so many hours work as was required under the present system. For those who could stay in bed as long as they liked it did not matter so much; but the work was too hard for Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench and others who could not do so. He hoped they would bring back their Rules to something like common sense, and enable Members to go to bed and rise at a reasonable hour.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) said, that probably the majority of hon. Members would be of opinion that the views of the House on the general question had been sufficiently gathered to enable them to proceed with the consideration of the substantive Amendments to the Rule which were upon the Paper. He had no hesitation in repeating—as he had stated earlier in the evening—that the desire of the Government was to meet the convenience of the House and to provide for the despatch of Business by men who were in a physical condition to discharge it with advantage to the country. With regard to the second paragraph providing for the suspension of the Sitting at 8 o'clock, he might state at once that, having gathered the sense of the House on that point, the Government would not press it. He thought it ought to be understood that in recent years it had become the practice for the Speaker to retire for a limited period between 8 and 9 o'clock, and that practice would be continued, except that the House would probably agree that the interval might very well be extended to half-an-hour. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had referred to the proviso in the first paragraph of the first Rule excepting from the operation of the Rule as to adjournment at 1 o'clock occasions when—

> "A Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means and proceedings made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, or otherwise excepted from the operation of this Standing Order"

might be under consideration. It was proposed to amend this provision so as to make the exceptions from the Rule of Closure at 1 o'clock perfectly clear and definite. Reference had also been made to the provision in the Rule that a Minister of the Crown might at the commencement of the Sitting move that the proceedings on any specified Business be not interrupted at half-past 12 o'clock under this Rule. It had been urged that Notice of this Motion ought to be required. It was the practice of the House that Notice should be given of a Motion of this kind, and it was therefore unnecessary to make provision for this in the Rule. The Notice, according to the general practice, would appear on the Notice Paper of the day. Then, with regard to the provision for the suspension of the proceedings at half-past 5 o'clock on Wednesdays instead of at a quarter to 6, as at present, this was to obviate a difficulty that now existed. If a Division was taken at half-past 5 o'clock it would be over at about 20 minutes to 6 o'clock, and that would leave time for taking up the next Business on the Paper before the quarter to 6 was reached, when all Business must cease; whereas at present, if a Division was taken shortly before a quarter to 6 it was not over until after a quarter to 6, and all the remaining Business stood postponed until the next day. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had objected that if the House met at 3 o'clock and Public Business commenced at half-past 3 o'clock the Private Bill Commitees would be seriously interfered with, but by Resolution of the House the Committees might be authorized to sit until half-past 3 o'clock; and as hon. Members would in future get to bed earlier, probably—so long as the House chose to continue the present system of consideration of Private Bills by Members of the House—such Committees might meet a little earlier than at present. The subject of Private Bill legislation had been fully considered, and the Government would propose that a Joint Committee of Members of this House and of the House of Lords should be appointed with a view to considering the whole subject of Private Bill legislation in Committee and devising a scheme which would be for the interest of the promoters of Private Bills and of the public. It was a very complicated and important subject, and if it could be solved it would relieve hon. Members of work which at present fell upon them, and at the same time assist in securing an extension of the system of devolution of Committee work with regard to Bills which, under the present Rule, occupied a large portion of the timeof the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundee (Mr. E. Robertson) had made some remarks with regard to the length of speeches delivered from the Front Benches. That was a matter with which the Government could not deal, but which must be left to the House itself to decide by the means which it possessed of giving expression to its feelings when unduly long speeches were made. With regard to the observations of the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce), he (Mr. W. H. Smith) could only say that it would be difficult for the Government to propose any scheme by which the rights of private Members would be further restricted; but when private Members brought forward any scheme on this subject the Government would consider it. As to the reference which had been made by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) with regard to the danger of "Counts-out," during the short period that he (Mr. W. H. Smith) had had the honour of occupying his present position he had had to remain in the House throughout the whole of the Sitting, and he had noticed during the latter part of last Session that on the return of the Speaker attempts were not infrequently made to count the House—the attempt being repeated on some occasions more than once on the same evening within a few minutes. He hoped that those hon. Members who were in favour of the retention of the present practice with regard to the dinner hour would set their faces against this most inconvenient course, which resulted in hon. Members being called back to the House in the middle of their dinner, and also in the loss of several minutes while the Count was taking place.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he did not rise for the purpose of prolonging the discussion, for the spirit of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks left nothing to be desired. But there was one point — namely, that raised by the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce)—to which he had given no answer. If the proposal with regard to the dinner hour were dropped and the present practice of an interval of half-an-hour were continued, then he thought that the proposal in the Rule that Business should be interrupted at half-past 12 o'clock ought to be altered to 12 o'clock.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, there was an Amendment on the Paper with regard to that point. He had already stated that the point was one with regard to which he did not desire to put any pressure on the House. He wished to carry the House with him, because he assumed that the House, as a whole, was desirous of assisting in the conduct of Public Business. For his own part, he thought half-past 12 o'clock a reasonable hour; but in that matter he was ready to defer to the wish of the House.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he understood the Government to offer no objection to the suggestion made, if it should find favour with the House at large. With regard to the suspension of proceedings between 8 and 9 o'clock, he thought the present elastic arrangement was convenient, and carried with it some subsidiary advantages. He regarded as the most important announcement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) the extremely satisfactory proposal to meet the difficulties felt in the House and the country as to the conduct of Private Bill legislation. He thought the proposal to have a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament to consider by what plan the purposes of Private Bill legislation could be carried out was extremely fair and reasonable, and one from which the House might hope to obtain a satisfactory scheme when the time arrived. He also felt the force of the right hon. Gentleman's reply to the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that the fact that hon. Members would come down earlier made it easier to terminate Business sooner than he proposed. He (Mr. John Morley) had been a little disappointed at the treatment of the criticisms of his Friends the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) and the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), with regard to the House affording greater choice and discretion as to the Bills which it might consider and further. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes), in reply to his hon. and learned Friend, said that a private Member would be at no greater disadvantage under the present proposals than he was already under the operation of the half-past 12 Rule. But that he thought was not quite an accurate account of the matter, because, for example, the half-past 12 o'clock Rule did not preclude the furthering of Unopposed Business; again, that Rule did not apply to Bills in the Committee stage. Speaking for himself, he thought with regard to the three methods proposed by his hon. and learned Friend that there was great difficulty in the way of the first, which contemplated the appointment of a Selecting Committee by the Speaker; and next, that the proposal that the House should declare its choice and preference would be found to be a very cumbrous and unworkable method of procedure. The third plan did not appear to be open to so grave objections; that he thought might be made into a workable expedient, and he hoped that some measures would be taken to bring it into that form.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) whether it would not be well to have independent Tellers? If that arrangement were made they would have much more independent voting.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he did not see his way to adopt the proposal of the hon. Member.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, the Amendment he was about to move embodied no Party question. There were many hon. Members in favour of it, and it almost spoke for itself. It was intended, in a Parliamentary sense, to substitute Wednesday for Friday and Friday for Wednesday. Its effect would be that on Wednesday they should sit at 3 o'clock and continue to do so during the evening, and on Friday they would commence business at 12 o'clock and rise at 6 o'clock. He gathered that the House used formerly to sit on Wednesday all the evening as on any other day, and that it was only when the hour of rising became exceedingly late that it was considered desirable to have a break and sit in the morning. That arrangement was very desirable in view of the late hour to which the House had sat during recent Sessions. But they were going to change all that now and go to bed at a reasonable time, and he did not think they would require so long a rest as they had now on Wednesday evening. The question was, on which evening, whether Wednesday or Friday, would it be most convenient to have a holiday? No doubt a reason could be alleged in favour of Wednesday, but if they had the evenings of both Wednesday and Friday hon. Members would probably be glad of it. There were many hon. Members engaged in business, who had their houses at a considerable distance from London, and who went from town on Saturday morning and remained until Monday morning. It would be a great convenience to those hon. Members to go down on Friday evening instead of Saturday morning, and it was the same with those hon. Gentlemen who, living in London, were accustomed for their health to leave town on Saturday. The objections to his proposal were somewhat of a social character. Those who were in favour of it were told that they were going to alter the whole system of London hospitality because people were in the habit of giving dinners on Wednesday. But why should they not give their dinners on Friday? Those who were of an hospitable turn might save by this; they might give a dinner on Friday and use what remained on Saturday. A friend of his had raised another objection to the scheme, and said—"I want to enjoy my Wednesday." "Well," he remarked to him—"You will be able to enjoy your Friday;" but the reply was—"If the Morning Sitting is on Friday my wife will expect me home, whereas if it is on Wednesday I can stop up in London." Of course, he could give no answer to that argument. They ought to bear in mind that the Government were in no way obliged to make a House on Wednesday. If the Amendment were carried it would be desirable to alter the Rule which now required that on a Wednesday Mr. Speaker should wait until 4 o'clock unless a House was made earlier; for if a wild and reckless Bill were down on Friday, it was probable that a House would be made on that day, and it would be outrageous that Mr. Speaker should lose the whole day. He left the matter entirely in the hands of the House to decide, and he trusted that every hon. Member would decide as he thought best in his own interest, for it was not a question affecting the interest of the Government.

Mr. ERNEST SPENCER (West Bromwich) said, he rose to second the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The hon. Member having spoken so ably had left him little to say on the subject, but he thought it would be a decided advantage to adopt the proposal, and he knew but of one valid objection against it—namely, that four days' continuous sitting would be a great strain on the health and strength of the officials of the House. The weight of that argument in the past would have been very considerable, but it would not be so strong now, because of the change in respect to the Sittings of the House which were about to take place. He had no doubt that the officials of the House would view this proposal with favour. The substitution of Wednesdays for Fridays would more materially affect hon. Gentlemen who lived in the country, and he was entitled to say on their behalf that they viewed this proposed alteration with considerable satisfaction, as it would enable them to devote not only more time to their homes but to their business affairs. He was also of opinion that hon. Members generally would gladly avail themselves of increased opportunities of seeking that change of air and scene which was rendered so very necessary by the prolonged Sessions of last and previous years.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the words "otherwise order," to insert the words "the Standing Orders relating to Wednesday Sittings shall no longer apply to the Sittings on Wednesday, but shall apply to the Sittings on Friday, and the Standing Orders relating to Fridays shall no longer apply to the Sittings on Friday, but shall apply to the Sittings on Wednesday, and."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BARING (London) said, he emphatically opposed the proposal to sit late on Wednesdays. Although he was but a new Member in that Parliament, he had sat, and sat late, in previous Parliaments, and he found that he could with the interval of Wednesday sit on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; but he entirely objected to that interval being taken from him. A good night's sleep on one night out of four was as little as a man could get on with, especially at his age, and many Members were a good deal older. He might add that he had hitherto lived in the country, and should be glad to have Friday as well as Wednesday; but as he could not get both, he very much preferred the latter day.

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) said, that in the Committee which sat to consider this subject the proposal which was embodied in the Amendment was supported by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), the hon. Member for the Everton Division of Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), and by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith); and although it was lost on a Division, that Division was a good one, and it justified an appeal to the House on the present occasion. The argument of the hon. Member for the Everton Division of Liverpool was that there were a number of hon. Gentlemen engaged in business at Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool, and in Scotland; that those hon. Gentlemen were compelled, to a certain extent, to neglect their businesses; but that if they could get down on Friday they would be able to pay some attention to them without neglecting their duty to their constituents. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had limited himself to the one point of the convenience of hon. Members; and the proposal was, no doubt, very much to their convenience that they should have three nights in the country instead of two. His own opinion was that the four days' continuous work would be better, and more work would be done, than if they had a break in the middle of the week to be followed by two more days of Public Business. If they could not get away before 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, it would be impossible to have four continuous nights; but if they were to have the early closing movement carried out he saw no hardship in the proposal. No doubt there was something in the argument that it was difficult to make a House on Friday morning; but if the Bill to be considered were an interesting one it was certain there would be a House on Friday, just as there was now on Wednesday. It had never been found, when at the end of the Session Wednesdays became public property, that there was any difficulty in getting a House; and he had no doubt that the same would be found to be the case with regard to Fridays; and with regard to the social arrangements of London, there would only be a change to which those arrangements would easily adapt themselves.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University) said, the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Craig-Sellar) had given a very fair account of what took place in the Committee, and had very justly stated the arguments, as well as the decision, at which the Committee had arrived. The Committee rejected this proposal when it was brought before them, and he (Mr. Raikes) trusted that the influence of that Committee would not be lost on the House that evening. What they ought to look to was how the House was to be made the best working legislative machine; and, regarding the question from that point of view, would they not say that the House was likely to do its work better if it worked two full days, then half-a-day, and then two full days, followed by a rest on Saturday and Sunday, than it would if it ground away for four consecutive evenings, and then sat in a perfunctory manner on the Friday afternoon? They heard much talk about private Members' Bills, but he thought they would hear very little of such Bills if the only day upon which they could be taken was the Friday. He could not help thinking that his hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. Baring) expressed very fairly and justly the view of those hon. Members who had constant occupation in the daytime, and who yet came down to the House in the evening and gave an earnest attention to the debates. It would be impossible for such Members to give to their Parliamentary duties that full and complete attention they now gave if it was necessary for them to attend for four days without a break. He had some experience of the House, having sat in it for a good many years, and he confessed the belief that it would not be competent for hon. Members who sat on the two Front Benches to carry on their work with that vigour and that elasticity which was required of them if they were to be confronted by each other for four consecutive days. On a Wednesday Members had an opportunity, when Party feeling was highly exasperated and passions were running high, to give quiet consideration to a subject; and it no doubt frequently happened that they re-assembled on the Thursday in a much better condition to settle some great question than they were in when they separated on the Tuesday night. This question, although it was one which might not appear to some to be of great importance, was one which demanded the utmost consideration, and he asked the House to think once, twice, and thrice before it departed from a system which the experience of many Parliaments had proved to be satisfactory, and embarked on a new arrangement for which no argument had been advanced, except that it might be convenient for hon. Gentlemen to live with one leg in London and one leg in a country house.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) said, he could not help thinking it was the continuity of the work of the House which told on the constitution; that their mental and physical powers were entirely exhausted by the continuity of the work. For himself, and he could speak for many Metropolitan Members, the interim in the middle of the week was of very great advantage; indeed, he was sure the existing arrangement was the best for hon. Members generally. He believed, too, that the officials of the House would be very sorry to know that any alteration had been made in the existing arrangement in regard to the rising of the House on the Wednesday.

Mr. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) said, he wished to re-assert the opinion he expressed on the Procedure Committee. He was sorry to hear the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes), because he recollected that the argument urged against any alteration of the hours of sitting on Wednesday was the convenience of Members and the late hours. Now, however, late hours were to be done away with, and therefore the position was altogether changed. Some hon. Members had treated the question as one between town and country. He regretted to hear the private convenience of Members quoted as an argument against the proposed change. Let the House consider for a moment what was the position the Representatives of many Provincial constituencies occupied. During the sitting of Parliament such Members had no opportunity whatever of coming in contact with their constituents, and of consulting them upon the important measures which might be introduced. He did not know anything that would be of greater advantage than the personal contact with their constituents which Members would have if they could go down to their constituencies from the Friday night to the Monday. He declined to discuss the question as one of private convenience. It was unworthy in Members of the House of Commons to cite private reasons rather than the public good in favour of the change now proposed. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) was in favour of this proposition when the Procedure Committee sat, and he (Mr. Whitley) could not understand the change in the opinion of the Government. He was quite aware the proposition would probably be opposed by the occupants of the two Front Benches; but that was no reason why independent Members, who believed that the Business of the country would be better consulted by an early adjournment on the Friday night, should not support the change. He cordially supported the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 105; Noes 167: Majority 62.

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Austin, J.
Barry, J.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, T. D.
Bond, G. H.
Broadhurst, H.
Brunner, J. T.
Burt, T.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Coghill, D. H.
Conway, M.
Corbet, W. J.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
Dillon, J.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Evershed, S.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fulton, J. F.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gent-Davis, R.
Gill, T. P.
Gray, C. W.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hayden, L. P.
Holloway, G.
Hooper, J.
Hoyle, I.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Joicey, J.
Kendrick, W.
Kilbride, D.
Lafone, A.
Leahy, J.
Lees, E.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
Mac Innes, M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mallock, R.
Marum, E. M.
Mulholland, H. L.
Neville, R.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Pinkerton, J.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.
Quinn, T.
Rankin, J.
Reed, H. B.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, E.
Roe, T.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, T. W.
Samuelson, G. B.
Sellar, A. C.
Sinclair, W. P.
Stack, J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Sutherland, A.
Thomas, A.
Thorburn, W.
Tuite, J.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Wardle, H.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitley, E.
Wilson, H. J.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.
Wroughton, P.

TELLERS.

Labouchere, H.
Spencer, J. E.

NOES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Addison, J. E. W.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allison, R. A.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barran, J.
Bartley, G. C. T.

Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Burghley, Lord
Buxton, S. C.
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Charrington, S.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cobb, H. P.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Collings, J.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Courtney, L. H.
Craig, J.
Crawford, D.
Crossley, E.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, Sir W.
Fenwick, C.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flower, C.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, rt. hn. H. H.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Gardner, H.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gedge, S.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gully, W. C.
Haldane, R. B.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Harrington, E.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Illingworth, A.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knowles, L.
Lawrence, W. F.
Leake, R.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Maclean, J. M.
M'Arthur, A.
Madden, D. H.
Maple, J. B.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Milvain, T.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Moss, R.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
Parker, C. S.
Pelly, Sir L.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Provand, A. D.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Rathbone, W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Salt, T
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Summers, W.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Trotter, H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he would move to insert "half-past" after "at" in line 2. The effect of the Amendment would be that the House would meet on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at half-past 3 o'clock, instead of at 3, as proposed by the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had himself given a good reason for the Amendment, because he had pointed out that Committees of the House would sit till half-past 3; and if they did so it would be difficult for Members serving on Committees to find places in the House if it met at 3 o'clock. It was all very well for Members of the Government and for right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who sat upon the Front Opposition Bench to come strolling down to the House at half-past 3 and find their seats reserved for them; but, unfortunately, private Members would be obliged, if the House met at 3, to come down before 3 in order to secure a place. He had thought of putting down an Amendment in the Rule to the effect that it should not come into force until a seat was provided for every Member; but if the House was to meet at an earlier hour he hoped that the First Lord of the Treasury would agree to the modest proposal of a Committee to take into consideration whether means could not be adopted for enlarging the House so as to find seats for all its Members. That proposal was always opposed by the two Front Benches. And why was that? Because the two Front Benches had got their places; and they said to other Members—"Come down at 3 o'clock; come down and pray; come down and pray for us." Let them come down and pray for themselves, and know what it was to be dragged down half-an-hour before the House met in order to get a seat. He trusted that whether the hour of meeting was 3 or half-past 3, his suggestion as to the appointment of a Committee would be acceded to. There was a subsequent Amendment placed on the Paper by an hon. Gentleman that the hour of meeting should be 4 o'clock, but at present the House met at a quarter to 4; and he thought that it would be a reasonable proposal to split the difference and make the time of meeting half-past 3. Moreover, if they were not to have the hour's relaxation in the middle of the Sitting, even if they were to meet at half-past 3, the Sittings would last longer than the First Lord of the Treasury originally suggested. That was not a Party question; but one on which Members on both sides of the House ought to vote for what was best for the country and what was best for themselves.

Amendment proposed, in line 2, after the word "at," to insert the words "half-past."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-past' be there inserted."

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he had an Amendment upon the Paper providing that the House should continue to meet at 4 o'clock. It might be convenient to discuss his Amendment in conjunction with that of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere); and, therefore, he hoped the Speaker would see his way to put the Question, "That 'three' stand part of the Question."

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not in my power to do that. I must put the Question, "That the words 'half-past' be there inserted." If the Question is negatived, it would be competent for the hon. Gentleman to move his Amendment.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE said, he did not propose any change in the existing arrangement. In spite of what the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) said, he asserted that the proper thing to do was to insert "4 o'clock," because he saw that on their Agenda Paper there was the Notice that the Speaker would take the Chair at 4 o'clock. ["No; a quarter to 4!"] Then he asked permission to move "a quarter to 4," so as not to alter the existing arrangement. He presumed that if "three" or "half-past three" were adopted, that would be prayer time, and the result would be very inconvenient for a large number, almost all the Members of the House. In the first place, the convenience of business men must be consulted, and it must be borne in mind that in these democratic days there were many more men of business in the House than formerly. Again, the expenses of Committees would be largely increased if the time for holding Committees was cut short. If hon. Members had to run away to secure seats, even though the Committees might agree to sit after the House had commenced Business, there would practically be a diminution of the time Members could give to Committee Business. [*Cries of* "Agreed, agreed!"] He should be very glad if the House would agree to his proposal. In any event, he hoped they would not agree to meet at 3 o'clock.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had any knowledge of the work which Members of the Government had to do, he would hardly talk of them strolling down to the House. It would undoubtedly be a convenience to a great many hon. and right hon. Gentlemen if the hour of meeting were fixed at a quarter to 4 instead of 3 o'clock. But the Government had to consider, in proposing Rules to govern the Business of the House, the convenience of the House, as a whole, and what time it was necessary to allow for the transaction of Public Business. The Government felt that when they asked the House to agree to conclude the Sittings at a given hour, they should also ask the House to meet somewhat earlier, in order that the time for discussion might not be unduly limited. Inasmuch as they proposed that the transaction of Opposed Business should cease at half-past 12, they thought it would be right to ask the House to meet at 3 o'clock. The question, however, was one for the House to decide. The Government could not take upon themselves the responsibility of seriously limiting the period for the transaction of Public Business; and, on the whole, they thought it right to adhere to the proposal to meet at 3 o'clock. Reference had been made by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) to the serious inconvenience which might arise from the time allowed for the Sittings of Committees being cut short. His hon.

Friend could hardly have been present when the question was raised in the general discussion which preceded the debate upon the first Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), or he would know that it was generally thought it would be reasonable, if the House rose earlier, that the Committees should meet earlier than now.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he thought a way out of the difficulty raised by his hon. Friend's Motion would be found by agreeing to the proposal which he (Mr. John Morley) made when he addressed the House a short time ago, and which the First Lord of the Treasury did not look exactly unfavourably upon. The objection to meeting so early as 3 o'clock would to a considerable extent be met, if the right hon. Gentleman would agree to conclude Opposed Business at 12 o'clock, instead of half-past 12 o'clock, because then they would be rewarded for their virtue in coming down—strolling down or otherwise—at 3 o'clock, by being able to get away at 12 o'clock, so far as great debates were concerned. His right hon. Friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had pointed out that half-an-hour would be too short a time for the House to get through the Legislative Business which was non-contentious, but which was, nevertheless, important and necessary. If the First Lord of the Treasury would accede to the suggestion to substitute 12 o'clock for half-past 12 o'clock, 1 o'clock might still remain in the paragraph at the bottom of the page, which would give an hour in which to get through the non-contentious Business on the Paper.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he had much pleasure in supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), as he considered it a fair compromise. Four o'clock was, no doubt, a very convenient hour of meeting for a large number of Members. Speaking, as he did, on behalf of those who were men of business, it would be very inconvenient to come down to the House earlier than 4 o'clock. It would, too, be inconvenient for many Members of the Legal Profession to come down before that hour.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, that the First Lord of the Treasury did not sit upon a Committee more than once in five years, and therefore it was all very well for him to suggest that Committees should meet before 12 o'clock. He (Colonel Nolan) strongly objected to Committees being required to meet earlier. If Members were to get an hour's exercise after breakfast, it was absolutely impossible for them to meet before 12 o'clock. If they did not meet before 12 o'clock, the Sittings of Committees would be cut short, which would be most unwise. He trusted the House would see its way to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere).

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (Exeter) said, the First Lord of the Treasury had said that the first business of the House was to consider the convenience of its Members. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) submitted it was even more important to consider how Public Business was to be carried on. If the House was to sit from 3 o'clock until half-past 12 that would allow of nine and a-half hours' discussion, but it would seriously curtail the hours during which Ministers had to transact their Departmental business. It was hardly possible for Ministers to get down to their offices before 10 o'clock, and that would allow them five hours in which to do their Departmental business, which was to be criticized in the House. He should be glad if the Leader of the House could see his way to make some such concession as that suggested.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, it was necessary to bear in mind the important question raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley)—namely, at what hour Public Business should close at night, because upon that one point many others depended. He was anxious that Public Business should close at midnight. Not alone would it be better for the House itself, but it would be striking a blow in favour of better hours for London generally. Moreover, if they closed Business at 12 o'clock, the advantage to the Press, particularly the country Press, would be very great; indeed, it would be a boon which would be recognized and appreciated the country through. Reference had been made to the possible inconvenience of Ministers in respect to their Departmental work. Speaking as a business man, he believed that one hour spent by Ministers in their Departments before 12 o'clock was infinitely more useful than two hours hurriedly spent after 12 o'clock. Not only would Ministers be able to do their own work better, but they would be able to see the work in their Departments was done better. But if they closed Opposed Business at 12 o'clock, it seemed to follow inevitably that the House should meet at 3 o'clock. He did not see that there need be any curtailment of the time given to Committee work upstairs. Committees could meet at 11 o'clock, and in future it would be quite as easy for Members engaged in Committees to meet at 11 o'clock as to meet at 12 now, considering the late hours to which the House was often kept sitting.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) that it would be impossible for business men to attend upon the House at 3 o'clock. The custom of the House was that to secure a seat a Member could affix his card to it if he were present at prayers. The House was not large enough to accommodate all its Members, and therefore the result of meeting at 3 would be that every business man and every man engaged in the law would be unable to secure a seat. He trusted that the First Lord of the Treasury would yield to the suggestion that they should meet at half-past 3 o'clock instead of 3.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, they had not only to consider the convenience of the House, but the question of the despatch of Business. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) had suggested that they should fix 12 o'clock as the hour at which Opposed Business should cease. If the Government accepted 12 o'clock instead of half-past 12, it appeared to be absolutely necessary they should adhere to the proposal to meet at 3 o'clock. His hon. Friend (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had mentioned a difficulty with which he (Mr. W. H. Smith) fully sympathized. It was, of course, a matter of very considerable importance that hon. Members who frequented the House should be able to obtain a seat, and if any method could be found by which seats could be secured for Members who took an interest in the House without requiring them to come down at 3 o'clock he should be very glad to adopt it. But the paramount duty they had to discharge was to secure the due order of Business in the House under conditions which would conduce to its efficiency. After listening to the arguments which had been advanced on both sides of the House, he had come to the conclusion that 12 o'clock should be fixed as the hour when debate on Opposed Business should conclude. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had referred to the Business which might follow Opposed Business. His (Mr. W. H. Smith's) impression was that the interval they had provided was sufficient in which to dispose of Unopposed Business. The right hon. Gentleman was under the impression that there might be discussion upon Business which was not opposed. If the right hon. Gentleman would put on the Paper any suggestion which would conduce to the transaction of Unopposed Business between 12 o'clock and a later hour, whether half-past 12 o'clock or 1 o'clock, he (Mr. W. H. Smith) would give it his best attention. He saw some difficulties in the way of the suggestion made, because it was exceedingly difficult to detect the character of any observations which might be made in reference to a Bill.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he greatly regretted to find himself on this question at variance with the occupants of the two Front Benches. He was in favour of eight hours' work for all men engaged in physical labour. The hon. Member spoke just now of the exhaustion of brain and body produced by the work of the House. The hon. Member's brain must be of a very weak kind. The brain work entailed in the case of the majority of Members in following the debates of the House was of the lightest possible description; but, in his opinion, the physical labour was of a very severe and exhaustive description. He thought there ought to be a law in every country where it was necessary confining physical labour to eight hours out of the 24, and he did not see why they, legislators, who were undoubtedly condemned to work of the most laborious kind, should be required to have far more than eight hours a day. There was one point upon which they ought to have a thorough understanding, and that was what course the Government were going to adopt with regard to the proposed adjournment for dinner. Was that abandoned? [*Cries of* "Yes!"] He was very glad of that. From 4 o'clock until 12 o'clock was eight hours, and in his opinion it was sufficiently long to keep the House occupied.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said the hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex (Mr. Dixon Hartland) and the hon. Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) had dwelt upon the great inconvenience which would result to business men and lawyers if the House met before four o'clock. What, however, they had to consider was the convenience of Members generally; and it seemed to him a monstrous thing that some 300 men of comparative leisure should be obliged to waste half the day and sit up half the night in order that 30 or 40 lawyers and bankers might make enormous incomes.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he should like to have a distinct understanding from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury as to the construction he placed upon the term "unopposed Business." There were two classes of what might be technically called "unopposed Business." There was the class of Business which, not being blocked, was allowed to be taken after half-past 12 on an ordinary night, and which consisted of measures of practical import, Government measures and other measures, and the carrying of Bills through stages of Committee which had previously passed the second reading. Practically, all second class Bills were now passed through Committee after half-past 12 o'clock at night. There was the other class of unopposed Business which occurred after a quarter to 6 on Wednesdays, when it was in the power of any individual Member of the House to stay all further progress in respect of that Business. Was he correct in understanding the First Lord of the Treasury to mean that after 12 o'clock, or half-past 12, it would be in the power of any individual Member of the House by saying "I object" to put a stop to all the Business upon the paper; because if so, he did not hesitate to say that the Business of the House would be brought to a standstill. It would be impossible to carry on either the legislation or the administration of the country if they put it in the power of any individual Member—and during the time he had been in the House there had always been individual Members ready to exercise that power, Members well known for their tendencies and powers in that direction—it would be in the power of any individual Member to stay progress in the case of 20 or 30 Government Orders and Bills of the greatest importance. If they were to do work after 12 o'clock, which was now done after the close of a big debate, an hour was the very least time that ought to be allowed them.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the right hon. Gentleman could hardly have read the last paragraph of the Rule, which stated that no opposed Business was to be taken after the close of the debate. He did not entertain the fears the right hon. Gentleman appeared to entertain as to the course of Public Business, or as to the course of Government Business. It would be in the power of the Government to ask the House to consider early in the evening measures which were now taken at the end of the evening, so that consideration might be given to them in the manner, and to the extent to which he was sure the right hon. Gentleman thought consideration should be given. As far as Private Bills were concerned, he trusted that the House would exercise due discretion and due judgment in reference to Bills promoted by private Members. If there was a fixed hour of closing, the danger which the right hon. Gentleman referred to must, under any circumstances, be encountered. It would be obviously quite possible for any two or three Members to occupy, in the discussion of any Bill, all the time allowed in order to shut out all other Business. There must be on the part of the House a desire fairly to promote the progress of Business.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 100; Noes 214: Majority 114.—(Div. List, No. 14.)

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he rose for the purpose of moving the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name, and he would like to say a few words in support of it. His proposal was as follows:—In line 3 to leave out the words "One of the clock a.m.," and insert "half-past Eleven of the clock." He would ask the right hon. Gentleman's attention to his principal reason for moving this Amenedment, and it was that the later hour named in the right hon. Gentleman's proposal would still leave the evils which the right hon. Gentleman complained of unremedied and untouched. His (Mr. Broadhurst's) object in desiring that the adjournment should take place at an early hour was to give all Members of the House opportunities of selecting their own means of returning home, which they did not possess at present. Up till now all hon. Members had either to walk home or to pay expensive cab hire. The latter might be within the reach of right hon. Members, but there were a number of Members who could not indulge in it, such number being rather on the increase than the decrease in future elections. It was a curious fact that nearly all the train services in the metropolis ceased at 12 o'clock, or very near that hour, and that omnibus services ceased at somewhere about the same time. If Members could leave the House at half-past 11, or certainly not later than 12, they would be able to travel comparatively long distances for a small sum, and would be able to occupy much cheaper residences than could be obtained within easy walking distance of the House. Then there were a great number of people employed in the House who were not Members, to whom it was of still greater importance that they should leave earlier in order to proceed home by train, or a cheaper mode of transit than a cab, and in their name, as well as in the name of many hon. Members, he pressed his Amendment upon the House. He did not believe in the argument used by the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), nor in the fears entertained by right hon. Members opposite—namely, that it was possible to coerce Members of the House into a more expedient mode of transacting their Business by Rules or hours of sitting. It would be necessary to trust to reason, and he entirely endorsed the remarks of his hon. Friend below the Gangway (Mr. Dillon) that eight hours work of the kind transacted by Members of Parliament was quite sufficient, and was quite as much as could be done efficiently and to the satisfaction of the country. While the Government were engaged in this sensible re-arrangement of the Rules of the House, he hoped they would freely work and do it thoroughly. He was certain of this, that in a very few Sessions, if not at once, the House and the country would find that they had lost nothing by reducing their hours of labour, but that they had added greatly to the efficiency of the work they are doing. He believed they would in the future be able to do quite as much work as they had done in longer hours in the past. He had no fear that the arrangement proposed would result in lengthening the Session. He did not believe that the proposal of the Government, even if his (Mr. Broadhurst's) Amendment were accepted, would add a fortnight to the length of the Session, but thought, on the contrary, it would rather have a tendency to shorten it. The lessening of the number of hours they sat would certainly be a great blessing to every Member of the House, both physically and mentally, and he believed that the legislation passed by the House would be more thorough, because it would be performed by men who were more competent than hon. Members were at present by reason of late sittings. On that subject he had received a great number of promises of support from both sides of the House, and he hoped that, should the First Lord of the Treasury not agree to accept his Amendment, he would at any rate assure his Followers that they were perfectly at liberty to vote as they chose on the question, and were not to be guided by the Whips at the door as they entered the House to take part in a division. He would not trespass on the House more than to express a hope that hon. Members fully gathered his reason for moving the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in line 34, to leave out the words, "One of the clock a.m.," and to insert the words, "half-past Eleven of the clock p.m."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT said, that he was in favour of the Amendment which had been moved; but there was also an Amendment of his own that the hour of closing should be 12 o'clock, subject to the disposal of unopposed Business. Perhaps it would be convenient for the First Lord of the Treasury to tell the House now whether, 3 o'clock having been adopted as a time of meeting, he did not propose to accept his Amendment to terminate opposed Business at midnight.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that it was understood, when the hour for commencing Business was fixed at 3 o'clock, that the Amendment would subsequently be agreed to providing for the termination of opposed Business at 12 o'clock. That was his answer to the Amendment. It was obvious that they could not adjourn the House at half-past 11, unless they agreed to close their debates at a much earlier hour. What had taken place in the House was, he thought, sufficient to show that the feeling and sense of the House was against the closing of opposed Business earlier than 12 o'clock. Much as he desired to meet the views of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Broadhurst) and the convenience of those he represented, he was compelled, in the interests of the convenience of the House itself, to adhere to the Rule he proposed, and to ask the House to close its Business at 12 o'clock. As the hon. Member was aware, the hour would remain as in the original Resolution, unless the Amendment were withdrawn and another Amendment were proposed. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) did not attach any great importance to leaving the hour for adjournment at 1 o'clock, because, as hon. Members would see, the meaning of the Rule was that the House should meet at 3 o'clock, and continue until 1, unless previously adjourned. If, therefore, the House decided to conclude its opposed Business at 12 o'clock, the House might adjourn at any moment thereafter that the unopposed Business was got rid of, provided it was before 1 o'clock. The House would adjourn at 1 o'clock in any event—whether the unopposed Business was disposed of or not. The House would see that it was not material that they should alter the hour from 1 o'clock to any earlier hour, although the fact that they had practically agreed in concluding opposed Business at 12 o'clock might appear to leave it open to doubt that they would sit till 1 o'clock. Of course, the House would adjourn as soon as the Business was got through.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said, he thought it meet that they should understand what the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury meant by the word "opposed." At the present time, they could not oppose a Bill after it had got into Committee. They could oppose a Bill on second reading, and on going into Committee; but when once it got into Committee, he presumed it would be taken as unopposed Business. If the Government meant by "opposing," the opposition of any one Member to a measure or a Motion, the House was aware that that opposition practically meant that five minutes after the hour fixed for the adjournment of the debate, all kinds of Business on the Paper would be disposed of. Did the Government mean that a Bill, on getting into the stage of Committee, or any later stage, could be opposed as measures could now be opposed, after a quarter before 6 on Wednesdays? Did they mean that any one Member could prevent any Business being proceeded with?

MR. COURTNEY said, that it was, perhaps, not in the power of the First Lord of the Treasury to pronounce on this matter more authoritatively than any other Member of the House. What was opposed Business was perfectly well understood, especially in relation to Business taken after a quarter before 6 o'clock. The same understanding would apply in connection with Business taken between 12 and 1 o'clock in future, whether Bills were in Committee or not. If a Motion was made to proceed with any Bill, and if a Member got up in his place and merely said "I object," further progress would be stopped; not only in the case of the second reading, but in the case of a Bill in Committee if a Member challenged a Division, it at once became opposed Business, and could not be dealt with. Therefore, it was probable, if the House were to stop opposed Business at 12 o'clock, and the present Order was maintained, in the course of 10 minutes all Business on the Paper would be got through, unless there was a great change in the authoritative ways of independent Members. It had been argued that it would be convenient to alter the hour for the adjournment of the House from 1 o'clock to an earlier hour; but he (Mr. Courtney) did not agree with those who expressed that opinion, and he did not think the House would suffer anything in having the later period fixed. The House would rise when its Business was disposed of. They were making a great experiment, of which no one could quite foresee the working, and it might come to pass that, after a little time, they might find that the necessary Business of the House could not be done under these Rules. Then it might be found convenient to alter the principle about to be laid down. He would suggest that the hour of 1 o'clock should be maintained, and that the question should be left open for some definition of the Business to be done between 12 and 1 o'clock. He would urge that the word "One" should be maintained, although that hour might never be reached, or anything near it.

Mr. BROADHURST said, that if it was the general wish of the House that the hour of 12 should be fixed, after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman opposite he would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. W. H. SMITH said he desired to move the omission of the following paragraph:—

> "That at Eight of the clock the Speaker or Chairman, as the case may be, shall suspend the sitting by leaving the Chair until Nine of the clock. If, after the resumption of Business, at Nine of the clock, and before a quarter-past Nine, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until a quarter-past Nine, when he shall count the House or Committee."

These words constituted a portion of the Rule providing for the dinner hour, and it had been understood that he would not press them.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, that if these words were left out, he would be precluded from moving an Amendment to them. Could he bring on his Amendment as a substantive Motion later on?

Mr. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member's Amendment would be in keeping with a later part of the Resolution and could be moved later on.

Amendment proposed, to omit from the proposed New Rule lines 8 to 13 inclusive.—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed new Rule," put, and *negatived.*

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he wished to omit in line 14 the words "half-an-hour after."

Amendment proposed, in Rule I, line 14, to omit the words "half-an-hour after."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Rule," put, and *negatived.*

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) said, he wished to move the following Amendment:—

> Rule I, line 16, after "interrupted," leave out to end of line 25, and insert, "and the question then under consideration shall be put, unless at the times before mentioned a Motion shall be made, 'That the Debate be now adjourned,' which Motion shall be decided without Amendment or Debate. If such Motion be resolved in the affirmative, the Business under consideration shall stand adjourned until the next day on which the House shall sit. If the Motion be resolved in the negative, the Question under consideration shall be put forthwith."

He said the Amendment he had to move was a very simple one, but he thought it required a few words of very brief explanation — more than any of the Amendments which had preceded it. The object of his Amendment was to decide what was to become of the Business under consideration at the close of the evening, and whether the arrangement proposed by the Government was best, or whether another was not more desirable and more natural and even more consonant with the spirit of the whole Rule which they were discussing. He should like to point out to the House that if the Rule remained exactly as it stood, every night in the week would become the same as the Wednesday was at present. Whatever Business was under discussion at the close of the day would stand adjourned until the following day; and they all knew from experience that the Procedure on Wednesdays frequently led to a great waste of time, and was a great inducement to the practice of talking out Business. Accordingly the object of his Amendment was to produce what had been described as an "automatic closure." That was an object which had no pretension to novelty. Indeed, he was surprised that no other hon. Member had put an Amendment on the Paper to this effect. When the Rules of last year were under the consideration of the House, there was an Amendment to the same effect in the name of an hon. Member, and he knew that other hon. Members and that a right hon. Gentleman of great experience on the Front Bench had favoured the idea, and had in previous years devoted attention to it. The difference between the proposed new Rule and his proposal was simply as to what was to be the ordinary Rule. His proposition was that, as an ordinary Rule, a debate should continue until 12 o'clock, at which hour the question under discussion should be put, and the debate concluded; but that it was to be open to any Member of the House to move the adjournment of the debate, if there was a desire that the debate should be adjourned, and the question of adjournment would be decided without Amendment or debate. The proposal of the Government, on the other hand, was that, as an ordinary Rule, there should not be an immediate conclusion of the Business under discussion. He did not think it had been made quite clear what was the meaning of the Speaker ascertaining by the majority the voice of the House. It contained the admission that it might be very inconvenient for Business to be adjourned till next day, and he thought it would be much more consistent if the opinion of the House were taken at the close of the evening, unless there were reasons to the contrary.

Amendment proposed,

In line 16, to leave out from the word "interrupted," to the word "day," in line 25 inclusive, in order to insert the words "and the Question then under consideration shall be put, unless at the times before mentioned a Motion shall be made 'That the Debate be now adjourned,' which Motion shall be decided without Amendment or Debate. If such Motion be resolved in the affirmative, the Business under consideration shall stand adjourned until the next day on which the House shall sit. If the Motion be resolved in the negative, the Question under consideration shall be put forthwith."—(*Mr. Donald Crawford.*)

Question,

"That the words, 'and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his Report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee, That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, that every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the Business then under consideration, and any Business subsequently appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit,' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government, in framing these Rules, had fully considered the proposal which the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had made; but it was found that there was a serious objection to it. It was exceedingly probable that a question might be brought under the consideration of the House at a very short time before the hour for closing the debate had arrived. It might be a Bill, a Motion, or a Vote in Supply, and by the Rule proposed by the hon. and learned Member automatic closure would immediately take place. It would be a very inconvenient thing to introduce a Rule which would in many cases force a premature closing of the debate on an important question. The Governmen were, therefore, of opinion that the question should be raised in a formal manner, that the closure of the debate should take place. The words of the Rule had been fully considered and duly weighed by the highest authorities, and, under all the circumstances, he thought it best to adhere to the Rule as it stood.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD said, that by the words he proposed the Question could be put, "That the Debate be adjourned," and if carried there would be no Division on the Main Question. The decision would rest with the House, and not with Mr. Speaker.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the proposal of the hon. and learned Member would give the majority the power of closing the debate without discussion, which was a thing he should hesitate to recommend.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in line 23, to leave out from the word "sit" to the word "day," in line 25, inclusive.—(*Mr. Francis Powell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he regretted that the Amendment he was about to move—which was of some importance—was not on the Paper. Under the Rule as it stood, when 12 o'clock was reached they might be in this position—that the second reading of a Bill having been moved, an Amendment might have been proposed to leave out "this day" and insert "this day six months," and the Question might be "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion." If then, the Closure was to apply to that, and that alone, the result would be that the House might take a Division on the Question "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion," and then stop. But he (Mr. Courtney) thought the House ought to be allowed to proceed to the Question "That the Bill be read a second time." He believed the intention of the present Rule was to apply the Closure Rule of last year in its entirety at the suspension of Business at 12 o'clock. If that was the case, he submitted that the Rule should be read thus—

> "The Speaker or Chairman shall not leave the Chair until the Questions consequent thereon, and any further Motion as provided in the Rule 'Closure of Debate,' have been decided."

Amendment proposed, in line 29, after the word "thereon," to insert the words, "and on any further Motion."—(*Mr. Leonard Courtney.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he had not the least objection to the Amendment. He was under the impression that the object of the hon. Gentleman was already provided for in the Rule, but it was better always to avoid the possibility of a difference of opinion arising in future.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 31, to leave out the words "half-past."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-past' stand part of the Question."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, the House had decided that the Main Question under discussion should cease at 12 o'clock, and it was also decided that they were willing to sit until a quarter to 1 o'clock to deal with what was called the routine business of the evening. The right hon. Gentleman had also said that if they were to have a Rule for closing the Sittings of the House at a fixed hour, there must be an intervening period during which unopposed business could be taken. To that he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) assented. He asked the House to concede that the interval between 12 o'clock and a quarter to 1 should be available for carrying on any business on the Paper, and not at the mercy of any individual Member who might put a stop on the Paper. He would propose that the Rule should read thus—

> "After the Business under consideration at a quarter before 1 has been disposed of, no fresh opposed Business shall be taken."

If the Rule remained, as at present, it would result that nothing but great measures would be carried during the Session; Bills and Motions relating to the ordinary Administration of the great offices could not be proceeded with because they would be at the mercy of private Members. He feared that if the Rule remained in its present form it would break down completely in five or six weeks, and they would be in a worse position than at present.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the House had already decided that the Business of the House should close at 12 o'clock. The effect of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal would be to prolong opposed Business till a quarter to 1. He believed that the difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman wished to obviate could be met by a judicious arrangement of Public Business. The Government would put down minor Bills of a contentious character as the first Business of the evening, and they would be considered between half-past 3 and half-past 4 or 5 o'clock. His experience was that a Member who desired to prevent the third Order, for instance, being taken, would prolong the discussion on the second, and by that means the time would arrive when the Rule for closing came into operation. He was afraid that, having adopted the early closing Rule, they must submit to the conditions attached to it. While thanking the right hon. Gentleman for the assistance which he desired to render the Government, he (Mr. W. H. Smith) was obliged to express his opinion that this proposal was not a practicable one, that it would not work to the right hon.

Gentleman's satisfaction, and that it might be availed of for the purposes of obstruction.

MR. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) said, he thought the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was a very useful one, and should certainly give it his support.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, E.) said, that what he understood his right hon. Friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) to propose was that between 12 o'clock and a quarter to 1, the Business which the present half-past 12 o'clock Rule admitted to be taken should continue to be taken. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) and his Colleagues, whether that was not a very reasonable proposal? Under the operation of the present half-past 12 o'clock Rule Business of great value was taken, Business which in one sense might be opposed, but which in another sense was unopposed. He thought the Government would do well to accept the proposition of his right hon. Friend.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) to suggest that the Business which was at present unblocked, and was taken after half-past12 o'clock, should be taken between 12 o'clock and a quarter to 1 o'clock if it was opposed. It was obvious, then, that any Member who really opposed the Business would have the power of stopping it.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: Not if the Bill has passed a second reading, and the Speaker is out of the Chair.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman would see that if there was a real disposition to oppose Business, it should not be proceeded with. He recalled the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that the House had practically decided to conclude Public Business, so far as opposed Business was concerned, at 12 o'clock,upon the understanding that the House met at 3 o'clock. If three-quarters of an hour, or an hour, were allowed afterwards for the transaction of the Business on the Paper, his impression was that if there was the slightest opposition to any measure, it would not be possible to pass it through any stage at all. It was an easy matter to occupy three-quarters of an hour in what was called "reasonable discussion." There was opposed Business and there was unopposed Business. If Business was unopposed it would pass, but if it was opposed, the fact that they had got an absolute closure at a quarter to 1 o'clock would make it quite certain that they would make no progress with the Business, but they would all be kept there until a quarter to 1 o'clock.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he did not intend to put the House to the trouble of a Division. This was an experiment, and they would all see how it would work.

Proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he proposed to omit the words "by a Minister of the Crown," in line 35. He understood that the object of this paragraph was on the occasion of great debates to give an opportunity of extending the time for discussion on probably the concluding night only. It seemed to him there was no reason for limiting the making of that Motion to a Minister of the Crown, and on general grounds there was no precedent for a Rule of this kind. Besides, the expression "a Minister of the Crown" was somewhat ambiguous. He did not know how far it would include hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Government Bench or not. The only kind of precedent there could be for anything of the sort was that it was only one of Her Majesty's Ministers who could make a Motion which would put a charge on the Public Revenue. But that was a totally different matter to this. During the discussions on the Rules of the House, especially on the question of closure, the House negatived the idea that the Motion for Closure should be limited either to a Minister or a Privy Councillor, preferring that it should be competent for any individual Member of the House to move the Closure, and, as they all knew, private Members had moved it. Upon Constitutional as well as practical grounds, he was of opinion that these words ought to be omitted.

Amendment proposed, in line 35, to leave out the words "by a Minister of the Crown."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'by a Minister of the Crown' stand part of the Question."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that these words were inserted in order to provide that a competent Member of the House should be the person to make the Motion. There was no desire to restrict the making of the Motion to a Minister of the Crown as a special privilege. It was usual, when a Motion of this character was to be made, that it should be made by a responsible Member. It was a customary thing for a responsible Member of the Opposition to ask whether it was the intention of the Government to suspend the Standing Order, and it was afterwards understood that if a Motion for the suspension of a Standing Order was made, it would be made by the Minister who was responsible for the conduct of the Business of the House of Commons for the time being. If it was the feeling of the House that the words "by a Minister of the Crown" should be omitted, he had no objection to offer. Of course, it must be borne in mind that a Motion could only be made after Notice of it had been placed upon the Paper. He trusted that this explanation would satisfy the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he desired to ask if it was not a fact that there was absolutely no precedent for a limitation of this kind upon the rights of individual Members?

Sir ROBERT FOWLER said, he would remind hon. Members that the words "Ministers of the Crown" were inserted by the then Government in the Rules proposed in 1881. Similar words were also inserted in Rules passed in the time and upon the recommendation of the late Lord Beaconsfield.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he would advise his hon. and learned Friend not to persevere with his Amendment, as it was quite understood that the words meant the Leader of the House or someone representing that Gentleman.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, that these words raised a very important question. There were many Ministers of the Crown who would not trench on the time of the House by asking for this kind of indulgence. If, however, the power were exercised very often it would become an absolute abuse, and they would be in precisely the same position as before the Rule was passed. A great debate might last for three or four nights, and upon each night it might be asked that the debate should be continued beyond 12 o'clock. If my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) gave them the assurance that it was only on some extraordinary occasion that it was intended this Motion should be made, he saw no objection to these words remaining in the Rule.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he had no hesitation whatever in giving his hon. and gallant Friend the assurance he required. He could hardly suppose it was probable a Minister of the Crown could desire to prolong debates beyond the period decided for the closing of Business. The object in view was to afford the opportunity of closing a great debate in a manner which would conduce to the proper conclusion of very grave and important questions. It would be obviously improper that the Minister or the Member of the Opposition who had to wind up a very important debate should be exposed to the necessity of crowding his observations into a few minutes.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddington) said, they were told that the words meant the Leader of the House for the time being. But the words as they stood said something quite different. They included any Junior Lord of the Treasury, and he objected strongly to leave the House at the mercy of any irresponsible Member of the Government. They had perfect confidence in the present Leader of the House; but it was reasonable to suppose the right hon. Gentleman would not always be the Leader of the House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the Government had adopted words which they believed would lead to the protection of the House. If these words be omitted it would give the right to any hon. Member to get up at half-past 4 o'clock, and move that the proceedings on a particular Bill in which he was interested should not be concluded at 12 o'clock. The privilege might be exercised by hon. Members very much to the inconvenience of the House. He did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Haldane) need have any fear that the power would be exercised by any Junior Lord of the Treasury.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, line 38, leave out "half-past."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Rule."

MR. C. T. D. ACLAND (Cornwall, Launceston) said, he would like to ask what would be the position of the House in reference to the blocking of Bills? As he understood the matter, the present custom of blocking would be entirely done away with. Would a notice of opposition to a Bill be considered to render that Bill an opposed Bill?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the present process of blocking would entirely disappear under the new system, but it would be quite open to any Member to give Notice of opposition. A Notice of opposition did not of itself constitute opposition.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said, the proposition he had now to make was one suggested to him by several hon. Members on both sides of the House as being one likely to be extremely convenient. It would be in the recollection of the House that very often last Session the House sat in Committee to a very late hour of the morning, and that it was necessary for the Speaker to sit up the whole night in order to perform the mere perfunctory duty of closing the Sitting. It seemed to him (Mr. Howorth) it would be well if the House, like every other Legislative Assembly in Europe, empowered its Speaker to appoint a Deputy to perform a perfunctory duty of this kind. It would be distinctly a great relief to the Speaker if he could depute the Chairman of Committees to perform this duty. If there were any occasions on which it was necessary that the Speaker should be recalled for the purpose of assisting the Chairman of Committees, that was provided for by the words he had inserted in his Amendment. If he might, he would add another clause to the Amendment, providing that the Speaker should be able to depute someone to take the Chair between 8 and 10 o'clock at night.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words —"That whenever the House is in Committee at half-past Twelve of the clock a.m. the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means may, at the request of Mr. Speaker, take the Chair as Deputy Speaker, for the purpose of concluding the Business of the Sitting."—(*Mr. Howorth.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was inclined to think that his Amendment, which came next, was better than that of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER said, the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton was much wider than that proposed by the hon. Member for Salford.

MR. HOWORTH said, he was willing to withdraw his Amendment in favour of that of the hon. Gentleman opposite.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words —"That the Chairman of Ways and Means do take the Chair as Deputy Speaker when requested so to do by Mr. Speaker without any formal communication to the House. And that Mr. Speaker do nominate, at the commencement of every Session, a panel of not more than five Members to act as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. BARING said, he entirely concurred in the object of the Amendment, but thought the hon. Gentleman should insert words which would bring it into force in the Session already begun.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that if the House desired it, he would accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton. It appeared to be a very reasonable proposal; it would be an improvement in their procedure that the Speaker himself should nominate five Members to act as temporary Chairmen of Committees.

MR. HOWORTH said, he wished to know whether the Amendment enabled Mr. Speaker to depute the Chairman of Committees to close a Sitting?

MR. SPEAKER said, the Amendment did not mention that, but of course Mr. Speaker would be able to depute such power to the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he hoped he should not be misunderstood in what he was about to say; but he thought the second part of the proposal a considerable innovation in the practice of the House. No doubt, the choice Mr. Speaker would make would be excellent; but the House appointed its own Speaker and Chairman, and he would ask whether it would not be a great revolution in their established customs by a single Rule to invest the Speaker with authority to appoint five additional Chairmen?

Mr. RAIKES pointed out that Mr. Speaker was able, by the existing Rules of the House, to appoint five Deputy Speakers, and if he was competent to do that, surely he was more than competent to appoint five Deputy Chairmen.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

Rule 1, leave out lines 8 to 13, inclusive, and insert,—" That if, during the first quarter of an hour from the resumption of business after the Speaker or Chairman has retired from the Chair, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until the termination of the said quarter of an hour, when he shall count the House or the Committee."

He proposed to alter the Amendment by leaving out the words "from the resumption of business," and by substituting the words "returned to" for "retired from." The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had pointed out the inconvenience and trouble that would often occur from some hon. Member taking it into his head to move a Count directly Mr. Speaker returned from his temporary retirement. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed a hope that hon. Members would not put the House to this inconvenience; but it seemed to him (Mr. Labouchere) that it would be well for them to prevent it as far as they could. This Rule would be a great advantage to the Whips, who, as a rule, had great difficulty in keeping hon. Members during the dinner hour. The greatest trouble would be at about 9 o'clock.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words.—" That if, during the first quarter of an hour after the Speaker or Chairman has returned to the Chair, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until the termination of the said quarter of an hour, when he shall count the House or the Committee."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he had given Notice of an Amendment which he thought would effect the desired object better than the words of the hon. Member for Northampton. By his Amendment no notice would be taken that 40 Members were not present between 8 and 10 o'clock, but if on a Division between those hours it should appear that 40 Members were not present, Business would be suspended until 10 o'clock, at which hour notice could be taken that 40 Members were not present. The House had done something to give Mr. Speaker a rest, but it had done nothing as yet to take rest itself. It would give hon. Members a rest if they knew that between 8 and 10—just as between 12 and 4 on a Wednesday—the House could not be counted. He would submit his Amendment to the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House already has an Amendment before it. If that Amendment is unsuccessful, of course it will be competent for the hon. Member to bring his on.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE: Would the hon. Member for Northampton accept his (Mr. Gedge's) Amendment in place of his own?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he understood the hon. Member for Northampton to propose that if on the Speaker's return to the Chair notice should be taken that there were not 40 Members present, and there should not be that number of Members in their places when the House was counted, the Sitting would be suspended for a quarter of an hour with Mr. Speaker in the Chair. It would be rather hard on Mr. Speaker that he should be kept in the House for that time while hon. Members were being brought in to form a House. There would be practically a suspension of Business during which the Speaker only would suffer, and he would suffer very often, for 40 Members would have no inducement to enter the House before the expiration of a quarter of an hour, for there would be no danger of the House being counted. The Member interrupted by the Count would be left in the House; and he and the Speaker would have to sit looking at each other for a quarter of an hour, which would hardly be a dignified condition of things. He certainly could not consent to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport, which would only add to the difficulties of the case.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought his proposal, if accepted, would obviate a good deal of trouble. But if the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House did not think so, he would not press it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That, unless the House otherwise order, the House shall meet every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, at Three of the clock, and shall, unless previously adjourned, sit till One of the Clock a.m., when the Speaker shall adjourn the House without Question put, unless a Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means, or unless proceedings made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, or otherwise exempted, as hereinafter provided, from the operation of this Standing Order, be then under consideration.

That at midnight on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, except as aforesaid, and at half-past Five of the clock on Wedesdays, the proceedings on any business then under consideration shall be interrupted; and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the business then under consideration, and any business subsequeutly appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit, unless the Speaker ascertains by the preponderance of voices that a Majority of the House desires that such business should be deferred until a later day.

Provided always, That on the interruption of business the Closure may be moved, and if moved, or if proceedings under the Closure Rule be then in progress, the Speaker or Chairman shall not leave the Chair, until the Questions consequent thereon and on any further Motion, as provided in the Rule " Closure of Debate," have been decided.

That after the business under consideration at Twelve, and half-past Five respectively, has been disposed of, no opposed business shall be taken; and the Orders of the Day not disposed of at the close of the sitting shall stand for the next day on which the House shall sit.

That a Motion may be made by a Minister of the Crown at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, to the following effect: "That the proceedings on any specified business if under discussion at Twelve this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order 'Sittings of the House.'"

Provided always, That after any business exempted from the operation of this Resolution is disposed of, the remaining business of the sitting shall be dealt with according to the provisions applicable to business taken after Twelve o'clock.

Provided also, That the Chairman of Ways and Means do take the Chair as Deputy Speaker when requested so to do by Mr. Speaker without any formal communication to the House. And that Mr. Speaker do nominate, at the commencement of every Session, a panel of not more than five Members to act as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means.

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR said, he should like to ask whether the Rule came into operation on Monday?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It comes into operation at once.

EAST INDIA [PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom a sum not exceeding £10,336,048 16*s.* 8*d.*, for the purchase of the Oude and Rohilkund Railway."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again:"—(*Dr. Clark.*)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

1. *Resolved*, That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom a sum not exceeding £10,336,048 16*s.* 8*d.*, for the purchase of the Oude and Rohilkund Railway.

2. *Resolved*, That, it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom a sum not exceeding £10,000,000, for the purpose of constructing, extending and equipping Railways in India through the agency of Companies.

3. *Resolved*, That it is expedient to make provisions for raising the said sums, and to charge the same on to the Revenues of India.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at ten minutes
before One o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 27th February, 1888.

MINUTES.] — Public Bill — *Committee* — Law of Distress Amendment (4-23).

INDIA (CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION)—THE REPORT.—QUESTION.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY : I wish to ask the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for India, Whether he will be able to lay upon the Table of the House the Report which I understand has been received from the Commission in India on the Civil Service of that Empire.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Viscount Cross): My Lords, I should not like to answer the Question of the noble Earl opposite without taking the first opportunity of tendering my thanks to Sir Charles Aitchison and Sir Charles Turner, and the other Gentleman engaged with them on that Commission, for the great pains and trouble they have taken in sifting the matter through and making a Report. As to the Question of the noble Earl, my answer is that I received a telegram from the Viceroy the other day asking me whether I had any objection to the publication of the Report at once. My answer was that I had none, and unless I hear again from him in the course of the week I will lay the Report on the Table.

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Herschell,*)

(NO. 4.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clauses 1 to 3 *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Certain goods exempted from distress as under County Court Acts, 9 & 10 Vict. c. 95, s. 96).

Lord BRAMWELL said, he rose to propose an Amendment to the effect that where a man owed rent and remained in possession, the term of tenancy having expired and the tenant having no right to remain in possession, this section should not apply. The case of a tenant was different to any other debtor, and some compulsion should be put upon him to give up possession and prevent him from holding over. Tenants sometimes held over until a bribe was offered or a gift of money. If this Amendment were not accepted, holding over would be more frequent. He quite agreed that in ordinary cases of distress goods which were privileged from being seized under an execution should be likewise privileged from distress. But cases were very numerous in which a tenant set his landlord at defiance, and at the shortest it took six weeks for the landlord to evict him, during which time he remained in occupation without paying any rent. This continuing in possession was dishonest, and the privilege ought to be extended to such cases. It was not in the interest of large but of small landlords that he brought forward this Amendment. He had received a number of communications on this subject, and an association in Liverpool had stated that landlords, as a rule, would be very glad to give up entirely the right of distraint if a more summary process of eviction was established. Until that more summary process was established, he thought it would be no hardship to deny privilege from distress to all goods, of whatsoever nature, of a tenant who overheld. The Amendment provided that even in these cases the distress should not take place until after six days from demand had elapsed.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 1, at end of clause 4 add—" Provided that this enactment shall not extend to any case where the lease, term, or interest of the tenant has expired, and where possession of the premises in respect of which the rent is claimed has been demanded and where the distress is made not earlier than seven days after such demand."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

Lord HERSCHELL said, his attention had also been called to the difficulty experienced by landlords in obtaining possession of their premises from tenants under the existing procedure. It certainly was a matter to be considered whether the law ought not to be amended so as to expedite the procedure; but that could not be done in the present Bill. He would not, however, oppose the Amendment; but it was open to the objection that it attempted to do indirectly what ought, if at all, to be done directly.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Distress to be levied by certified bailiffs as under the Agricultural Holdings Acts, 46 & 47 Vict. c. 61, s. 52).

LORD HERSCHELL moved an Amendment providing for the appointment of bailiffs by County Court Judges. The Amendment laid down that no person should act as a bailiff without a certificate, but that a certificate might be given for use on one occasion only. This would enable landlords to employ particular persons as bailiffs on special occasions. The right of granting certificates would be vested in County Court Judges, who would be empowered to delegate the power to their Registrars. He thought the same principle should be adopted with regard to the Agricultural Holdings Act, and unless he heard anything which would induce him to think otherwise, he would at a later stage move to include distraints under that Act.

Amendment *moved*,

In line 20, leave out from ("and") to ("bailiffs") in line 24 inclusive, and insert ("such certificate may be general or apply to a particular distress or distresses, and may be granted at any time after the passing of this Act in such manner as may be prescribed by rules under this Act"); in line 24, leave out ("so appointed") and insert ("holding a certificate"); and in line 28, leave out ("appointment") and insert ("certificate").—(*The Lord Herschell.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Power to make rules).

LORD HERSCHELL proposed that rules should be framed to apply to fees and expenses of distraints, as sometimes gross extortions were perpetrated; and he would propose, too, that they should not be limited to £20 as now, but apply to cases up to £50, and even larger sums.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

LORD HERSCHELL moved the insertion of, after Clause 6, a New Clause, making appraisement unnecessary in cases of distress. Appraisements involved expense, which fell upon the tenant, and neither the landlord nor the tenant was benefited. But he would give power to a tenant to require an appraisement if he wished to have one.

Moved, after Clause 6, to insert the following Clause:—

"From and after the commencement of this Act no appraisement of the value of any goods and chattels taken under a distress for rent shall be requisite, and the tenant shall not be liable for the expenses of any appraisement unless such appraisement be made on his request in writing."—(*The Lord Herschell.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) pointed out that in many cases distress to be successful should be carried out without delay. He was afraid that delays would occur under this Bill.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he would make provision against delays.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 7 *agreed to.*

Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 23.)

AFRICA (SOUTH)—THE DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I rise to put the Question of which I have given Notice—namely, Whether the Government have had their attention directed to the importance of the Delagoa Bay Railway, and whether they contemplate taking any action in respect to it? I do not desire to make any remarks with regard to it except this—that the matter is one, I need hardly inform the House, of very grave importance and also of the most extreme delicacy. It is because of its extreme delicacy that I will not enlarge on the Question I have put on the Paper. I will, however, say this—I believe the whole test, or the main test, of the Colonial policy of the Government of this country must be found for the future in its dealings with South Africa, and that at this moment this railroad, which gives access to almost the only, if not the only, port on that enormous length of coast, is in danger of falling into hands which, if not hostile, are at any rate unfriendly, and into control which may not merely have an important effect in shutting in our South African Dominions, but may also have an important bearing on our commerce as a country, and be the means of leading to the imposition of differential and hostile rates on our commerce as a nation. I say these are grave matters, and the noble Marquess opposite will know that I have not stated them in their full gravity. But because they are grave and delicate is, I think, a reason not for discussing them without information, but for asking the Government the simple Question of which I have given Notice, and on the answer to which will depend the knowledge of how we stand in this most grave and pregnant matter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW): As the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies has not yet taken his seat in your Lordships' House, he has asked me to reply on his behalf to the Question put by the noble Earl. I need hardly say that the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been very seriously directed to the question of the Delagoa Bay Railway, both as an inlet for trade between this country and the South African Republic, and also as a competitor for the trade coming in by the Cape and Natal, which is not of great volume and may possibly suffer by competition. Several proposals have been made. It has been proposed that Her Majesty's Government should acquire by purchase the territory now belonging to Portugal. But as far as I know at present a word which the noble Earl may, perhaps, consider "blessed"—the word compulsion—has not come into our international relations; and, inasmuch as Portugal is proud of her Colony and well satisfied with it, she is not disposed to part with it. Therefore, whatever may be the views of Her Majesty's Government, they need not be discussed at this moment. Another proposal has been that Her Majesty's Government should acquire the railway. This railway, however, does not run through British territory; it does not run from British territory; it does not run to British territory; and I believe I am correct in saying that for the British Government to purchase the railway would be an act perfectly unprecedented. I cannot conceive on what ground it can be argued that the British taxpayer should be asked to acquire, and not only to acquire, but also to work and control, this railway. If it is of importance to anybody, it is of importance to the Cape and Natal. The Cape and Natal are out of their long clothes; they are perfectly able to look after their own interests; they are wealthy and powerful, and I

have reason to know that proposals for the acquisition by purchase of this railway have been submitted to the Government of the Cape. These proposals have not yet been decided upon. What they may be I do not know, and am therefore not in a position to state. But with reference to the remarks of the noble Earl as to the possibility of differential rates against goods coming in from Great Britain in comparison with those from other countries, we have in existence a Treaty with the Transvaal Government which places goods coming from England upon an equal footing with those coming into the territory from any other country. A Conference has recently been held between the Orange Free State and the Colonies of the Cape and Natal in relation to the better working of their systems of railways, and my own belief is that the outcome of that Conference, which will be made public at the beginning of March next, will tend towards a better arrangement for the working of the railways of South Africa. And, if so, if we can come to a satisfactory arrangement in that respect, I do not fear that this Delagoa Bay Railway will be of that importance which has been made out to us, or the bugbear that some people think it.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 27th February, 1888.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland), *appointed.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887-8): CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 21, 2, 3; CLASS II. — SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 9, 6, 10, & 17; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Votes 5, 11, 16, 19, & 28; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Votes 4

PUBLIC BILLS —*Resolution* [February 24] *reported — Ordered—First Reading*—East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) * [143].

Resolution in Committee—Ordered—Frst Reading —Companies' Acts Consolidation and Amendment * [144].

Ordered—First Reading—Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen * [145]; Metalliferous Mines * [146]; Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) * [147]; Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Extracts * [148.]

QUEEN'S SPEECH (ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

THE COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Lord ARTHUR HILL) *reported* Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

I have received with much satisfaction your loyal and dutiful Address.

I rely with confidence on your assurance that you will give careful consideration to the Measures that will be submitted to you; and I trust that the result of your deliberations will be effectual in promoting prosperity and concord among all classes of My People.

MERTOPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

THE COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Lord ARTHUR HILL) *reported* Her Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

I have received your Address praying that a Royal Commission may be issued to inquire and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith, and assuring Me that you will concur in empowering such Commission to take Evidence on Oath, to compel Attendance of Witnesses, to grant Certificates of Indemnity to Witnesses in such cases as may be desirable and proper, and to call for all necessary records and documents. And I have given directions that a Commission shall issue for the purposes which you request, and that a Bill shall be submitted to Parliament for conferring on such Commission the powers recommended by you as expedient for the purposes of the Inquiry.

QUESTIONS.

——o——

PUBLIC HEALTH — INFECTIOUS DISEASES — COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the Local Government Board, In how many boroughs of the United Kingdom the compulsory notification of small-pox and other infectious diseases is compulsory; and, if, having regard to the increased density of population and the additional public danger of infectious diseases, Her Majesty's Government contemplated the introduction of a Bill to extend such compulsory notification, either to all the boroughs not at present possessing such powers, or to those in which the majority of the ratepayers may elect, by their representatives in the Town Councils, to adopt them?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The system of compulsory notification of infectious diseases is in force in England and Wales in 43 boroughs and four Local Board districts. I have no precise information at the present moment with regard to Scotland and Ireland; but if my hon. Friend wishes I will procure it. The question as to the introduction of a Bill to extend the system of compulsory notification is under consideration.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—CITY OF CORK.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many citizens of the City of Cork were injured on the occasion of Mr. Lane's release from prison; what was the number, names, and technical medical terms of the wounds inflicted on the people, and what was the name or names of the responsible medical men who attended them; what was the exact number of police injured, the technical medical terms of the injuries inflicted, if any, and the name of the doctor or doctors who treated them; and, on how many occasions since December have there been similar collisions with the police?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It would not be practicable to obtain in a definite form the information asked for in the first two paragraphs. As regards the remaining portions of the Question, the Inspector General of Constabulary reports that eight policemen were injured on the occasion referred to. Three of these are under medical treatment—one for contusion of the back, another for concussion of the brain, and the third for a cut or injuries to the face through being struck with a stone. Drs. Lawton and Curtis are attending them. Many more of the police were struck with stones, but they were not injured. On one other occasion only since December has there been a collision between the people and the police.

Dr. TANNER wished to ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman how it was that he could not give the information as to the citizens, inasmuch as all he would have to do would be to ask for it at the door of the north and south infirmaries in Cork, where full information regarding all the cases treated was registered?

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, that if the hon. Gentleman asked him for a list of the cases treated he would be happy to get that information for him.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman how it is that he can give me a report only as regards the policemen, and that he cannot give me information as regards the citizens. He tells us that one of these policemen was suffering from a contusion of the back, which might be produced by the most trivial cause, and yet he can say nothing about the public who were injured?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked whether, on the occasion in question, the Riot Act had been previously read to the people before they were ordered to disperse?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I have already stated that there was only one occasion since January last when there was a collision between the police and the people; and on that occasion a large crowd attempted to force their way through a body of police who were guarding the gaol, and the police then charged them with their batons.

ARMY—COLONEL PHILIP DICKSON.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been directed to the case of Colonel Philip Dickson; if he has received a copy of his pamphlet; and, if any redress can be given him in the shape of Colonial appointment?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State's attention has been called to this case, and a copy of the pamphlet relative to the circumstances under which Lieutenant Colonel Dickson was placed on half-pay upwards of 23 years ago has been laid before him. The officer's case was very carefully considered at the time, and the Secretary of State is not prepared to re-open it.

SCOTLAND—INSPECTORS OF MINES (WESTERN DISTRICT).

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will appoint some additional Inspectors of Mines in the Western District of Scotland?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E): In comparing the West Scotland district with the other coal-mining districts of the United Kingdom, I find that the proportion of accidents and deaths relatively to the number of men employed and the tons of coal raised is extremely favourable—in fact, more favourable than almost any other district. Every case of accident has been investigated by the Inspector, who has also found time, with the help of the Assistant Inspector, to make many underground examinations in cases where there are neither accidents nor complaints. Under these circumstances, I do not see that any present necessity exists for appointing additional Inspectors in that district.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM asked, Whether the right hon. Gentleman had not given the House to understand that additional Inspectors would be appointed?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, his memory did not serve him as to any undertaking that he might have given. Any undertaking he had given he would, of course, abide by. He had given the hon. Member the result of inquiries he had made since last Session; and he was happy to say that the West of Scotland came out most favourably.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, if the right hon. Gentleman could tell the House how many pits there were, and how many Inspectors, in the district in question?

Mr. MATTHEWS said he had the figures, but he was unable to carry them in his memory. If the hon. Member wished to know, he would tell him privately, or the hon. Member could put a Question on the Paper.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—EXPORTS FROM GERMANY, 1885-1886.

COLONEL BRIDGEMAN (Bolton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he can supplement the figures given in Mr. Giffen's article in *The Board of Trade Journal* for February, by stating the amount of the exports from Germany in 1885 and 1886?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): It would be impossible to bring down the figures generally in Mr. Giffen's Report to a later date than is contained in it, as the figures were mostly collected from the Blue Books of many foreign countries and British Possessions, and when the Report was prepared some of these countries had not issued their detailed statistics for a later year than 1885. Some later figures could be given; but, the Report being a comparative one, the sames dates were taken throughout. The Statistical Abstract for Foreign Countries, now in the press, will contain many of these later figures, including the exports from Germany referred to by the hon. and gallant Member.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC —THE CONVENTION OF 1847.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, For what reason Her Majesty's Government assent to the abrogation of the Convention of 1847, whereby the independence of the Islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, near Tahiti, was guaranteed; and, why the protection of life and property in Raiatea was not secured, as in the New Hebrides, by a Joint Commission, instead of handing over that Island to the French?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The reason why Her Majesty's Government assented to the abrogation of the Convention of 1847, relative to the Islands to the leeward of Tahiti, is stated in a despatch addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, which is printed along with the Convention relative to the New Hebrides, lately presented to Parliament. The last paragraph of that despatch is as follows:—

"The result of this failure upon Raiatea has been that, contrary to all expectation, the French Protectorate has never been made definitive. It does not, however, appear to Her Majesty's Government desirable, or, indeed, practicable, to remit to an aboriginal administration an Island which has been for some years under French government, as well as in view of the peculiar circumstances attending the failure of the Convention of 1885. They are willing to transfer the stipulation in question to the present Convention, subject, of course, to the undertakings given in a *note verbale* to Lord Lyons on the 24th of October, 1885."

POST OFFICE—MAIL DESPATCHES TO THE UNITED STATES.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Postmaster General, If his attention has been drawn to a Memorial addressed to the United States Postal Authorities by the leading bankers and merchants of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other large cities in the United States, complaining of the loss and annoyance caused to them under the present system of mail despatches to the United States, owing to the mails from this side being frequently forwarded by steamers of a comparatively low rate of speed; and, whether he will take steps to promote the more rapid transit of mails from this country to the United States?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): My attention has been drawn to the Memorial referred to; but I may state that it is not exactly in the terms quoted by the hon. Member. After eulogizing the successful efforts made on the other side of the Atlantic to expedite the transmission of mails to Europe, it expresses regret that the Postal Administrations of "some European countries" appear not to manifest an equal interest in the prompt and speedy transmission of mails to the United States. I am not bound to accept this challenge as especially applicable to this country, particularly as the arrangements made last year for the use of the best of the Cunard and White Star steamers, as well as fast ships of other lines, seems to have given general satisfaction here. But the House will be aware that the efforts which the Post Office has made from time to time to adopt the American Transatlantic mail system have hardly received so much support in this country as would at present warrant a disturbance of the existing arrangements.

ARMY (INDIA)—MADRAS—ARMY CLOTHING DEPARTMENT—EXCLUSION OF EUROPEAN ARTICLES.

Mr. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If "the terms which the Secretary of State considers misleading in the advertisements" by the Superintendent of Army Clothing, Madras, for tenders for the year 1889-90, are those of the paragraph numbered 3 in the specifications—namely, "Articles of European manufacture are not required;" if so, would those terms exclude goods made in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and would they freely admit goods made in the United States of America; what was the total cost of advertisements last year for the goods amounting to £17,000 in value, of which only £24 in value were contracted for; and, will the Secretary of State for India feel obliged, in the interests of the Public Service, to cancel any and all contracts entered into in contravention of the pledge given to this House on the 10th of March, 1887?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): (1) Yes; but as regards goods from the United States the advertisement was not likely to have any practical consequences. (2) The cost of the advertisement is not known to the Secretary of State. (3) No; such a course would not, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, be for the interest of the Public Service, and the Secretary of State is very doubtful whether he even has the power.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked, whether it was intentional that goods manufactured in the United Kingdom should be excluded?

Sir JOHN GORST: No, Sir; I think I have answered that Question several times before. It was not intentional.

Mr. HOYLE: Did not the hon. Gentleman say last year—

> "The rule of the Service is fair competition between articles of Indian and European manufacture;"

and will the Secretary of State see that effectually carried out?

Sir JOHN GORST: Yes, Sir; I think that is what I said last year.

WALES — THE TITHE AGITATION — CWM, CO. FLINT—ALLEGED ASSAULT BY AN EMERGENCY MAN.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the report is true that, at a farm named Marian Bach, situate in the parish of Cwm, in the County of Flint, during a settlement of tithe on Thursday, the 9th day of February, a Mrs. Davies, wife of the farmer, while standing in her own doorway, was either struck or pushed in the breast by an Emergency man, until she reeled backwards and fell; and that the Superintendent in charge of the police had to take him by the collar and remove him, in order to prevent a breach of the peace?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes; I have received a Report from the Chief Constable of Flintshire, who informs me that the date of the occurrence was the 26th of January, not the 9th of February. He states that not one of the allegations contained in the Question is founded on fact; but that, on the contrary, the Emergency man was assaulted by Mrs. Davies, who rushed at him and struck at him with a thick stick, but he parried off the blow, and she then retired.

LAW AND JUSTICE—HOUSE OF LORDS —APPEALS.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked Mr. Attorney General, If he will lay upon the Table a Return showing what Appeals to the House of Lords remain undecided, and giving the dates when they were heard?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): There is not, in my opinion, any necessity for the Return asked for by the hon. and learned Member. I may add that there are only five appeals waiting for judgment, and they were all heard since the Long Vacation. The only case heard before the Long Vacation has to be re-argued.

ARMY—HORSE BREEDING—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Baron DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin) (for Mr. Chaplin) (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the Government will undertake to give effect to the recommendation contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding:—

> "That, for the future, in the statistics of the export of horses, the number of stallions, mares, and geldings, shall be distinguished and classified."

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) asked, whether it would be possible to give a record of the breeds to which the exported stallions and mares belonged?

The CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY (Lord John Manners) (Leicestershire, E.): I have been in communication with the Board of Trade and the Board of Customs on the subject of this Question, and am able to say that the statistics of the export of horses will in future be given in the form suggested by the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding. With regard to the other Question which has been put to me, I will have inquiry made as to whether it is possible to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member.

ARMY PENSIONS—INVALIDED SOLDIERS.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a Rule in Her Majesty's Service that a soldier who has served 21 years, or is discharged as invalided a year or two before that time in consequence of ill-health brought on by long foreign service, is entitled to the full pension of 11*d*. per day, and 2*d*. per day extra if invalided after nine years' service in India; whether Peter MacNee, late of the 21st Scottish Rifles, is so entitled to a pension of 1*s*. 1*d*. per day, having served altogether 19 years and eight months, over 18 years of which he served in India, and been discharged as invalided in consequence of general debility caused by foreign service; whether, instead of being granted the full pension of 1*s*. 1*d*. per day, to which he was entitled, he was granted on discharge only 1*s*. per day from the 3rd of August, 1887, and whether this was amended and reduced on the 23rd of November following to 11*d*. per day; and, whether the War Office Authorities will reconsider the case of this old soldier, who has a good conduct badge, and as so long served Her Majesty, and, but for ill health, would have completed his full term?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: Peter MacNee was discharged after 19 years' qualifying service, which only entitles him to a pension of 11*d*. a-day under the present Regulations. By the Regulations under which he enlisted his pension would have been smaller. There is no provision in the Royal Warrant for giving 2*d*. a-day extra for invaliding after nine years' service in India. I may add that the granting of pensions within the limits of the Royal Warrant rests entirely with the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital.

VENEZUELA — EXPULSION OF A BRITISH OFFICIAL.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether a Representative, despatched by the Governor of the Colony of British Guiana to the territory declared by the Proclamation of last December to be part of the Colony, was compelled by Venezuelan authorities to appear before an official at Guacipati, detained for some days, and ordered to leave by a foreign route; and, if so, what action will be taken by the Government to resent this infraction of British rights by the arrest of a Colonial Representative?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Mr. McTurk, an official of British Guiana, was sent at the end of last year to ascertain the correctness of reported disturbances in the Yurnari district. No official Report of his journey has been received; but it is stated in a local newspaper that on his arrival at El Callao he was stopped by the Venezuelan authorities and required to return by the route open to the public. Mr. McTurk is understood to be on his way to Trinidad, and we must await his Report before forming any opinion upon what has happened. A telegram has been sent to Trinidad to ascertain the nature of his Report. The district in question has been for some time past in dispute between this country and Venezuela. The object of the Proclamation referred to was to safeguard any British rights which might be infringed by the concession for a railway granted by the President of Venezuela.

LAW AND JUSTICE—COUNTY COURTS.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been called to the fact that at Woodbridge, on the 26th of September last, though the summonses were returnable at 11.30, the Court did not begin to sit until nearly 2, and that at Stowmarket, on the 5th of December, the Court, though summoned for 10, did not commence till 12.30; if he is aware that at Stowmarket only nine Courts were held in 1883, five in 1884, six in 1885, five in 1886, and seven in 1887; if he will consult the Registrars as to the dates of the fixtures of County Courts in Suffolk during the last few years; and, if he will give instructions that monthly Courts shall be held in pursuance of 9 & 10 *Vict.* c. 95, ss. 5, 6?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The hon. Member is aware that I have no control over County Courts. All that I can do is to bring the allegations of the hon. Member to the notice of the Lord Chancellor. This I have done, and inquiry is being made. I am informed that no representations have reached the Lord Chancellor that more frequent Courts are desired in Suffolk.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—STATISTICS.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table of the House any, and what, statistics relating to the cases which have been tried under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887;" and, if so, whether he will make the Return continuous?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: We purpose to lay upon the Table of the House, almost immediately, the same information as Earl Spencer gave after the Session of 1883. This will contain a Return, by counties, showing the number of persons proceeded against for each class of offences under the Act, together with the results of the proceedings up to the 31st of December, 1887. Had the form in which it has been printed been convenient, this would have been on the Table to-day; but we have had to send it back to Dublin for alterations. These statistics would, in ordinary course, be published annually, and I see no reason for having regular publications at more frequent intervals; but if the hon. Member cares to move for it at the proper time, so as to get a review of the working of the Act during the first six months of this year, there will be no objection to giving it to him.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say, whether the Return will show the names of the magistrates who tried the cases?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT, KERRY—FAIR RENTS.

MR. SHEEHAN (Kerry, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many applications to fix fair rents have been lodged with the Land Commission Court for six months up to 1st February, 1888, in the County Kerry; in how many cases have fair rents been fixed by the Courts during the period; and, whether any steps will be taken to remove the block in the Land Court in that county, and so relieve applicants from impending ruin?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that during the period named 1,105 applications were lodged, and in 38 cases rents have been fixed in County Kerry. A Sub-Commission will sit in Kerry during the month of April.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FOREIGN COMPETITION—MR. GIFFEN'S REPORT.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When Mr. Giffen's Report and Tables relating to Foreign Competition will be in the hands of Members?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.), in reply, said, the Report was in the hands of the printers, and it would be circulated in a few days.

MALTA BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS—EXPENSES.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is proposed that the expenses of the Malta Boundary Commissioners shall be paid by the British or the Maltese Government?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The expenses of the Malta Royal Commission, which amounted to a little over £450, will be defrayed from Malta Funds. The Papers about to be distributed will show that, in addition to the actual expenses of travelling and living, Sir George Bowen, one of the Commissioners, was allowed an honorarium at the rate of £5 per diem. The other Commissioner, Sir George Baden-Powell, when he accepted the Commissionership, declined to receive any remuneration, as being a Member of the House of Commons. The Papers about to be presented will contain an acknowledgment of the discretion and ability with which the Commissioners discharged their functions.

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—THE BULL ROCK.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, during the Recess, tenders were received, in response to advertisements of the Commissioners of Irish Lights inserted in the newspapers, for certain lenses and other apparatus for the new lighthouse at Bull Rock; whether the tender sent in by Mr. J. R. Wigham, for Messrs. Barbier and Co., of Paris, was the lowest tender received in answer to that advertisement; whether Mr. Wigham's and Messrs. Barbier's work has frequently been used with satisfaction by the Lighthouse Authorities; whether the Commissioners of Irish Lights consequently decided to accept Messrs. Barbier's tender; whether the Board of Trade interfered and interposed their statutory authority for the purpose of reversing the decision of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, and caused the order to be given to a firm whose tender was higher than that sent in by Mr. Wigham on behalf of Messrs. Barbier and Co.; whether this action of the Board of Trade was decided on at a full meeting of the members of the Board of Trade; and, whether he will state the grounds on which the action of the Board was based?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Three tenders for the supply of a dioptric apparatus for the Bull Rock Lighthouse were submitted in September last by the Commissioners of Irish Lights to the Board of Trade for their statutory sanction. The lowest tender was that of Messrs. Barbier and Fenestre, of Paris, amounting to £2,980. The next lowest was that of Messrs. Chance Brothers and Company, of Birmingham, amounting to £3,130. The Commissioners recommended the acceptance of the lowest tender. My Predecessor at the Board of Trade, noticing that this tender was only £150 below that of the British firm of Messrs. Chance and Co., and that, should the work be carried out by a French firm, this difference would be liable to be further reduced by the additional expenses to be incurred by the engineer in visiting France to inspect the work, decided that it would be desirable to depart from the usual custom of accepting the lowest trustworthy tender, and to place the work in the hands of the British firm.

CRIMINAL LAW—MURDER OF ELIZABETH OLIVER AT EAST HULL.

MR. GROTRIAN (Hull, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Elizabeth Oliver, aged 13, who was murdered in East Hull on the 8th of February, having, according to the medical evidence, been first outraged; and, whether, having regard to the fact that the perpetrator or perpetrators of this murder are still at large, he will recommend that a reward be offered by the Government for the discovery of those concerned in this outrage and murder?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this case. The Home Office has for some years past discontinued the practice of offering rewards in such cases, on the ground that they have been found by experience not only to be ineffectual towards the detection of crime, but even to operate prejudicially. I do not feel justified in departing from this practice in the present instance.

GAMBLING ACTS—PRIZE DRAWING AT STOKE-ON-TRENT.

CAPTAIN HEATHCOTE (Staffordshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the prohibition of a prize drawing at Stoke-on-Trent; and, whether, when such prohibition was issued, he was aware that this prize drawing was for a charitable object, that the prizes are all voluntary contributions, and that the whole of the proceeds were to be devoted to the benefit of Mrs. J. B. Evans, a widow, who is now in straitened circumstances?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): My attention was called to the fact that such a lottery was about to take place. Under the circumstances, I was obliged to take notice of an act illegal and forbidden by statute, however deserving of sympathy the objects of the lottery might be. I accordingly communicated with the Director of Public Prosecutions, who issued his usual letter of warning to the persons whose names appeared on the printed prospectus.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—PROCEEDINGS AT RATHMORE PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report in *The Cork Herald*, of 10th February, of the proceedings at Rathmore Petty Sessions, from which it appears that Mr. Cecil Roche endeavoured to secure precedence to cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, in opposition to the unpaid magistrates sitting with him; whether the following is a correct report of a portion of the proceedings:—

> "Mr. Roche: The local magistrates did not attend for two months, and the result is that the Crimes Act cases have been delayed by the hearing of the others.
>
> "Mr. Coltsman: I don't consider that the Crimes Court is entitled to take precedence of the ordinary Petty Sessions Court.
>
> "Mr. Leonard: Neither do I.
>
> "Mr. Roche: We will see what the Lord Chancellor has to say on the matter.
>
> "Mr. Coltsman: I must enter my strongest protest against the conduct of Mr. Roche. He endeavoured to intimidate the local magistrates from proceeding with the ordinary business of the Court, and he has threatened Mr. Leonard and myself with the Lord Chancellor. I need scarcely say that both Mr. Leonard and I disregard this threat, and we will do what we consider our duty;"

whether the Government intend to take any notice of the language of Mr. Roche; if Mr. Roche did complain to the Lord Chancellor what reply he received; and, what power the Lord Chancellor has, and under what statute, to regulate the precedence of Petty Sessions cases?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): My attention has been called, by the Question of the hon. and learned Member, to the report in *The Cork Herald* referred to in the Question. I am unable to state whether the report is accurate in every particular; but it is the fact that a difference of opinion arose between the members of the Bench on the occasion in question as to the order in which the business before the Bench should be proceeded with. The Government do not intend to take any notice of what occurred on that occasion. Both parties represented their views to the Lord Chancellor, who, however, does not regulate the precedence of cases before Courts of Petty Sessions. I believe that the incident has now completely terminated.

MR. DEASY: May I ask—and my Question arises out of the answer of the hon. and learned Gentleman—whether he will not consider it to be his duty to see that the paid magistrates—the officers under the direction of Dublin Castle—are not permitted to intimidate the unpaid magistrates?

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): May I also ask whether Mr. D. Cronin Coltsman has been a magistrate of the County Kerry for 45 years, and whether he is not also a deputy lieutenant for that county, and also a large landowner in that county; and, whether this discussion occurred in open Court, and whether it was initiated by Mr. Cecil Roche?

MR. MADDEN: I am not really aware of the facts with reference to Mr. Coltsman. The facts as stated by the hon. Member may be perfectly true.

ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1887 — CROWN LANDS—COMPULSORY PURCHASES.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Clauses of "The Allotments Act, 1887," with reference to the compulsory purchase of land, can be put in force against the Crown, where the Crown is the owner of the lands?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The clauses of the Allotments Act as to compulsory purchase of land cannot be put in force against the Crown. The provisions of the Public Health Act and of the Lands Clauses Acts, as to the taking of lands compulsorily, are subject to the like limitation.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): In how many cases have the compulsory clauses of the Act been put into force?

MR. RITCHIE: No application has been made to the Local Government Board.

INDIA (BENGAL)—WRECK OF THE "SIR JOHN LAWRENCE."

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been directed to a Report on the loss of the steamer *Sir John Lawrence*, addressed by the Members of the Marine Court of Inquiry to the Government of Bengal, which Report states, upon the evidence given in the inquiry, that not only was the *Sir John Lawrence* carrying more than her proper complement of passengers, but that

> "Every inducement exists for the captains, or even for the owners of the vessels engaged in the Chanobbally trade, to avail themselves of the opportunity to carry more than the licensed number of passengers;"
>
> "That the method of survey adopted under the auspices of the Port Commissioners and Port Officer is extremely unsatisfactory, and in urgent need of speedy and thorough reform;"

and, if he can inform the House whether the Government of Bengal are taking steps to correct these abuses?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The attention of the Secretary of State has been directed to the Report in question. The Government of Bengal has already taken measures with a view to correcting these abuses. It has directed the Commissioner of Police at Calcutta and the Commissioner of Orissa to report fully upon the whole subject, with a view to the introduction of more stringent Regulations.

SEA FISHERY DEPARTMENT—TRAWLING WITHIN TERRITORIAL WATERS.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If the Government will this Session introduce a Bill to give to the Sea Fishery Department powers to stop beam trawling within territorial waters on the English coast, where it is desirable so to do, similar to the powers already enjoyed by the Fishery Boards of Scotland and of Ireland, and recommended for adoption in England by the Parliamentary Commission of 1878, and again by the Royal Commission of 1885?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): This subject is only part of the general question of the regulation of fisheries within territorial waters, a scheme for which is now under the consideration of the Board of Trade. But as such a scheme would involve the creation of Local Authorities for the purpose, I think it would be premature to introduce a Bill at the present moment.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate whether a difference of opinion did not exist in Scotland as to the powers of the Scottish Fishery Board to stop beam trawling within territorial waters; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman would make an inquiry so as to give a decisive opinion on the subject?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Undoubtedly there is no power to close any fishing within the territorial waters in Scotland, except where the authority is satisfied that fishing by beam trawling there is injurious to some other mode of fishing in that part of the water; and hitherto, as I understand, nothing has been done in the way of closing up any fishings permanently. They have only been closed by way of experiment, in order to see whether it was injurious.

MR. ESSLEMONT asked, if the Lord Advocate held that the Fishery Board had power to stop fishing within the whole territorial waters at one and the same time?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD replied, that he was not prepared to give a legal opinion on such very short notice.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —POSTAL ORDERS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Has he adopted any of the suggestions for the remedying the anomaly whereby the commission on postal orders for 19*s.* 6*d.* costs more than postal orders for £1?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): No, Sir. Various suggestions with this object have been considered by my Department; but none of them has appeared completely satisfactory.

POST OFFICE—POSTAL CHARGES AT SHANGHAI.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Has he taken any steps to remedy the anomaly of the English Post Office at Shanghai charging 100 per cent more for the postage of letters to England than the French Post Office charges for postage of letters also to England?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I can only refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the same Question asked by him on the 22nd of March last. I then said—

> "In the case referred to, the French Office does not incur a loss in sending the letters by British packets for 2½*d.*; but even at the 5*d.* rate a considerable loss is incurred by the British Office, because it has to pay heavily, not only for the sea service, but also for a special train service across Italy and France. Obviously, any reduction of the British postage would involve additional loss."

POST OFFICE CONTRACTS — THE AUSTRALIAN MAILS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, If it is true that a contract has been signed for seven years for the conveyance of mails to and from Australia; if it is true that the rate of speed for the mail steamers has been fixed at less than 12 knots an hour during the next seven years; is he aware that eight out of the 16 steamers now engaged on the contract can easily steam 16 knots an hour, and some of them in bad weather have averaged this rate of speed the whole distance to Australia; and, is he aware that, even going on what is known as an economical consumption of coal, these steamers have easily accomplished a 14½ knot speed from Australia on several occasions during the past few months?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): Two such contracts have been entered into, subject to the approval of Parliament—one with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, and the other with the Orient Steam Navigation Company. The conditions as to speed are that the mails shall be carried (under penalties for overtime) in 32 days from Naples to Adelaide, and in 32½ days from Brindisi to Adelaide, including the landing of mails at King George's Sound, and all other stoppages that may be made on the voyage. Some of the steamers which will be employed in this service will, no doubt, be faster than others; and it is obvious that contractors undertaking a mail service under heavy penalties for overtime would not be bound by the time possible to their swiftest ships. Allowing for stops, the average running speed under these contracts may be reckoned at about 12 knots.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON wished to know, whether any premium was given for excess of speed?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I think it will be better to defer this Question until the contract is on the Table.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT BELFAST.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to an extraordinary statement in a London paper called *The Star*, purporting to describe a "revolting Orange outrage," alleged to have taken place in Belfast on Friday, and published in that evening's paper; whether there is any foundation for the statement that a funeral procession was attacked by the workers in the mill of Messrs. William Ewart and Sons; whether it is a fact that the funeral referred to happened to pass the mill when the workers were crowding in from dinner; and, whether any single person connected with the mill molested the procession in the slightest degree?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I have not seen the statement in the London paper referred to; but I have seen reports of the occurrence in *The Belfast Morning News* and in *The Freeman's Journal.* These reports are, according to the reports of the local Constabulary, considerably exaggerated; but I regret to find that a body of the mill workers were guilty of the disgraceful conduct of booing at and groaning at the funeral procession.

THE FOOD SUPPLY—EXPORTATION OF CATTLE, &c. FROM THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) asked the President of the Board of Trade, with regard to the bounties on the exportation of live cattle and preserved beef and mutton from the Argentine Republic, Whether, for reasons and objects similar to those which prompted his intervention on behalf of the sugar industry, he proposes any action to relieve the struggling and depressed agricultural industry from the effects of foreign bounties?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): This is, doubtless, an important subject, and I have already given directions for the latest information with regard to it to be collected, with the intention of submitting it to the Agricultural Department and the Foreign Office, by whom it would be properly considered. But I may remind the hon. Member that the circumstances are by no means the same as existed in the case of the sugar bounties, and that the bounty given by the Argentine Republic is a very small one, amounting to about 1*s.* per cwt. of meat.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE—NUMBERS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any, and, if so, what additions have been made to the Metropolitan Police Force since August last?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, the increase to the strength of the Force up to the 1st of August last was 224.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION FOR COUNTY DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact, as published in *The Belfast Northern Whig* of the 23rd instant, that the Sub-Commission for the County of Down will sit at Newry on 4th April, and at Banbridge on 4th May next; whether, considering the large number of originating notices to fix fair rents served by the tenants of the Lord Lieutenant, the Marquess of Downshire, Colonel Forde, and Lord Annesley, in the Unions of Newtownards and Downpatrick, he can now state on what dates a Sub-Commission will sit to hear applications from tenants in these Unions; and, whether it is intended to have only the one Sub-Commission sitting in the County of Down?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners state that a Sub-Commission for County Down will sit at Banbridge on the 4th April, and, as far as possible, dispose of the applications from the north side of the county. The sitting at Newry, although at present fixed for the 1st of May, will be open to re-arrangement as occasion may justify. It is intended to have only one Sub-Commission sitting in the County Down.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION FOR COUNTY DONEGAL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state when the Sub-Commission for County Donegal will hear the fair rent applications entered from the Union of Stranorlar, the Union of Strabane, and the district of Dunfanaghy; and, whether he is aware that a large number of tenants residing in this Union had their originating notices served on the Land Commission before the gale day at November last, and, although entitled to the benefit of the reduced rent in respect of the half-year expiring on the gale day next previous to the passing of "The Irish Land Act, 1887," they will be obliged to pay the old rent up to the date of the decision of the Commissioners?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that on the 14th of October last there were but nine cases unheard in the Stranorlar Union, five in the Strabane Union, and four in the Dunfanaghy Union. They were not at present in a position to say when the application from these Unions will be heard. The Sub-Commission which has been sitting in the County Donegal since the 10th of January continue there until the end of April; but its time will be fully occupied by applications from the remaining Unions of the county, all of which were entered prior to the 14th of October. As regards the latter portion of the Question, it is to be observed that where a tenant has made application prior to the gale day next following the passing of the Act quoted, he will be entitled to deduct any over-payment he may have made for the half-year expiring on that gale day upon the judicial rent being fixed.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that in the Union of Stranorlar alone there were 200 notices lodged in November?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I am not aware of that.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS COURT, KANTURK—REFUSAL OF SUMMONS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If it is a fact that a young man named Patrick Hongan, within the past fortnight, applied for a summons to the Petty Sessions Clerk at Kanturk against Constable Egan of that town, and that the clerk refused to issue a summons without the directions of a magistrate; whether Hongan then applied to Mr. Crawford, J.P., who refused to grant a summons until Hongan went before the Petty Sessions Bench and formally there applied for same; whether Mr. Crawford, at Kanturk Petty Sessions, on Saturday last, the 18th instant, stated from the Bench that it was always the custom not to issue summonses against policemen without the sanction of the Bench; and, whether there is any legal foundation for such a custom?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The facts are correctly stated in the Question of the hon. Member. The Petty Sessions Clerk, in refusing to issue a summons under the circumstances mentioned in the Question without the direction of a magistrate, was acting not merely in accordance with custom, but in pursuance of instructions which he had received from a full Bench of Magistrates. Under the Petty Sessions Act it is the duty of the clerk to issue summonses under the direction of the Justices; and it is quite competent to the Justices to give any directions which they may think necessary for the purpose of protecting the process of the Court from abuse.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE LORD LIEUTENANT'S COUNTY DOWN TENANTS.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) (for Mr. M'CARTAN) (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Lord Lieutenant, with a view to make a settlement with, or to sell their holdings at 20 years' purchase, to his County Down tenants, extended the time within which they could make applications to have fair rents fixed and be entitled to the reduction on the half-year's rent due at 1st November last, as provided by the fifth section of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887;" whether he can state how many originating notices to fix fair rent were served on the Land Commission by the tenants of His Excellency between the 31st of October last and the 1st of February instant; whether notices were served on the tenants who had not made application to the Court, offering 20 per cent reduction on the old rents; and, whether, considering that there are upwards of 4,000 applications at present entered for hearing in the County of Down, and that one Sub-Commission could not dispose of all these cases for years, he will now consider the desirability of having a new Sub-Commission appointed for the County of Down?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN)

(Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I hardly understand the inquiry contained in the first paragraph. In order that the tenants should be entitled to the reduction on the half-year's rent due the 1st of November, the Act requires that the application should have been made before that date. If a landlord desires to give his tenants the benefit of any reduction made in cases in which they made application after the 1st of November, and allow them an abatement on the six months' rent to that date, it is altogether a matter of personal arrangement. I am not, however, aware of the Lord Lieutenant having done so. The number of originating notices referred to in the second paragraph was 19. I have no knowledge as regards the third paragraph. The number of applications from the County Down is 3,645. The Land Commissioners will consider whether any course can be adopted to effect the hearing of these cases within a reasonable time.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — SPECIAL REPORT SCHEDULES.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) (for Mr. M'CARTAN) (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Special Report of the Irish Land Commission, dated 3rd January, 1888, and presented to the House on Wednesday last, does not contain copies of the Schedule and Supplemental Schedule referred to therein; whether, considering the numerous complaints that the reductions made by the Land Commission were by no means commensurate with the fall in the prices of produce, and that the same machinery has to be resorted to for 1888 and 1889, he will give a Return of Copies of these Schedules, with the answers given thereon by the scrutineers; whether the suggestion, No. 1, made in the Letter of the Land Commission of the 25th of August, and copy of which is appended to the Special Report, has been in any instance carried out by the scrutineers; and, if so, in what Unions differences have been made in the revision of judicial rents by reason of "one portion being a mountain and the other portion a lowland district;" whether he can state the names of the persons in the County of Down with whom "the Supplemental Schedules on thin paper," referred to in Suggestion No. 2, were left to be filled, as directed, "at the request" of the scrutineers; and, whether he can mention at what dates respectively the scrutineers for the County of Down were instructed to have their Schedules and Supplemental Schedules filled up and returned?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I am aware of the circumstances mentioned in the first paragraph. The Land Commissioners inform me that they have no objection to furnish copies of the Schedules referred to, and which they state were at the time communicated to the public Press. They cannot, however, undertake to give the answers furnished by their scrutineers, nor the names of the persons in the County Down with whom the Supplemental Schedules were left. The Returns of the scrutineers did indicate, in most instances, the characteristics of the Union dealt with, as regarded its mountain and lowland districts. The scrutineers were directed to return their Schedules and Supplemental Schedules as soon as they should have obtained the information called for.

RATING ASSESSMENTS — EXEMPTION OF LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government, in any Bill to be introduced this Session, to provide for the removal of the existing exemption of lunatic asylums from the ordinary assessment for rating purposes, which relieves the county at the expense of the particular parish in which the asylum is situate?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government do not propose to bring in a Bill dealing with the assessment of rates on lunatic asylums; but an opportunity will arise for the hon. Gentleman to raise the question when the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill is before the House.

THE ROYAL FAMILY—ADDITIONAL GRANTS.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government still adhere to the undertaking given by the Government of the day in 1885, not to propose any new grants to Members of the Royal Family until the whole subject has been considered by a Committee of this House?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): As I do not apprehend it will be the duty of the Government to propose any new grants to Members of the Royal Family at any very early date, I think it inadvisable to enter into any engagement with the House with regard to what may possibly be remote contingencies; and I must refer the hon. and learned Gentleman to the answers I gave to him and to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) last Monday with reference to the appointment of a Committee.

MR. E. ROBERTSON asked, whether the House was to understand from the right hon. Gentleman's answer that the Government did not depart, and did not intend to depart, from the understanding given in 1885?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have answered the Question already, both last Monday and to-day. I cannot vary my answer in the slightest degree.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, that his Question was, whether the Government still adhered to the understanding given by the Government of the day in 1885, not to propose any new grants to Members of the Royal Family until the whole subject had been considered by a Committee of that House?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not able to accept the view of the hon. and learned Gentleman that the Government of 1885 did enter into any such undertaking. But, whether that is so or not, I am not prepared to give any such undertaking with reference to what I believe to be remote contingencies. I have stated the course which the Government think it right to follow.

PUBLIC BILLS — AMENDMENTS TO QUESTION FOR SECOND READING — PAROCHIAL BOARDS, &c. BILL —CROFTERS, &c. BILL.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked Mr. Speaker, Whether the Parochial Boards Bill, the second reading of which was merely negatived on Wednesday without the Amendment "this day six months" being carried, could be put down again for a second reading?

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) put a similar Question with regard to the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the Parochial Boards (Scotland) Bill, the second reading of which was negatived on Wednesday last, the position is this—inasmuch as no Amendment was moved "that the Bill be read a second time this day six months," and all the House determined was "that the Bill be not now read a second time," it is therefore competent for the hon. Gentleman to set up the Bill again and put it down for a second reading on a future day. The same Rule applies to the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill, the circumstances, if I recollect, being identically the same.

TURKEY—THE DARDANELLES—ALLEGED PURCHASE OF AN ISLAND.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether there is any truth in the statement in a leading article in *Le Temps* newspaper, that Her Majesty's Government have procured or asked from the Turkish Government the cession of a port or of an Island in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I have no hesitation in answering my hon. Friend. There is no foundation whatever for that statement, or for any of the other statements in the article in question.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE, 1888 — RULE 1 (SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE).

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I wish to put a Question to you, Sir, on a point of Order, in reference to the new Rule which was passed on Friday. I wish to know whether, under the new Rule, no Notice of opposition to a Bill or a Motion on the Paper under the half-past 12 o'clock Rule will take place unless the opposition comes from an hon. Member in his place?

MR. SPEAKER: As I read the Resolution passed by this House on Friday last, its purport appears to be this—that after 12 o'clock it is sufficient to retard the further progress of any Bill for any hon. Member to say "I object." I am not prepared to say that the half-past 12 Rule has been abolished; but it has certainly fallen into desuetude, or will fall into desuetude, by the operation of the Rule which was passed on Friday last. But if half-past 12 o'clock be reached I am not prepared to say that the Rule, in regard to what is called a Blocking Motion, would not come into operation; but, as the hon. Member will observe, it is sufficient after 12 to stop the further progress of a Bill by an hon. Member objecting to the time at which it is proposed to bring it on.

THE ESTIMATES.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he wished to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to the Vote for Salaries, Allowances, and Travelling Expenses of Resident Magistrates in Ireland, Whether he could see his way to postpone the consideration of that Vote, inasmuch as there were two or three Votes before it which he was informed would give rise to considerable discussion, and then they could hardly be called upon to discuss the Irish Vote in a small portion of one night's Sitting?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I think there is every reason to believe, and hope, that the Votes preceding Vote 28, referred to by the hon. Member, will not take up much time, as they are not of a contentious character, and I trust that this particular Vote may be reached at a very early hour, leaving ample time for its discussion. The hon. Gentleman is aware that unless the Votes on the Paper are got through at this Sitting it will be impossible for me to ask the House to consider the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) on Thursday next. I am exceedingly desirous that an opportunity should be afforded to bring on the Motion; but if Supply is not finished to-night it would be necessary to continue it on Thursday.

MR. DILLON: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that if the other Votes take considerable time there will be another opportunity found for discussing this Vote

MR. W. H. SMITH: That is the only Vote on which we expect considerable discussion.

MR. DILLON: Is there not prolonged discussion expected on the Chamberlain Vote?

An hon. MEMBER: That comes on after the Irish Vote.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman state to the House definitely when the Army and Navy Estimates will be laid before the House; also when the printed Paper setting forth the usual Statement will be furnished?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We have every reason to hope that the Army Estimates will be distributed on Thursday, and I trust the Navy Estimates will be ready on Friday or Saturday. The Army Estimates will be proceeded with on Monday next. The Navy Estimates will follow on Thursday, if it is possible to do so.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: As to the Supplementary Estimates to come on to-night, I should like to ask whether, as to the Vote of £18,000 for New Guinea, any money has already been expended by the Treasury under that head?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): No, Sir.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Why is it put down in the Supplementary Estimates?

MR. JACKSON: Because it is necessary to make provision in the financial year for expenditure which is intended to come within the year.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked, was it intended to take the Army Estimates on Monday on short notice?

MR. W. H. SMITH: My experience is that they generally have been taken on short notice. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that there has been considerable delay with regard to the Estimates. It is proposed to take the debate on going into Committee of Supply on Monday next on the Army Estimates.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, when the Civil Service Estimates would be laid before the House?

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) gave Notice that he should move to reduce Vote 1 by £3,900 (Mr. Chamberlain's Mission), and a further reduction on a subsequent Vote relating to Jubilee expenses of £5,658.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887-8).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £13,000, Supplementary, Public Buildings, Ireland.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, it was very difficult to appreciate the value of these Supplementary Estimates, with copies of the original Estimates to which they were Supplementary being in the hands of hon. Members. He had found on inquiry at the Vote Office that there was scarcely a copy to be obtained. He had, however, succeeded in obtaining a copy, and on looking at it he found that the figures given in the Supplementary Estimates did not agree with those which appeared in the original Estimate. The original Estimate was for £62,000 odd for National Education Buildings; whereas the sum now put down in the present Vote as the original Estimate was £59,478. He desired to ask one or two questions in regard to this particular Vote, which was one that had come before the Public Accounts' Committee on more than one occasion, and after subjecting it to a detailed examination the result had invariably been unsatisfactory. Last year the Committee were assisted by a representative of the Board of Works in Ireland, and it was found that several irregularities had occurred during the financial year then under discussion. The Representative of the Treasury who appeared before the Committee was utterly unable to give any explanation of the relations between the Treasury itself and the Board of Works in Ireland with respect to the expenditure of public money. The Treasury official, however, admitted that certain irregularities had taken place on the part of the Board of Works. Hon. Members might suppose on looking at this Supplementary Estimate that there was some unforeseen expenditure to be met in the financial year amounting to £13,000. According to the original Estimate, it would appear that the whole amount for the year was £75,478; but that sum had been reduced by £13,000, showing an apparent economy to the extent of £13,000. There could not be a more misleading case. The economy effected in the Vote figured last year at the sum of £13,000; but the Committee were now told that the grants for ordinary literary schools, in addition to a Vote of £35,000, were required to the extent of £13,000, that being precisely the sum which they stated to have been saved. In fact, this Supplementary Estimate wiped away the whole of the economy effected last year in this Department. The whole Estimate was based on a system which had nothing to say for itself in respect of real economy; but it was calculated to mislead and delude the Committee of Supply. The Public Accounts' Committee on many occasions had found it necessary to consider the irregularities of the Board of Works in Ireland, and the fact that they were in the habit of spending large sums of money without the Treasury knowing anything of the matter until months after the expenditure had been incurred. At present he would content himself by asking the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) whether this sum of £13,000 represented the sum which was put down last year as a saving?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he was always afraid that any proposal to save money upon Irish Votes was only made the means of simply throwing good money after bad. They had been given to understand lately that the financial authorities of the Government were about to take steps to minimize as much as possible the Supplementary Estimates. There were unusually favourable circumstances why that should have been done this year, seeing that there was no apprehension of war, and no Supplementary Estimates for the Naval and Military Services. So far, however, from the Department having taken the trouble to avoid Supplementary Estimates, they had come to the House to ask it to pass Votes greater in number than ever. The Civil Service Supplementary Estimates would be found to be a fat volume—a good deal more numerous than in previous years. Some of the items were ridiculously small in amount; in one instance he saw that the amount to be voted was only £1.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, the hon. Gentleman was referring to Estimates which were not now under the consideration of the Committee.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he felt that he had gone somewhat beyond the consideration of the present Vote. He thought, however. it was a lamentable fact that the Departments were not able to cut their coat according to their cloth.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am precluded by your ruling, Sir, from following the hon. Gentleman into the Vote of £1 that becomes necessary on the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade; but the Supplementary Estimates on this occasion are not, as the hon. Member has described, "a fat volume." They are by no means as large this year as they have been in previous years. [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I said more numerous.] If the hon. Gentleman will examine them, I am sure he will find that they are fewer in number and considerably smaller in amount than they have ever been on any previous occasion. The Supplementary Estimates this year are about £130,000, whereas last year they amounted to £515,000. That shows, I think, that great care and effective control have been exercised by the Department, and the Department itself may take credit for the examination to which the Estimates were subjected before they were presented to Parliament last year. As to the control exercised over the expenditure, I think there has been a greater improvement in the administration than ever characterized the previous Estimates. There is another point which touches one of the questions raised by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) —not one of these Estimates would have been evaded, and the fact that they have been so little exceeded in amount is due to the action of the Department, and those responsible for examining the Estimates as originally sent in. In answer to the remarks of the hon. Member for East Donegal, I find the first objection which he took was on comparing the original Estimate with the amount now required in the shape of Supplementary Estimates. The discrepancy between the original Estimate and the statement which now appears in the Supplementary Estimate is accounted for in this way. The hon. Member will remember that last year there was a proposal to take £3,000 for the Ulster Canal. The House of Commons decided to strike that item out, and consequently the original Estimate was reduced by £3,000, which, it will be found, represents exactly the difference between the original Estimate and the statement given in the Supplementary Estimate. The total sum for new works and alterations was £62,478 in the original Estimate, owing to the fact that £3,000 were asked for the Ulster Canal. With regard to this very item, I may point out that the reduction of the general Vote has nothing to do with the Supplementary Estimate which is presented on this occasion; because the hon. Member, if he refers to the original Estimate, will find that the sum taken for grants for ordinary literary schools was £35,000. As a matter of fact, the expenditure proved to be more than £35,000, and the £13,000 the Committee are now asked to vote is the amount, with certain savings on the general Vote, which it is necessary to provide in order to make up the amount expended on the National literary schools. The fact referred to by the hon. Member that the sum of £13,000 now asked for represents the reduction on the Estimate as compared with 1886-7, is a mere accidental coincidence. These grants are dependent upon the progress which has been made upon the building of schools to which the grants are applied, and the favourable weather in the past year enabled greater progress to be made with the buildings than had been expected. It is rather difficult to estimate beforehand how much in a particular year the Treasury may be called upon to grant. I hope I have shown that there is no discrepancy between the original Estimate and this Supplementary Estimate; and, further, that the cutting down of the works estimated on a former occasion has nothing to do with the sum the Committee are now asked to pass. The two questions are entirely distinct, and, as I have pointed out, it is due to greater progress having been made with the buildings for which the grants were made than it was possible to foresee.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I do not see that the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury errs on the side of lucidity. I was just as wise when the hon. Member sat down as I was when he got up. The hon. Gentleman gave two reasons for these Supplementary Estimates. One was that £3,000, intended to have been spent upon the Ulster Canal, were not included in the Vote, although that expenditure had been estimated for in the original Vote for Works. Now, I want to know what possible connection there can be, or ought to be, in this Supplementary Estimate between Votes for building ordinary literary schools and a Vote for the Ulster Canal? Cananything show more clearly the ridiculous jumble in which the Estimates are presented to Parliament than to drag in the Ulster Canal in connection with the ordinary literary schools? The hon. Gentleman says that the expenditure on the ordinary literary schools has been greater by £13,000 on account of the extraordinarily favourable weather for enabling progress to be made with building operations. Before I accept that statement, I should like the hon. Gentleman to tell the Committee what was the particular month of the year which was so extraordinarily favourable for the purposes of building as to enable this increased sum to be spent. That is the sort of explanation which is given from time to time when information is demanded in regard to increased expenditure. There is only too frequently an explanation of this far-fetched and *rococo* character instead of the explanation which the Committee is entitled to demand. The original grant for ordinary literary schools last year was £35,000. Why, then, did the Treasury allow the Board of Works to expend £13,000 more? Was it done with the sanction of the Treasury, and did the Board of Works apply directly for the sanction of the Treasury? I think that the whole of this amount might have been well included in the Estimates for the coming year, if the statement of the hon. Gentleman is correct that last year the Vote showed a saving of £13,000. The whole of that saving appeared now to be eaten up by the increased Estimate now presented to the Committee. All I can say is, that the whole treatment of financial matters submitted to the House of Commons is distinctly illusory, and discreditable to the Treasury.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The explanation of my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) was not only an explanation of the Vote upon the Paper, but an answer to the remarks of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who asked certain questions. The noble Lord does not seem to appreciate that the amount was cut down on the one hand and was raised on the other. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: That is what I am appreciating.] The noble Lord did not appreciate it, because he asked why my hon. Friend had referred to the reduction of £3,000 on the Ulster Canal. As the hon. Member for East Donegal had alluded to the cutting down of the original Estimate, it was the duty of my hon. Friend to explain why it had been done. The statement was not that of my hon. Friend, but that of the hon. Member opposite; because my hon. Friend pointed out that the cutting down of the original Estimate had nothing to do with this particular Vote. As to the increase in the Vote, I frankly admit—and I am sure that the noble Lord will join with me—that the general situation in which the Treasury and the Board of Works stands in connection with the National Schools in Ireland is a most unsatisfactory one, and requires continual watchfulness. It is more or less an automatic expenditure, over which the control of the Treasury is not anything like what it ought to be. The intention has been that the Board of Works should give this money without the previous assent of Parliament, which I think is a monstrous proposition. I entirely demur to the idea that Parliament should have no control over the amount that is to be spent in a given year, and over the measures that should be taken to exercise control over the expenditure upon the schools. Unless that is done, it will never be possible for Parliament to know distinctly in any given year how much money is likely to be expended. It appears that more has been spent this year than is generally spent; but it is not the fault of the Treasury that there should have been an excess this year. I can assure the noble Lord that every care will be taken to prevent a recurrence in future of the unsatisfactory state of things which has been complained of.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I be allowed to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether the Board of Works can spend money on these schools without the assent of the Treasury? I apprehend that they cannot; but that any expenditure beyond the Estimate must have obtained the sanction of the Treasury. I want to know whether that is not the case?

MR. JACKSON: Yes; but I think I can satisfy the noble Lord that the Treasury, as far as possible, took every precaution they could. [Lord Randolph CHURCHILL made a remark which was inaudible.] Perhaps the noble Lord will allow me to answer the question in my own way as far as I can. I must first state to the Committee how the matter stands and how these grants are made. The grants are made to the extent of two-thirds of the estimated cost of building schools in Ireland. Applications are sent to the National Education Commissioners in Ireland, by whom the grants are made. They have, in the first instance, to give their approval to every scheme for the erection of schools, and the grants are made to them. Plans are sent to the Board of Works, and the Board of Works are charged with the duty of paying the money which has been granted by the National Education Commissioners. The Board of Works makes the payments from time to time on the certificate of the architect and surveyor that a certain amount of work has been done, and certain amounts become payable. Towards the end of last year I went over to Dublin, and in the course of my investigation, I found that the amount of money that had been voted by Parliament for these services had been exhausted. [Mr. Arthur O'CONNOR: What month?] In December. I at once caused a letter to be written to the Education Commissioners drawing their attention to the fact, and pointing out that no more money was at the disposal of the Treasury for the financial year. The consequence of that was that a stop was put to the payments by the Board of Works, and no furthur payments were made without the sanction of the Treasury. I think that is an answer to the noble Lord's question as to whether the Board of Works spent the money without the sanction of the Treasury. I have pointed out that the Board of Works did not spend money without the sanction of the Treasury, and I will now explain why the sanction of the Treasury was given. These schools for which grants have been sanctioned are spread all over Ireland. The sanction to their erection is first given by the National Education Commissioners, and subsequently by the Board of Works. It would entail extreme hardship if, after the grants have been made, and the buildings have made progress in the belief that under the conditions of the grant, the money expended would be repaid, it would entail extreme hardship to arrest their progress, and moreover would be extremely difficult to do so. I have called the attention both of the Board of Works and of the National Education Commissioners to this matter in such a way that I believe in future the making of these grants will be placed on a better footing; but I do not feel that the Treasury would be justified in repudiating them, because they would have been repudiating what was a distinct contract entered into between the National Education Commissioners and the Board of Works on making these grants. If economy is to be effected, it must be on the original granting of the money, more than upon the Estimates. The money which becomes payable this year is not the money granted this year. A portion of the money expended this year was granted in 1884-5, a further portion in 1885-6, and a third portion in 1886-7. It must necessarily be that the payment of the money and the build- of the schools must follow at some considerable period subsequent to that on which the grant was made. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has touched slightly upon what has been a difficulty in the past. I think there has been a misunderstanding as to the power of the Commissioners of National Education to act separately and independently of the action of the Board of Works. I can safely say that in future the Estimates will be framed in conjunction with and upon the approval of the National Education Commissioners, and we shall, as far as it is possible to do so, limit the grants within the year's Estimate so as to prevent any excess in a future year. I do not say that that will be possible next year, because, now that the question has been raised, I feel it my duty to be perfectly frank with the Commissioners, and I may tell them that when I went to Dublin and discovered this fact—that not only had the grant of last year been exhausted, that not only had the Board of Works no more money at their disposal, but that grants, which in the ordinary course will and must be met before the end of the financial year, had been made by the Education Commissioners in excess of the provision made by Parliament. Immediately this was discovered, I determined to put the system upon some better footing; but that is too late now. If the House of Commons is anxious to say that the system of making grants for these buildings by the National Education Commissioners from day to day and week to week shall be stopped, then of course Parliament has the power to do that, and will take the responsibility upon themselves. But as the matter stands at present, I do not think the Treasury has power to interfere with any of the grants already made, and I think I have shown my noble Friend that I have endeavoured, as far as I can, to put a stop to the present condition of things. My noble Friend referred to the way in which this Estimate is submitted to Parliament and to what I said about the Ulster Canal. Now, the amount which appears in the original Estimate of the year for the Ulster Canal was struck out, and that accounts for the discrepancy between the amount stated in the original Estimate and the amount which now appears in the Supplementary Estimate. If my noble Friend will refer to sub-head B, he will find that it covers various items besides grants for ordinary literary schools, and unless you are to have separate Estimates, I do not see how you are to avoid mixing up two or three subjects of this sort, all of them coming under the provision of the Board of Works and for which they are responsible.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he desired to support the course which his hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had taken in regard to this Estimate. It was not often that he found himself in accord with the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill); but he did so on this occasion, and he desired to thank the noble Lord for the remarks he had made. It was obvious that the Estimates were purely illusory, and that the Government took no pains to ascertain how much money the National Education Commissioners had granted, notwithstanding the professions of economy with which they came to Parliament. Those professions of economy they knew to be altogether unreal. He had no wish to attribute to the Treasury that which he had no right to attribute to [illegible] but it was quite clear that they paid away money without knowing what the real requirements under this head were, for it was evident that the Government were in ignorance of what was required until the Secretary to the Treasury went to Ireland in the month of December. Nothing could be more monstrous than the way in which these Estimates were prepared. The difference between the sum of £59,000 and £62,000 was accounted for by the cutting off of the item for the Ulster Canal; but the main objection was that a saving of £13,000 had been put forward which could only serve to delude the public. The Government appeared to take no pains to ascertain what amount of money they might be called upon to pay, and, according to the Secretary to the Treasury, he had discovered on his visit to Dublin, very much to his surprise, that it would be necessary to make provision for £60,000 more than he had any previous knowledge of. He protested against the Committee being asked blindly to vote a sum of money they knew nothing about. They were obliged to take it on trust from the Treasury, and the Treasury appeared to know quite as little as they did about it.

Mr. JACKSON: I will answer at once the observations of the hon. Member for Northampton. The economy of £13,000, to which he has alluded, had no reference in any form, shape, or manner to the question of the erection of literary schools.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that it happened to be the same amount.

MR. JACKSON: That is only an accidental coincident.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, the hon. Gentlemen had said that until he went over to Ireland he did not know what grants had been made, and he then discovered that it would be necessary to make provision for £60,000 more. He understood the hon. Gentleman to say that the £13,000 had actually been expended.

MR. JACKSON: I should like to keep the hon. Member to the £13,000, which happens to be the same amount as the saving effected last year. I wish to inform the hon. Member that the amount provided for the ordinary Public Works Vote proved to be sufficient, and more than sufficient, for the work done. The £13,000 deficit has reference to the grants for literary schools; therefore it is altogether inaccurate to say that the Government came to the House with illusory Votes, seeking to deceive the public. I would ask the hon. Member to consider the difficulties we have to encounter with regard to this Vote. The Treasury receive from the Board of Works an Estimate that will come in payment in the course of the year. That Estimate has to be framed in the month of November, and it is an Estimate of the sum likely to be expended in carrying on the building operations in certain schools in different parts of Ireland, some of which may not even have been begun, and the information as to the progress of which cannot be determined by the Board of Works itself, except upon a very rough and general Estimate. It is quite impossible for the Board to determine beforehand what schools will be begun at all within the financial year, and to say 15 months beforehand what progress will have been made with them during the year. I think I have shown the hon. Member that the £13,000 to which he has alluded have no reference to any public works except the literary schools.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he must trouble the Committee again. The matter had not been made clear yet. He understood the Financial Secretary to say that this money was granted in 1884-5 and 1885-6. Why, then, in November, 1886, when the Estimates were being prepared, could not the Secretary to the Treasury learn that which he learned afterwards? Why should he not have communicated with the authorities who controlled the building, or have learned what buildings were going to be undertaken during the year. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) would not say that the Estimate had been made out with an intention to deceive; but why should it have been made out in a manner which certainly had the effect of deceiving the House? The Government professed to be economical, whereas there was no saving at all.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The Secretary to the Treasury has tried, with some success, to throw upon the National Education Commissioners and the Board of Works in Ireland the responsibility for the excess which amounts this year to £13,000, and next to £60,000, for contracts they have entered into without the consent of Parliament. What I say is, that if the Secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer desire to throw the responsibility on the National Education Commissioners and the Board of Works, they are trying to divest themselves of a responsibility which belongs to themselves. Everybody knows that the National Education Commissioners and the Board of Works will grant money lavishly, and with great freedom, if they have the power to do so. The only control over those two Bodies is the Treasury, and it will not do for the Secretary to the Treasury to get up in this House and throw the responsibility upon those Bodies, when we know that the Treasury itself possesses an absolute power of veto. It will not do, therefore, for the Treasury to say that the fault rests with the Commissioners of Education and the Board of Works. The very fact of the Commissioners of Education and the Board of Works having committed a fault shows that there must have been complicity on the part of the Treasury. I object, therefore, to the hon. Gentleman getting up in this House and endeavouring to exculpate the Treasury by throwing the responsibility upon other persons. Another point on which there has been a misunderstanding is that which was raised by the hon. Member for East Donegal and the hon. Member for Northampton. This is an Estimate for works amounting to more than £59,000, and the Supplementary Estimate this year shows that there has been no diminution. The Secretary to the Treasury may give any explanation he likes, but he cannot get rid of that fact. It is too much the habit in presenting a Vote to Parliament to present it in a light as favourable as possible; but invariably, when a saving is shown, it is discovered that all the economy is eaten up by an excess next year. The fact remains in this instance that the control of the Treasury over expenditure of this nature is illusory.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I will take the last point of the noble Lord first. I think the Committee will be prepared to accept from my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury the fact that, whatever the appearances may be, the deficiency of £13,000 has had nothing to do with the original Estimate. There is no connection between the two things. There must have been items to the amount of £13,000 cut off in the original Estimate; but they had nothing whatever to do with the present deficiency, and facts are facts. For the reason stated by my hon. Friend, the two figures which appear in the two sets of Estimates are identical. If one had been £15,000 and the other £8,000, instead of £13,000, it would have been necessary to make an intentional reduction in order to present an illusory balance sheet. Let me direct the attention of the Committee to this point—what object can the Government have in cutting down the expenditure if it is likely to lead to a Supplementary Estimate, because the credit gained for the reduction of the Estimate is certainly nothing like the discredit thrown upon the Government in regard to the introduction of a Supplementary Estimate! No Administration would run the risk of reducing the original Estimate if they foresaw that a Supplementary Estimate would be necessary. I therefore repudiate on the part of the Government the charge that they have been guilty of the conduct which has been imputed to them. And now I come to the next point—namely, the control of the Treasury. It is a fact that it has been held by the National Board of Education, erroneously I admit, but assented to by successive Governments, until the present Administration, that the National Board of Education in Ireland may make grants, and that to the extent of two-thirds of the expenditure. Parliament was bound to vote the money, the locality providing the remaining third. I am bound to say that, so far as I am concerned, I was not prepared to vote that principle for a moment, and I am obliged to the hon. Member opposite for having taken up the matter, because the discussion which has taken place will strengthen our hands in the future arrangements we make with the National Board. The National Board undoubtedly believe themselves to be acting within their right. We do not admit that, but until this year it was erroneously considered that where the locality provided one-third of the money to be expended, Parliament was bound to vote the remaining two-thirds. I come now to a third point, which has been raised by the hon. Member for Northampton, with regard to the alleged *laches* of the Government in not having determined in November last how much money should be spent. I can assure the hon. Member that there is nothing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasery desire more than to ascertain how much money will be spent in building operations in the course of a given year; but there is nothing more liable to fluctuation. We have not got the matter in our own hands. We do not build the schools; but they are built by contractors or by the local authorities, and in large operations it is impossible to say how much money within a few thousand pounds is likely to be spent in a given year. I admit that every effort must be made to ascertain that sum; but it is not an easy task, and the Treasury are unable to withhold the few thousands of pounds that may be necessary, seeing that their refusal would involve a suspension of the erection. If the schools are wanted, and more good progress is made with them in the financial year than was originally expected, it would be undesirable to withhold the public money which must be paid a few months later. Of course, it is very inconvenient to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has to make his calculation in regard to the Public Expenditure; but I think it is more advisable to carry on works of this nature rather than to turn away a large number of men who are engaged in the building of these schools towards the end of the year, in order to prevent an expenditure that would be sanctioned as a matter of course in February or March. The Secretary to the Treasury simply put down the money that was wanted when the Estimate was originally prepared.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The Secretary to the Treasury said that there had been no communication from the Board of Works.

MR. JACKSON: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I said there had been no communication from the Commissioners of National Education. I did not say there had been no communication between the National Education Commissioners and the Board of Works.

MR. BRADLAUGH: That only shifts the responsibility to some other Board.

MR. GOSCHEN: The Board of Works are our agents in Dublin, and they made the best Estimate they could in November last year; but in the case of buildings not yet commenced, it is a difficult task to know what money it would be necessary to spend within a given year. I trust the Committee will see that there has been no negligence on the part of the Treasury in regard to this matter.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was afraid that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not appreciated the point of his observations, possibly because he was not in the House when he made them. He thought the Committee would recognize that, although this item looked very simple and innocent, there was a great deal behind it which had not come to light, and which it was desirable to draw the attention of the Committee to. What they had to deal with lay hidden behind that sum of £13,000. He was making no attack upon the Secretary to the Treasury. The Secretary to the Treasury did his work as honestly and as well as any man who ever filled the post, and he (Mr. O'Connor) would have no objection to make to anything the hon. Gentleman had said or done. His point was this—that the Board of Works, who were the agents of the Treasury for Irish purposes, did not deal with the Treasury in London as the Treasury ought to be dealt with. They did not communicate to the Treasury all those items connected with the public expenditnre which they ought to have communicated, and if there was any point upon which the Financial Secretary was to blame it was not in insisting in having that information. The hon. Gentleman was a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, and he must have known that those and other irregularities had not been made known to the Treasury until a month after the money was granted, showing the perfunctory carelessness with which money was granted, and proving that there was anything but a rigid and careful examination. The hon. Gentleman said that that item had nothing to do with the whole Vote. He (Mr. O'Connor) demurred from that view altogether, because if they had a surplus on one particular item in a Vote and a deficit on another, the Treasury ought to be able to balance the deficit by the surplus without going to the House. The Financial Secretary had informed the House that with regard to all the rest of the Vote the money voted by Parliament was more than sufficient for the purposes of the Board of Works in connection with other works, and that this Supplementary Estimate would otherwise have been required to deal with a larger deficit which had been prevented by applying balances obtained from other items in the Vote. Now, he could not understand how economy could be practised in a Vote by applying surpluses obtained from particular items for which more was asked than was absolutely necessary, and then discovering that upon one item there was a large deficit. This Vote covered buildings for the Hibernian schools, Coastguard stations, Metropolitan buildings, lunatic asylums, Science and Art buildings, Revenue buildings, and other institutions, as well as the unfortunate Ulster Canal. He was afraid that the examination of the details of the original Estimate was anything but satisfactory. The National Education Commissioners contended that they were within the terms of the Act of Parliament; that they had to furnish Estimates for the Board of Works, who ought to have full information as to what purposes the money was required for. It was admitted that the Board of Works knew, as far back as November and December last, that there was a deficit on this particular Service; but the Committee now learned from the Financial Secretary that it was not until he went over to Dublin, and investigated the matter on the spot, that he ascertained that not only had all the money which had been voted been exhausted before two-thirds of the financial year had lapsed, but that there was a further liability to the extent of £60,000 of which the Treasury knew nothing at all, and of which he himself would have been ignorant if he had not gone over and investigated for himself. That, to his (Mr. Arthur O'Connor's) mind, showed very lax administration of the public money. The Board of Works last year spent a great deal of money they were not authorized to spend by Parliament, or checked by the Treasury, except in regard to the reception of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in Dublin. In the previous year the same thing occurred, and money was expended by the Board of Works without the authority of the Treasury or the sanction of Parliament. The Treasury had come to no decision in the matter at the time the Public Accounts Committee was appointed. The letter of the Treasury communicating the decision to which they had arrived last year, and the decision of the Public Accounts Committee, was not communicated to the different Departments until the month of January this year, or more than a month late. As a rule the Treasury letter was communicated in the month of December; but this year it was not sent out until January. The whole of this business showed looseness on the part of the Board of Works and of the Treasury which almost amounted to carelessness. He entirely believed that the Financial Secretary was innocent in the matter; but the whole attitude of the Treasury in regard to the Board of Works in Ireland was one which required to be revived. These irregularities should not be allowed for one moment. The Board of Works should not be allowed to spend money they were not authorized to spend, nor should they render themselves liable for the expenditure of thousands of pounds of the public money without communicating full information to the Treasury.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that this Vote for the building of schools was very much on the plan adopted in connection with the Science and Art Department. The grants were given in proportion to the amounts raised in the localities, but only on the understanding that the total annual vote for this service was not exceeded, and late applicants must be put off for a subsequent year. So far as the Science and Art Department was concerned, he did not think that any question had ever been raised as to the way in which it carried on its duties in this respect, simply because it was understood that no money could be expended without the approval of Parliament and that in no case should a given vote be exceeded. If money was to be spent without the sanction of Parliament simply by a locality claiming it, the control of Parliament over the expenditure was lost.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he was perfectly satisfied with the explanation of the Financial Secretary; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had opened up the ground of policy in regard to the way in which the education of the Irish people was administered. There had been a great desire expressed to extend education in Ireland, and upon a system which had been settled for a long time, in order to avoid quarrels between different religious denominations. In order to carry that out and leave the Government free, the system had been automatic, so that any school could be established in any place, if it were not too near another school. It was the duty of the Commissioners of Education and the Board of Works to see that the locality had a sufficicient population. As the people of Ireland paid £7,500,000 towards the Imperial taxation, he thought they had some right to receive some little good out of the expenditure. He knew the desire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to economize; and he would point out a way in which that object could be accomplished. At present the system only permitted the erection of a school where a piece of land could be obtained. It was not the practice to build a school in the best place, but only where a bit of land could be got. The result was that where four schools might be sufficient, they had to build 10, because they were not erected in the best places. A Bill to remedy this defect had frequently been brought in by the Irish Party. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to effect a considerable economy if he would insist on the schools being built in the best places. Moreover, fewer teachers would be required, and a great deal more than this £13,000 would be saved. Instead of grumbling about the expenditure of this £13,000, he believed that the money had been very well spent indeed.

MR. GOSCHEN: I will certainly take a note of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's suggestion. The point, however, is to check the expenditure of the National Education Commissioners. Parliament will, I hope, insist that the Treasury shall have more authority over the amount expended in a particular year than they have hitherto had. Looking at the enormous way in which these schools are being built, I think that Parliament should insist that there should be a limit upon the expenditure on these schools in a particular year. The House of Commons ought to expect the Government to determine how much money shall be expended in a particular year, and keep to that amount rigidly.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that when the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan) maintained the right and privilege of Irish Boards to spend money without the sanction of Parliament, he thought the British taxpayer might fairly tremble. At the same time, the Government had admitted that in regard to this particular Vote there were anomalies which ought to be remedied. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not gone a little further, and told the Committee that next year there should not be a Vote of this kind, but that the Irish Board should be given to understand that they must get their coat cut according to their cloth, and not spend more than the money voted by Parliament, whatever that amount might be. He sincerely hoped that there would be no discussions of this nature in the ensuing Session.

MR. GOSCHEN: I can assure the hon. Member that no one would regret the recurrence of such a discussion more than I should.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £12,000, Supplementary, Science and Art Buildings (Dublin).

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I have one or two words to say upon this matter. I think the Vote stands still more in need of explanation than the last, and that there are matters connected with it that ought not to be passed over in silence. What I object to is a Supplementary Vote for works which Parliament did not consider and vote money for last year. The Vote last year for the erection of these buildings was £30,000, and the Government and the Treasury have allowed £12,000 more to be spent within the financial year than they took power for. If the Government will turn to the Vote they will find that their Estimate was even more gravely defective than that, because it will be found that the original Estimate was £100,000. That, I suppose, was the Estimate of the Board of Works; but the revised Estimate now placed before the Committee amounts to £145,000. When the Treasury came before Parliament and asked for a Vote to purchase part of a site and erect new Science and Art buildings and a national library, they told Parliament that the cost would be £100,000, and it is now found that the expenditure will be £45,000 more than the original Estimate. I think that that is not only objectionable but discreditable, and it throws the greatest possible suspicion on the value of the Government Estimates. That is a general complaint in regard to all works, and I put it to the Secretary to the Treasury why it should be allowed. I know that the hon. Gentleman will tell me that to have arrested the progress of the building would, of course, entail great confusion and a loss of money. But if the Treasury had said that they had no more money to devote to this purpose this year, the public would have known that it was the bad management of the Board of Works that had caused all the loss and confusion. If a great stand of that kind were once made, I do not think that it would occur again, but as long as the Government allow the Board of Works to spend more money than they originally estimated, and consented to pay the excess, so long as this loose and unbusinesslike way of conducting business goes on, there will be loss and confusion. I think that the Secretary to the Treasury owes an explanation to the Committee of this Vote even more than upon the last one.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that in addition to the point raised by the noble Lord, he desired to call attention to the fact that these Estimates were being constantly revised. He found that the original Estimate submitted to the House was £100,000. Then came the revised estimate of £138,571, and during the financial year that Estimate of £138,571 had been again revised and brought up to the £145,191 to which the noble Lord had drawn attention. Therefore, the Estimates laid before Parliament turned out to be utterly worthless, and he wished to have some explanation of why the Estimates should grow every year in this manner.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked, how much of the money was to be spent for the site?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am afraid that I have not got the amount for which the hon. and gallant Gentleman asked. The noble Lord has brought two Questions before the Committee—one is as to the amount of the Estimate originally presented to Parliament, and its subsequent enlargement or revision; and, secondly, as to the unwisdom of allowing the expenditure to exceed the amount voted by Parliament, and not stopping it in the way suggested. I may say that I am not responsible for that original Estimate presented to Parliament. But I would venture to ask any Member of the Committee, who has had any experience of building operations, to consider for one moment how difficult it must be for anybody before an actual contract could be obtained, to estimate accurately what the cost of a building would be. I am afraid that that is actually impossible, and I am sure that the noble Lord knows perfectly well, from his own experience, that estimates for building operations are seldom sufficient to carry out works of this character. I may point out that the Estimates have been revised from time to time, possibly in consequence of alterations in the plan. It may be said that the plans ought to be made complete in the first instance; but we know that from time to time alterations are found to be necessary. With regard to the amount which has been expended in excess of the Estimate, I am sorry to repeat what I said in the previous case. I merely stated what the explanation was, and it is apparently an explanation well founded. When I was in Dublin, both in conversation with the contractor and with those who are responsible for superintending the building, I learned that the contractors in this case have acted most energetically. There has never been a single day on which the works have been stopped, and I cannot admit that it would have been good policy to have turned these men away from that building, simply because the money voted by Parliament had been spent, and to have kept them idle for months. I cannot think that Parliament would have justified the Treasury if we had taken that course. It is most difficult, and in some cases impossible, to calculate how much progress will be made in a large building of this character during the year. I am extremely sorry to have to come now and ask for a Supplementary Estimate. I can only plead that although the money is raised this year, instead of next, it does not add one single sixpence to the cost of the building to which Parliament is committed, and the circumstance is entirely due to the fact that the building has made much greater progress than was contemplated when the Estimate was framed last year. I, therefore, do not believe that the Board of Works are deserving of censure, because they framed their Estimate as far as the information they had to guide them enabled them to calculate the amount that would come in course of payment during the year. The original Estimate for the service was £100,000. I cannot say when that original Estimate was formed, and I am afraid that I have not the particulars as to why that sum had been so largely exceeded.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the hon. Gentleman mean the Committee to understand that he thinks the increase in the Estimate from £100,000 to £145,000 is such a reasonable increase as would happen in the ordinary affairs of life?

MR. JACKSON: Speaking from my own experience I should say "Yes." I should say "It is not at all an exceptional case;" and I must say that Parliament must have sanctioned the increase on a former occasion; therefore the Treasury is not responsible. It is not surprising that the Estimate has been enlarged, partly by reason of the improvements which have been sanctioned in the construction itself. Even during the last year I must plead guilty to having sanctioned a further addition of £1,800, because it was very strongly represented to the Treasury that unless the Rotunda was raised a little higher than was intended in the original plan, the general appearance of what everybody admits to be a magnificent building would be spoiled.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he thought that the Treasury ought to exercise the utmost care in dealing with public Departments. They seldom heard of a case where the expenditure fell below the Estimate. The practice of exceeding the Estimates for building was not only common, but habitual, and for that reason he thought that the Treasury ought to exercise the utmost care and even rigour in dealing with the public Departments, so that they should not allow the expenditure to be so largely exceeded. £184,155 had already been sanctioned by Parliament in connection with these Science and Art buildings in Dublin, and that sum was likely to be still further exceeded by the £1,800 to which the Secretary to the Treasury had alluded. At any rate he should be glad to learn whether the £1,800 was in excess of the £184,000.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that this was only a typical case of the enormous increase over the Estimates in regard to buildings erected in connection with the Science and Art Department. There were buildings at South Kensington Museum, in Edinburgh, in Jermyn Street, and elsewhere, and in all cases it had been found that the Estimate was so absurdly below the real cost as to require very strict notice. He thought that an increase of about 50 per cent over the original Estimate was very excessive. He had had a good deal to do with building, and he could not help thinking that this was an excessive amount of increase. The item of £1,800 was the keynote of the whole difficulty, because, although only a very small sum, it showed that the plans were not properly and carefully considered originally. They were prepared economically in the first instance, with the idea that it would in that case be more easy to get the Treasury to allow an increased expenditure afterwards. He was satisfied that the only way of effecting economy in the cost of building operations was by going carefully into the plans at first, and by its being understood that the House of Commons would not consent to increase the amount afterwards. He thought it would be a wholesome thing for the Committee to throw out the increase on the present occasion.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it would appear from the Vote that £184,155 had already been sanctioned. Was this a new Estimate or part of the Estimate that had already been passed?

MR. JACKSON: This sum which has already been sanctioned will, I hope, complete the works. In regard to the sum of £1,800 which the hon. Member referred to as having been sanctioned in the past year, I am afraid it may happen that that sum will prove to be an excess over the Estimate. It would, however, be an unwise thing to spoil a building like this for the sake of £1,800. Everybody must admit that the alteration proposed to be effected in the Rotunda will be a very great improvement.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Does this item include this sum of £1,800?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, certainly.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, they were told that the favourable weather in the past year had enabled greater progress to be made with the building than had been expected; but now they were told that the Estimate included a portion of the Rotunda which had not been sanctioned by Parliament.

MR. BARTLEY asked, whether the architect received a larger fee for the increased amount?

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member rather mistakes the matter. It was arranged, in the original plan, to go a certain height; and the question has since arisen whether it was not desirable to put four or five feet more on the top of it in order to give it a better appearance. It was originally arranged that the boilers and heating apparatus should be placed in the basement of the main building; but, later on, when it was seen that there was a possibility, at some time or other, of the electric light being adopted—for which additional machinery would be required — the question came up for consideration whether it would be desirable or safe to put in the basement of the main building all the appliances for heating and lighting—engines, boilers, and so on. It was suggested that there was a piece of ground outside the building which might be used for an annexe, if that were ultimately determined upon, and that the boilers and heating apparatus might be put outside of and separate from the main building. It seemed to him that that would be a valuable improvement, alike as regarded safety, convenience, and economical working; and that it would be better to adopt that plan than to carry out the original suggestion.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that the explanation of the hon. Gentleman showed very clearly how these things grew; how, when a plain building was estimated for, all sorts of additions and improvements were asked for. In the first place, the House was led to sanction an outlay of £100,000, and then was led on to sanction one of £200,000 or £300,000. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson), he was sorry to say, did not seem to condemn the system under which they were asked to sanction, bit by bit, an enlargement of an original Estimate.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) assured the hon. Gentleman that neither the Board of Works in Ireland nor any other body in the United Kingdom found the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury too yielding or easy in regard to these matters. This was one case in which his hon. Friend had given way; but for this one case which appeared before the House of Commons, there were 50 cases in which he had not given way, and in which he received considerable abuse for the hardness of his heart. He hoped the hon. Member would not judge the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury by this case. A great building was concerned, and his hon. Friend had made a slight concession; but he was stoney-hearted generally, unless a strong case was made out.

MR. H. S. WRIGHT (Nottingham, S.) said, they all knew from experience that however large an Estimate was, it was certain to be exceeded in the long run. It was, therefore, far better to allow a certain latitude than to draw hard and fast lines which they found it impossible to observe. If this Vote was refused, the result would be that the Local Authorities would be compelled to make their Estimates in future considerably larger than at the time might seem necessary, in order to provide for unforeseen contingencies.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £1,100, Supplementary, Lighthouses Abroad.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, the explanation of this Vote was very simple. There was a tender called the *Richmond*, which carried stores to the lighthouses off the coast of Rocky Island. A hurricane came on when this tender was making for the shore. The tender was blown on the rocks, and injured. This expenditure consisted partly of repairs, partly of the hire of a schooner to do the work during the time the *Richmond* was laid up, and partly of the cost of assistance in getting the vessel off the rocks. The occurrence was an accident, and no blame attached to anyone.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(4.) £1, Supplementary, Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he believed that £1 was the smallest sum which it was competent for Parliament to Vote, and he had purposely made the charge £1 so that the Committee might see at once that the voting of the money was a mere matter of form. The Committee would understand that although the fees were sufficient to cover the whole cost of the service, there had been in the original Estimate a Vote for £68,920 for salaries. There had been an increase of fees, and, in some cases, an increase of salaries to the extent of £7,044; but, unless a Vote of the House was taken, those salaries could not be dealt with in the Appropriation Account, because they would never have received the sanction of Parliament. The Treasury had power to issue from time to time to the Board of Trade in aid of Votes of Parliament, out of the receipts arising from fees, stamps, and dividends, any sums which might be necessary to meet the charge estimated by the Board of Trade in respect of salaries and expenditure. They had done this, but there would not be Parliamentary sanction of the salaries unless they took a Vote in this form. That was why the Vote was taken.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he supposed they might take it that the receipts from the working of the Bankruptcy Act were in excess of the expenditure.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) said, the salary of the official receiver at Liverpool was £1,000; whereas, the official receiver at Manchester was paid a salary of £1,200 and had an assistant receiver who was paid £600. The business of Liverpool was considerably in excess of that at Manchester, and, therefore, it was thought that the salary of the Liverpool receiver should be placed on an equal footing with that of the Manchester receiver. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) whether there was anything included in the Vote for the purpose.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, there was nothing included in the Vote for the particular matter to which his hon. Friend referred. An application on the subject of this gentleman's salary had been sent to the Board of Trade, and, of course, it would be fully considered.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that this was a formal matter must be taken with some qualification. A great deal more than £1 was involved in the Vote. When the Bankruptcy Act of 1883 passed through the House, an alteration was made in the Estimates. It was then agreed that a statement should be annually laid before Parliament, showing the amount of fees realized under the Bankruptcy Act, and the amount expended in the administration of the Act. Apparently there was no charge on the Public Treasury in connection with the Service, but the appearances were misleading. As a matter of fact there was just as large a charge against the Public Treasury in connection with this Vote as in connection with any other Vote in the Estimates, because if this money was not spent in extra salaries and in large travelling allowances it would go into the Exchequer. The officials under the Bankruptcy administration were at present battening upon the fees obtained in bankruptcy proceedings. Of course, as the charge did not come apparently as a direct charge on the Treasury, the House was not very much inclined to look with scrutiny into the matter; but he contended that it was the duty of the Treasury to keep down this Vote as much as possible. This involved an extra charge of £7,000, and was justified on the ground that the fees were enough to meet the outgoings. They were, unfortunately, more than enough, and that involved an injustice to the suitors and to the estates under the Bankruptcy administration. Seeing how much money was realized by these fees, it would be very much fairer, and more in accordance with the spirit which was manifested and expressed at the time the Act of 1883 was passed, if Bankruptcy fees were very considerably lowered, at any rate, in a great number of cases. He would like to know whether the Treasury had conferred with the Board of Trade as to the possibility of lowering some, at least, of the charges under Bankruptcy administration.

MR. JACKSON said, the Treasury and the Board of Trade were constantly in communication with regard to this expenditure. Perhaps he ought to explain that, although the total sum was £7,044, it really was not an increase of £7,044, because there were the Subheads E and F, which, he believed, came under the Vote for the first time this year. Hitherto they had been paid out of the fees of the estate, and an arrangement had been made, which was thought to be more economical, whereby they should come on the Votes. He would bear in mind what the hon. Member had said regarding the fees. He believed that since 1883 the fees had amounted to £485,000, while the expenditure had been £460,000. There was, therefore, a balance of £25,000. The fees more than covered the cost, but the margin was rather small.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he wished to point out that under the heading "Law Charges" there was a sum of £784 required in addition to the original Estimate, and, on turning over the page, he found that this was due to exceedingly heavy litigation. He desired to know whether this sum was made up in part of costs in connection with the prosecutions of supposed fraudulent bankrupts?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he believed it was not so made up; on the contrary, it arose from an increase of litigation which was consequent upon the administration of estates by officials of the Bankruptcy Department and questions arising out of it upon which the decisions of the Court and of the House of Lords had had to be taken.

MR. PICKERSGILL said, that some cases of criminal prosecution directed by the Board of Trade appeared to him to be most improper and even oppressive—cases in which juries could not reasonably be expected to convict. He suggested to the right hon. Gentleman that he should look into the matter, and put a check, if necessary, upon the eagerness of over-zealous officials.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £481, Supplementary, Colonial Office.

(6.) £2,277, Supplementary, Charity Commission.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, that the reason why a Supplementary Estimate was to be taken at all was that the Endowed Schools Commission's year ended on the 31st of December, and the Act under which the Commission was appointed was included each year in the Expiring Laws Bill. The ordinary financial year ended on the 31st of March, and, therefore, three months had to be provided for in a Supplementary Estimate. It had been suggested, and he thought it was desirable, that both years should end on the 31st of March.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) agreed that it would be desirable to make the change suggested by the Secretary to the Treasury and thus avoid the need of any Supplementary Estimate in this matter. He was sorry the hon. Member who was connected with the Charity Commission, and who was the ordinary means of communication between the Commission and the House, was unable to be in his place in consequence of an accident, but, no doubt, the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) would be able to answer the question he (Mr. J. E. Ellis) wished to put. It would be remembered that the Endowed Schools Commission which sat in 1886 and 1887 were of opinion that the introduction of the representative principle in the Governing Bodies of the schools was a matter of great importance. In Section 12 of their Report they declared it to be essential that the sympathies of the localities should be enlisted by giving the people a large share in the management of the schools by representation, either direct or indirect, through elected bodies. The point he wished to call attention to was this—whether the Endowed School Commission was now really carrying into effect that recommendation. If the Committee would turn to the Report of the Endowed Schools Commission, it would be seen that there was an Amendment moved to the effect that the words "a large share" should be left out, to substitute a share in the management by "a majority" of representatives, and that this was only lost by the casting vote of the Chairman. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would agree that there was a strong expression of opinion on the part of the Committee that the representative principle should find a larger place on these bodies. The matter was not a Party one at all. It cut both ways, and he had no doubt that under the principle of election hon. Gentlemen on the opposite—the Conservative—side of the House, would find places on the governing bodies of the schools just as they did now. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would be able to give the Committee an assurance that the Endowed Schools Commissioners were carrying out the representative principle in the schemes they were framing.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that as a Member of the Endowed Schools Commission he could say that it was the opinion of that Committee, after taking a considerable amount of evidence, that the Endowed Schools Commissioners in framing their schemes did have regard to the principle of representation. The Commissioners themselves gave evidence in support of the principle of representation. How soon it might be desirable to extend the principle was another question, but he did not think the granting or refusing of the money now asked for could be determined by the opinion of the Committee on that point. No doubt it was desirable that the Governing Bodies of these endowed schools should be in full sympathy with the sentiment of the localities and should have the confidence of the public. It was the policy of the Charity Commissioners, he believed, to act in accordance with that view, and they had accepted the decision of the Select Committee as being in accordance with their own well established system. That, however, was not the only element to be considered in the constitution of these bodies, as there were others which should be kept clearly in view. The question of how far the principle of representation should be extended would not be affected by this Vote.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford) said, he apologized for taking part in the debate, and only rose because the hon. Member who usually answered for the Endowed Schools Commissioners, was not able to be in his place. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) had conceded the point urged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis); that was to say, that the representative principle should have effect in these schemes so far as the localities were concerned. He would point out, however, that they might go too far with the representative element, and he did not think the hon. Member opposite desired that they should do that. A Motion had been brought forward by the hon. Baronet the Member for Lichfield Division of Staffordshire to deal with this question of representation, and he did not suppose that the Committee would go so far as that Motion. Though he (Sir William Hart Dyke) was not a Member of the Endowed Schools Commission, he was constantly in communication with the Commissioners, and he could assure the hon. Member, without any further communication with them, that they were perfectly well aware of the language used in the Report to which reference had been made. It would be found that reference was made to the proceedings of the Select Committee in the Report of the Commissioners themselves, so that that was evidence, at all events, that the Commissioners considered the recommendation of the Committee as worthy of their attention. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that so far as the Charity Commissioners were concerned they had taken note of the matter, and that in every scheme they were framing now, or would frame in future, they would take care that the representative principle should have a place.

Vote *agreed to.*

(7.) £7,100, Supplementary, Mint, including Coinage.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said, he should like to ascertain some particulars with regard to this loss of £7,100 on foreign bronze coin, as it appeared to be equal to 33 per cent on the £22,578 withdrawn from circulation. Would the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) or the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) explain what portion of the loss arose from the sale of coins, and what portion was on account of expenses connected with it. There was a public announcement made, he thought, in July last, to the effect that the French Government intended to withdraw their copper coins. Now, the bulk of the coins which were withdrawn in this country were French, and that would have been a very favourable opportunity for getting rid of the French copper coin in this country without loss beyond the cost of carriage from London to Paris, which would have been about £1 per ton or less than £100 in all. He wished to know whether that intimation was conveyed to the Government and how they could account for the heavy loss?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, that the intimation was conveyed to the Government, and they endeavoured first to ascertain whether the French Government would be willing to accept this coin. It must be borne in mind, however, that this foreign copper coin in circulation was not entirely French. There was some Italian coin and some belonging to other countries. He regretted to say that the negotiations with the French Government were not successful. They did not want the coin, and the arrangement to which the hon. Member referred—namely, the withdrawal of copper coin in France, had not been carried out. The Government further thought it possible that the French

Government might say that they had got a large quantity of English copper coin, and might ask Her Majesty's Government to take it in exchange. Her Majesty's Government were perfectly ready to do this, but they had not the opportunity. The decision to call in this copper coin was taken very much with the sanction of every hon. Member of the House at the time. The circulation of this coin was considered to be such a great source of inconvenience and difficulty to a large number of poor people that it was determined to call it in. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he believed, insisted upon the matter being brought to a Vote of the House so as to emphasize what the loss on the transaction had been. The loss might really have been dealt with in the Mint account—the matter might have been handed over to the Mint and dealt with as Mint questions usually are dealt with. They were face to face with two alternatives—one was to melt the coin down as bullion and make it into copper coin, and the other was to sell it to the best bidder. He could not, with his commercial mind, admit the force of the sentimental objection to selling it to the best bidder. They hunted about and tried to find a buyer, and after some negotiation sold it at the best price they could get. He might point out that if they had melted it up the loss would have been £20,000, with the price at which copper was at that time. It seemed to him that it was much more economical to dispose of it as they did, though the arrangement was beset with some little difficulty, and it was only reasonable that they should try and save £15,000 out of the fire. There were certain expenses connected with the collection by the General Post Office—sending the coin to London and Paris, shipping charges and insurance, packing and sorting, and such like matters. In addition to all this there were about six or seven tons of coin which had been defaced and could not be passed. He believed that some of the enterprizing traders in London—he was not quite sure whether it was an eminent firm which deals in soap—were responsible for having stamped the coins with the names of their firms. These coins could not be passed into currency. This coin having passed into the Mint at the rate of £400 a-ton, and having to be sold as bullion at the rate of about £45 per ton —for that was then the price, although it had gone up considerably since—this in itself resulted in considerable loss. He believed that under the circumstances the best arrangement had been made so far as the financial question was concerned. Hon. Gentlemen knew pretty much the circumstances at the time, and he hoped, therefore, that the Committee would approve of what had been done.

Mr. MONTAGU said, he did not think the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had answered his question as to what portion of the loss resulted from the sale of the French coin. He did not think there was any question about the policy of not melting the coin up, nor did he believe that there was any regulation to withdraw coin that had been defaced by being stamped with the advertisement of the soap merchant referred to; but he should like to know whether the Government had invited competition for the purchase of the good French coin. He had pointed out to the Secretary to the Treasury how a small portion of the coin could be sold at 4 per cent loss, and he failed to understand what the large increase in the loss incurred, as set forth in the Supplementary Estimate, was owing to. What he wished to ask was simply what proportion of the loss arose through the sale of French coin?

Mr. JACKSON said, he was afraid he could not state accurately what the proportion of the loss was; but he believed, taking it all round, that the coin was sold at a discount of 17½ per cent. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Montagu) would remember that he (Mr. Jackson) had consulted him as one from whom he had thought he would be likely to get valuable information. He had hoped that they would have got a better bargain than that they ultimately had to make. It was a question of getting rid of the French coin at once or spreading its sale over a long period of time. They had sent through the markets and had made the best inquiries they could. They had succeeded in getting some competition for the money. He could not say he was proud of the bargain which had been made, as he had hoped to make a better sale; still he believed that, considering all the circumstances, the best had been done.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he did not object to the course the Government had taken. The question had been a difficult one, and he had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had acted for the best. What he could not understand was why, if this French coin was made of the same metal as that which was used in the manufacture of our own pence, it was not sent into the Mint, re-minted, and re-issued as English pence?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that if that had been done the loss would have been £20,000. They might have manufactured the bronze into pence, but how would they have put the pence into circulation? They had put now as many pence into circulation as they could through the ordinary transactions of trade. Besides, if they had used the French money for the manufacture of English pence, they would have been buying the bronze bullion at a price infinitely above the market price at the time. It appeared to him that the wisest course had been taken in sending the money back to France. If they had themselves attempted to put the money into circulation in France they might have done so at the rate of about £100 a month, or in some similar way, but when they had £25,000 worth of centimes it was obvious that it would have taken years to dispose of the coin in this retail manner. Under the circumstances, he thought his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury had taken the best course he could in getting offers from several French firms for the purchase of the coin. It would have been a very dangerous course, and one prejudicial to the public interest, to have smelted down the coin.

MR. CHILDERS said, the right hon. Gentleman's answer was perfectly satisfactory. He had been under the impression that copper coin was still being issued; but if this was not the case, the plan adopted was clearly the best.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he hoped that great care had been taken to prevent these French coins getting into circulation again amongst the poor. Was it understood that the coins had been sold out of the country?

MR. GOSCHEN: It was delivered in France.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(8.) £38,073, Supplementary, County Courts.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he thought the Committee should have some explanation of the large increase in the Vote over the original Estimate. He had thought that the amount for the County Courts was a fixed Estimate, and they ought to be told whether the number of Judges had increased, whether the salaries had increased, or what the increase of £38,073 was owing to.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he was sorry he had not risen at once to give an explanation of the Vote, but he had thought the Committee was aware that this was one of the Votes which very often resulted in a Supplementary Estimate. The expenses were paid according to the amount of business. For instance, the Registrars were paid £4 for each 25 cases, and he did not think it was very easy to judge beforehand how many cases would be brought into the County Court during the next 12 months. An Estimate was usually taken as near as any approximate estimate could be made to cover the number of cases, but the real fact in the past financial year had been—and, no doubt, hon. Members would notice it—that the growth of expenditure was not only considerable in itself, but was disproportionate to the growth of receipts from fees. The explanation of that, he understood, was that the Registrars were paid so much per case, and the fees depended on the amounts which were involved in the cases. He understood that there had been a considerable increase in the total business, whether or not due to bad trade he could not say. There had been not only a considerable increase in the total business, but there had been at the same time a considerable increase in the cases involving very small amounts, and that accounted for the amount of fees not having grown proportionately with the amount of expenses, because the expenses were paid at so much per case, while the fees were collected according to the amounts involved in the cases. The Committee would see that it was not possible for the Government to correctly foretell the number of cases that would be brought on. He admitted that £38,000 was a considerable increase on an Estimate something short of £400,000, but he hoped the Committee would recognize that an expenditure of £400,000 on such a business represented in itself an enormous amount of work, and that it must necessarily be very difficult to estimate with anything like accuracy the amount that would be required. He hoped also, if he might say so at this stage, that the Committee would not be too severe and that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) would not be too severe on the Treasury for not asking for large sums of money merely for the purpose of avoiding Supplementary Estimates. There was no check on expenditure which the House and the Treasury could exercise so effectually as being able to say "The amount of money voted is exceeded, and therefore we cannot give you any more."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): We do not say it.

Mr. JACKSON said, his noble Friend remarked that the House did not say that; but he would be more correct if he said "On some occasions we do not say it." The Treasury did not ask for large sums when there was necessarily uncertainty as to the amount which would be required.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he wished to ask, whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury could tell the Committee how much of this money was for additional payment to Registrars? At the rate of £4 for 25 cases, the Supplementary amount asked for would represent 208,000 extra plaints, which would be an enormous number.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, whether the effect of paying Registrars by the case was not that some of them received salaries higher than the County Court Judges themselves?

Mr. JACKSON said, he was afraid he had not very much knowledge on that subject; but he certainly did happen to know of one case where the fees of the Registrar became so large that it was thought desirable to cut them down by appointing someone else to help him to take them. With regard to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Kingswinford Division of Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), he (Mr. Jackson) was afraid he could not supply the details asked for.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked, if the hon. Gentleman would inquire whether it was true that many Registrars were now receiving by the scale of payments by case a higher sum of money than was paid to some County Court Judges; and whether, if that turned out to be the fact—as he believed it was—the Government would take some immediate steps, by legislation, to remedy that most outrageous state of things?

Mr. JACKSON said, he would promise to inquire as to the facts; but he was afraid it was another question whether legislation would be brought forward. He must leave that to someone else to answer.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, there could be no hesitation in giving an answer on such a subject. If it were shown that a subordinate received a higher pay than the Chief of his Court, the Government ought to feel bound to remedy the state of things at once.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he thought that there had been some gross miscalculation in reference to this Vote, and the Committee was bound to do what it could to see that such miscalculations did not occur in future; otherwise they might be asked next year to pay another £38,000.

Mr. DIXON - HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said, the Committee was called upon to pay a large sum in connection with bankruptcy remuneration. When the Bankruptcy Act was passed three years ago, they were told that its effect would be to cheapen the conduct of bankruptcy cases, and that the whole cost would fall on the people who used the Court, and not on the nation. Why were they called upon to pay nearly £30,000 for remuneration in bankruptcy cases when the whole of the expense ought to come out of the pockets of those who used the Courts.

Mr. JACKSON said, he was afraid he had not the particulars as to bankruptcy remuneration. He would, however, make inquiries and find out what it had been.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) said, he wished to call attention to the original Estimate of £17,910 for printing and stationery under the County Court Department. The addition to the Vote now asked for was £818. He desired to know if there was any check upon this expenditure; also on the postages, for which an additional sum of £796 was now asked, the original Estimate having been £10,294? If the "postages" represented penny stamps, 2,400,000 letters must have been sent out, and if it represented halfpenny stamps the letters must have numbered 4,800,000. It appeared to him that the items for postages and stationery were very large, and he should like to have information with regard to them.

MR. JACKSON said, he was afraid he could not give the hon. Member any detailed information on these sub-heads "C" and "E." All he could say was that when the Estimates were submitted to the Treasury every item was criticized with the greatest care, all sorts of questions were asked of those responsible, and every effort was made to cut down the expenditure. These sub-heads had been most carefully gone through by the officers of the Treasury, and he believed they had received much more searching investigation than in former years.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said he thought it would be desirable to have the Vote delayed for another night, in order to have an explanation of some of these matters as to which no explanation was now forthcoming.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it was notorious in many parts of the country that, under the dangerous practice of payment by fees, subordinate officers often came to receive most exorbitant salaries. He did think they should have a very distinct pledge that attention should be paid to this matter. As the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury did not appear to be fully informed upon the matter, he thought it would be better that the Vote should be postponed.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he did not wish to prolong the discussion now, but would give notice to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury that when this particular Vote in the new Estimates came on, unless the Government were prepared to give a distinct pledge to alter the system of paying the Registrars by fees, the result of which was in some cases to pay them higher salaries than were received by the Chiefs of their own Courts, he would oppose the Vote.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, they should not only draw the attention of the Committee to this matter, but the attention of the public should be directed to it—to the fact that the Committee was asked to vote the very considerable sum of £38,073 as a Supplementary Estimate, of which no explanation had been given by the Secretary to the Treasury, and no explanation was forthcoming by the Secretary to the Treasury. The hon. Gentleman could not be expected to give them all the details of the procedure of County Courts. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) could not, however, refrain from expressing his surprise that the Law Officers of the Crown had not been in the House to defend the very large expenditure asked for under the Vote, because the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had been quite unable to give them an explanation of the large increase in the item of salaries of £34,778, except that it was connected with Registrars. That large increase was an increase in fixed salaries, and showed a very unbusinesslike proceeding on the part of those responsible for the Estimates. The Government, he thought, should give a promise that this matter of the payment of these Registrars should be considered, and should be thoroughly explained on Report, or should postpone the Vote until the Law Officers were in attendance to give some account of the expenditure to the Committee.

MR. JACKSON said the noble Lord appeared to think that the Treasury had under-estimated the fixed salaries of the Registrars, but that was not the case. He (Mr. Jackson) understood that the salaries of the Registrars were limited only in the sense that these gentlemen never received more than £1,400 a-year. The salary was not fixed, therefore it was impossible to say what the amount which would be paid in salaries would be unless they could say what the amount of business would be which would be brought before the Registrars. With regard to the question affecting bankruptcy remuneration, which really meant the sums paid to Registrars in bankruptcy under Sub-head "D," he had to point out that these Registrars were paid according to a certain scale—according to the amount dealt with. On sums exceeding £5 and under £10 they were paid 2*s*. 6*d*., and so on, over a considerable scale. The Registrars were entitled to a sum for every bankruptcy petition filed in their respective Courts—£4 for every petition filed in the year above £100 and not exceeding £200. The amount of remuneration was regulated by a scale which had been most carefully considered, and the increase or decrease in these salaries fluctuated, as he had endeavoured to show, by reason of the increase or decrease which might occur in the amount of business done in the course of the year. The increase was not an increase of salary, but an increased payment for increased business, and it was very difficult to estimate correctly beforehand whether there would be an increase or decrease, because it was impossible to know what business there would be. The scale had been very carefully gone into, and, therefore, he hoped the House would not ask that the Vote be postponed. If it were postponed he did not see that any information he might be able to obtain could make any difference in the Vote, the increase on which arose from circumstances which were not under the control of the Treasury.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked if the £34,778 were entirely connected with the salaries of the Registrars?

Mr. JACKSON said, that was not so.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he hoped the Committee would consider the whole question of printing, stationery, and postage, because there could be no economy as long as each Department went on drawing its supplies from another Department, so that each had no interest in keeping expenses down. He was afraid they would never have economy in this matter until each Department drew its own expenses for stationery, &c., and was made accountable for them. It seemed impossible that all this money could be accounted for under the head of printing and stationery, and he felt certain that if the matter were looked into it would be found that the amount could be enormously reduced.

Mr. JACKSON said, he quite admitted that the Committee ought to be in possession of full details on every subject stated in the Votes, and he would take care that further information was supplied on Report.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not quite know what the position would be on the Report stage under the New Rules. If the Report were taken after 12 o'clock, he did not feel sure that the discussion would be of a sufficient character. He thought it would be a great advantage if the hon. and learned Attorney General would state what he knew of this matter.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, that this particular matter relating to the Registrars had been the subject of some remarks last Session. Had he been aware that there would be any discussion upon the item that evening, he would have been in a position to give more information upon the subject. His impression was, however, and the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington was no doubt aware, that the Registrars were not allowed under the present system to make more than a certain amount from all sources. He regretted that he had not the details at hand, but he could not imagine that any extra payment was included here beyond that which was now fixed by the County Court Rules.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that having held the office of Registrar he was in a position to state that the salaries were limited some four or five years ago, at least in the case of the larger registries. With respect to postages, and other minor items, he could only bear his testimony to the extreme vigilance exercised over this expenditure by the Treasury. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) appeared to be under a misapprehension which destroyed the whole effect of his calculation. He understood him to say that the number of Registrars was 50 or 60. [Lord Randolph Churchill: I said I was so informed.] As a matter of fact, the number was very largely in excess of that. He believed that each County Court Judge had a constellation of Registrars surrounding him, and that the whole number was probably between 600 and 700.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, he believed the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would not be surprised that this Vote had been made the subject of discussion. When they considered that there was extreme difficulty in obtaining from the Treasury aid for objects which stood greatly in need of it, it was only natural that they should expect details to be given when the House was asked for so large an amount as the present under a Supplementary Estimate. He asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury if he had any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing how this amount asked for the Registrars was to be disposed of? There appeared to be some uncertainty as to the number of the Registrars, and he would like a Return to be laid upon the Table of the House showing the number of Registrars who had received an additional sum. The principle of payment by fees was one which had been gradually abolished. He (Sir Richard Paget) himself considered it exceptional, and he wished to know whether the same unusual system of payment would be continued in the future?

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he should like to know whether the percentage of increased expenditure to increased receipts was larger or smaller than the percentage of original expenditure bore to the original estimate of receipts? In all businesses it was expected that the expenditure would bear a certain proportion to the receipts. If this were stated, the House would then have a guide as to whether the expenditure was excessive or otherwise.

MR. JACKSON said, he should be happy to give the information which the hon. Gentleman asked for. He was not aware whether the hon. Gentleman was in the House at the time of making his (Mr. Jackson's) first explanation; but he had pointed out that the growth of receipts was disproportionate to the current expenditure, and he had also stated that the explanation was that the fees were paid at so much for 25 cases. The receipts were based upon the value of the cases, and therefore they could not make a complete comparison between the cost and the receipts at the time of framing the Estimates, because they would then not be comparing like with like, and the result would be to a certain extent fallacious. There were in all, he believed, 500 Registrars, the salaries of 188 of whom were regulated by the 19th *Vict.*, and 312 whose salaries were regulated by the 29th *Vict.*, and there were 250 High Bailiffs whose salaries were regulated by the 19th *Vict.* The Committee would perceive that the number of these officers was very considerable, and that the increase of salaries was due to the cause he had stated. He would give full details of the various salaries on Report.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was generally so well-informed and so courteous on the subject of the Estimates that they ought not to press him too closely for his present unpreparedness. Nevertheless, he agreed that the Committee should be furnished with further information on the subject of this Vote. He thought the hon. Gentleman should give an explanation of the fact that this particular Vote in the Estimates of 1887-8 had been reduced from the Vote of the previous year by £20,000, and that now in a Supplementary Estimate he was replacing that sum. That meant that the Treasury had a year ago made a great miscalculation. They had calculated last year that on the sum for the Registrars there would be a great economy of salary; but this saving had, in point of fact, not occurred. The mistake was made the worse because the receipts were not cut down in proportion, so that the Supplementary Estimate showed a considerable excess in the net charges, as stated last year. The balance of the account was altogether miscalculated, and the Treasury now came to Parliament to have the error rectified.

MR. JACKSON said, he admitted that there had been a miscalculation last year. The fact was that when the Estimates were sent to the Treasury the course of business showed a diminished quantity. It was not the Treasury who made the Estimate, but those who were supposed to know all the details of the work, and whose advice the Treasury believed they could take safely on the subject of reducing the sum in consequence of the falling-off of business. He had pointed out that the fees had proved to be less because the number of cases had been of less value. With regard to the increased receipts from fees, which were placed at £22,000, it was not as his hon. Friend the Member for Wandsworth (Mr. Kimber) seemed to think. The increased fees did not necessarily result from increasing business; it was a revised Estimate, and the best they could give of the amount to be received during the whole of the year, and their Estimate was that there would be an additional sum of £22,000 received from the fees. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) was perfectly right in saying that there had been a miscalculation as to the amount of business which would come forward, and that, therefore, the decrease in the Estimate was not justified by the facts of the case.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he had listened to the discussion on this question attentively, and he had been quite unable to discover from anything which had fallen from the Treasury Bench what the Vote was taken for—whether for Registrars' salaries, Assistant Registrars, or as Registrars proper; no one seemed to know. He asked who it was that prepared this Estimate? He should have thought, whoever prepared it, that the information upon which it was based must now be in the possession of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury or of the Law Officers of the Crown. Although this discussion had been going on for a considerable time, the Committee were in a state of absolute and helpless ignorance as to the items of which the Estimate was composed. He did not think on a matter of such great importance that it would be right to pass this Vote unless they were in possession of information which would clear up the matter. He asked the Government either to postpone the Vote or to furnish the Committee with further details.

Mr. JACKSON said, the Estimate was prepared by the Superintendent of County Courts, an officer of very great experience, and who, he believed, was thoroughly reliable. He wished the Committee to understand that the Estimate had not been cut down by the Treasury for the purpose of showing a saving. As he had explained, it was anticipated at the time the Estimate was framed that the amount of business would be less than it had been by £20,000.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, in his opinion, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had given a very substantial reason for the increased charge, but he had given them no information on which they should vote the extra sum. He, therefore, thought the Committee would do well to refuse to vote the money asked for until further information was supplied.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, that he regretted not having been prepared with further information, but he had, since the discussion commenced, somewhat refreshed his memory on the subject of the Estimate. The original Estimate was for £335,055, which was insufficient, inasmuch as they now had to ask for £34,778 more. But the amount really required was, practically speaking, only £12,000 more, being the difference between £34,778 and £22,000 expected to be received for increased receipts above the Estimate. He pointed out that the postages and similar charges were comparatively small in amount, so there could be no increase in respect of those items, and he had also formerly shown that the Registrars were paid amounts which depended upon the quantity of business done. The Registrars were partly paid by fees and partly by salary. The High Bailiffs were paid strictly according to statute, and the reason why there had been a miscalculation in round numbers of £12,000 was exactly that stated by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury—namely, that there had been an increase of business. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had reminded the Committee that the information on which this Estimate was based came, in the first instance, from the County Court officials, who were the only persons who could give the necessary information. He (Sir Richard Webster) admitted that the business had increased; there was a larger sum required for salaries; but that was met, to a certain extent, by the £22,000 expected to be received from increased fees. The miscalculation was that it was thought that the original Estimate could be reduced by a larger sum than was found to be the case, and the consequence was that, too small a sum of money having been asked for originally it was now necessary to come to the House with a Supplementary Estimate. He pointed out that all payments were controlled by statute, and the Estimate depended upon the amount of business done. The Committee would, therefore, see that whatever mistake had been made in calculation was the result of estimating the amount which would be recouped. It could not be said that any extra charge had been thrown on the country, nor could it be said that there had been anything more than a too sanguine expectation formed at the time of preparing the Estimates.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said, he wished to point out that this Estimate was not alone for Registrars and High Bailiffs, because there was a large staff of clerks to be provided for, in some cases eight or 10, and where the Registrar was paid by salary, these clerks were paid for by Government. He knew in one case that the salaries for clerks had been increased, and that in consequence an additional charge for salaries would be included in the present Vote. The instance was typical, and explained to a large extent the amount now asked for.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought, after what had fallen from the hon. and learned Attorney General and his hon. Friend near him, it was absolutely necessary that the Government should furnish detailed printed statements as to the amount paid to the Registrars, and the manner in which they were paid.

Vote *agreed to.*

(9.) £7,300, Supplementary, Police—Counties and Boroughs, Great Britain.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he might, perhaps, explain that this Supplementary Estimate was mainly due to the additional expenditure entailed by the formation during the year of separate police forces by six boroughs in the county of Lancaster. These boroughs were previously policed by the county, but the authorities now decided to have their own police, which had led to an increase of 170 men. The Estimate was also partly due to an underestimate of the cost of pay and clothing in the other forces. This Estimate represented the amount of contribution which the Government made. The boroughs in question would, in future, find their own police, and not come upon the county as heretofore.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, that in this instance it appeared that the Treasury had broken through the usual rule—namely, that there should be no extra expense for police incurred after the 29th of September. They had here, however, an increase of £7,300 in addition to the original Estimate. The authorities in his county had often tried to get an extra grant from the Home Office; but this had been invariably and rightly refused, because of the rule laid down that there should be no increase made after a certain date. He would, therefore, ask his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary how it happened that these extra police had been allowed to come into this year's account instead of remaining over till next year? He would also like to know how it was that the total original Estimate of £857,000 was now extended to £867,586, because if the latter figures were correct the total increase would be £10,586 instead of £7,300 now asked for?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, there had been no increase properly so-called. As the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had explained, these six boroughs had supplied themselves with police instead of coming upon the county. That change had occurred in July last. He (Mr. Matthews) need not point out that in the case of these boroughs, which had forces of their own, more men, and especially more officers, were required. The extra allowance in regard to these boroughs only amounted to about £2,000 of the whole sum, that being for pay and clothing due to the change of system, and he could assure the Committee that there was no expenditure except that which was rendered necessary by setting up this force.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, the inference which the Committee might very properly draw was that in the coming discussion on Local Government this would furnish an illustration of the effect of Government subsidies. It would be taken for granted that the result of these boroughs having their own police would nearly double the cost, and the change would not be made if the authorities did not see that a considerable portion of the cost would come from the Exchequer.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he should like to ask whether any portion of this sum was applicable to the Metropolitan Police?

MR. JACKSON said, that was not the case.

Vote *agreed to.*

(10.) £1,963, Supplementary, Courts of Law and Justice, Scotland.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he should like to have an explanation of the details of this Vote.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, that the first item was incurred in consequence principally of two very important litigations in which the Crown had been engaged, and which it was impossible to avoid. The first of these related to a property in the North of Scotland, and in the course of that litigation inquiries were ordered by the Judge which necessarily involved considerable expense. The result of the inquiry was that the case was decided against the Crown, and upon the advice of the Law Officers it was not carried further. The second case was also one of importance. An action had been raised against the Crown in consequence of a tenant of the Crown having made a cut for the purpose of diverting the course of a stream which would spoil a number of acres of land which afforded good pasture for sheep. The water was again diverted into the old channel by the parties interested below, and an action was raised for the purpose of preventing the Crown from re-opening the new cut and claiming £5,000 damages. There was a great deal of expense incurred in connection with the evidence of engineers and others who had to be called to defend the action. The Court decided in the first instance that the cut was not to be re-opened, but gave no damage against the Crown. Whether there would be an appeal or not he was not then in a position to say. With regard to the salaries of the Sheriff Court, hon. Members would see that a foot-note explained that at the death of the Commissary Clerk the Sheriff Clerk assumed his duties as well as his own. The result would ultimately be a very large saving to the country; but there was, of course, provision to be made for the expense of the work being done at the Sheriff Clerk's office, and that was the provision made in this Vote. With regard to the charge of £100, it had been thought advisable to establish a Sheriff Court in the town of Arbroath, in consequence of the extension of the district and the increase of the town making it suitable that they should have the convenience of a Court at their door. It was absolutely necessary to have an efficient Sheriff Clerk's department there, and for that purpose the sum of £100 had been allowed.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, he would ask the Lord Advocate what became of the fees payable for Commissary Court business?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, they were paid into the Exchequer. The accounts would appear in the next Estimate.

MR. CALDWELL said, that the fees taken day by day would more than pay any salary given to the Sheriff Clerk.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, these would be set against the amount now required in the next Estimate.

Vote *agreed to.*

(11.) £400, Supplementary, Police—Counties and Burghs, Scotland.

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,550, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers."

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he thought the Committee would not be surprised that he should take an early opportunity of adverting again to a matter which he had brought before the House on Thursday last. He wished to point out to the Committee that no answer whatever had been made to the statement which he then put forward. He had made a serious charge against the Government and against the administrators of the law in a particular district in Ireland—namely, Woodford, and had stated, as the result of his experience there, that the Coercion Act was being used as a means of oppression against the tenants and in the interest of the landlords. He had quoted a number of cases in which, in his opinion, injustice had emphatically been done by the Resident Magistrates in that respect. The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had taken no notice whatever of his statement. That statement was not sprung upon the right hon. Gentleman, because many of the cases to which he referred were contained in a letter he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had written to *The Times;* some of them had been mentioned in a speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) during the Recess. Under the circumstances, he was surprised that the Government made no reply whatever to his statements. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had contented himself with a *tu quoque* reply in respect of matters which took place under Lord Spencer's Administration; but he had not attempted to deal with any of his statements with reference to the Resident Magistrates, nor did the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), who followed the right hon. Gentleman, take any notice of this. The noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) did say that he had listened to his statement with great pleasure, because he considered it a proof that he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had been gulled by the people in that part of Ireland; and he further remarked that he had listened to any nonsense that reached him. The noble Lord, in short, undertook to say that the statements were false. He could assure the Committee that he was not in the habit of bringing forward matters of the kind without inquiries, and he undertook to say that all the statements he had made to the House could be substantiated by proofs. Although the deductions he had drawn from them might be open to criticism, the facts of the case were as he had stated them, and he was now in a position to substantiate what he had said. There was one statement to which the noble Lord especially took exception, and that was the case of a man who had been sent to prison by two Resident Magistrates at Woodford for inciting his widowed mother to resist eviction. He confessed that the statement did at first sight appear incredible; but when he came to make inquiries he found that it was substantially true. In the case of the woman in question the bailiffs declined to show their warrants, and the son thereupon advised his mother not to leave the house until the bailiffs complied with the requirements of the law and showed their warrant; for this the son was charged with inciting his mother to resist the bailiffs, and was sent to prison for two months. The sentence was appealed against; the counsel for the son alleged no extenuating circumstances in mitigation of the sentence; he addressed himself to the fact that the depositions disclosed no evidence whatever, and urged that he was entitled to acquittal on a question of law. The County Court Judge contented himself with reducing the sentence from two months' to one month's imprisonment. That was the statement which he had received from the counsel employed in the case, and he had every reason to believe that it was to be regarded as substantially true. That, he thought, showed the mode in which the Resident Magistrates in that district were pursuing their work. He would also refer to another case not mentioned by him on a previous occasion. A man named Kelly was prosecuted at Loughrea for intimidating a shopkeeper. It was stated that a person came into a shop and asked for a globe for a lamp, and that Kelly told the shopkeeper that if he sold any goods to this man he would leave the shop. The shopkeeper himself was not called by the police; but two policemen gave evidence that they had applied for goods. The reply was that he had not refused, but that he had not got lamp globes. This man Kelly was actually sent to prison for a month with hard labour. Curiously enough, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had seen Kelly talking afterwards with the man whom he was alleged to have intimidated, and he could say that the meeting was of the most friendly character. That was another illustration of the way in which the Resident Magistrates were doing their work, and of the kind of evidence upon which they proceeded. He had adverted the other night to the cases of prosecution arising out of the midnight meeting at Woodford. He did not intend now to repeat what he had said. However, since that statement was made, he had found, in some back numbers of *The Freeman's*

Journal, a statement to the effect that when the 12 men were arrested, and charged with having been present at a midnight meeting, the police had sworn informations before them with respect to nine other men—Mr. Blunt and several Members of Parliament—who had taken an active part in the proceedings, but against whom no prosecution was instituted. He asked why no prosecution had been commenced against these nine persons who made speeches, and why 12 persons were prosecuted who took no part in the proceedings, but were simply spectators at the meeting? That was a matter which appeared to him to require explanation; and he desired to know on what principle the selection for prosecution had been made? He would not go into details again with regard to the various charges made against Mr. Roche. He only wished he could bring him into that House, and let him tell his own story, so that the House might hear the gross injustice to which he had been subjected—namely, four prosecutions by the police arising out of matters for which he ventured to say no jury would, under any circumstances, have committed him to prison; he had been connected with a combination of the tenants, and he was Secretary to the Tenants' Defence Association, and it was believed that it was on account of this that he had been the subject of the successive prosecutions. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had also alluded to the prosecution of 11 men for being parties to the demonstration which took place on the release of some persons from prison. He would not go again into the details of that case; but there was one particular point that he wished to bring under the attention of the Committee. Of those 11 men nine were sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour and two to three months with hard labour. In the latter case there was, of course, the right of appeal; in the former it was asked that the sentences might be enlarged in order to give an opportunity for appealing. The Resident Magistrates, however, refused the application. Now, if the two men sentenced to three months could, as he believed there was a reasonable chance of their doing, establish their innocence on appeal, it was clear that the nine men who were committed without appeal were suffering from injustice. He would only say that these were cases he had personally inquired into, and which he believed might be fully substantiated. He wanted to hear from the Government what possible answer there could be to accusations of this kind. It appeared to him that the proceedings of the Resident Magistrates in the district he referred to had been carried out with disregard to the ordinary principles of justice, with the result that a number of persons had been sent to prison on charges on which he believed juries would under no circumstances have convicted. How these matters were arranged he knew not, and he asked on what principle men were selected for prosecution out of a large number of persons who attended a particular meeting? He knew not whether this was done in Dublin or by the authorities on the spot; all he could say was that the general result of the cases he had mentioned caused him strongly to believe that injustice had been done, and it was the opinion of the people in the district that these steps were taken against persons who were engaged in an active war, if he might so call it, with the landlords on the question of arrears of rent, and that the object of the Government was to imprison men who had made themselves disagreeable to the landlords of the district. He knew not whether that was a right conclusion or not, but it was the belief of the people on the spot, and it, at any rate, seemed to him that injustice had been done. He did not say that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was, in the first instance, responsible for acts of this kind; he was probably not aware of all that was going on in the district; but if when cases of this kind were brought to his notice by speeches in the country or in that House no notice was taken of them, if no remonstrance were made to the magistrates concerned, and if no attempt was made to undo the injustice that had been done, then he said that the Chief Secretary himself became responsible. He only hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to show that he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was wrong in the opinion he had formed, and that no injustice had been done in the cases to which he had referred.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he believed the Committee could not be better employed than in bringing to the notice of the Government and the public such cases as those to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had called attention. On the 15th of February he had addressed to the House some observations on the subject of the Resident Magistrates, and he had named five persons, none of whom had been appointed by Lord Spencer. On that occasion the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who followed (Colonel King Harman) did not attempt to deal with any one of his statements. He had noticed that Mr. Meldon, one of the magistrates, had written a letter to *The Times* traversing some of the statements; but, at the same time, putting into his mouth assertions which he (Mr. Ellis) had never used in that House. He (Mr. Ellis) had found in *Hansard's Debates* a very accurate report of what he had said, and upon every word of that report he took his stand. The report was as follows—

> "Another magistrate was Mr. Meldon, at Limerick. He (Mr. Ellis) knew nothing of that gentleman's character; but Mr. Meldon had done that which would not be tolerated in England for a single moment. Certain persons were charged before the magistrates in Court. The case was heard, and the accused were discharged. Mr. Meldon, however, went outside the Court, and gave instructions in regard to particular persons that they should be again arrested. He then took his seat upon the Bench, and the prisoners were brought before him as a magistrate under the Coercion Act on the same charge as that upon which they had been acquitted by the magistrates a short time before."—(3 *Hansard*, [322] 488.)

Those were the words he had uttered, and by them he should abide. If hon. Members would refer to the report of this matter in *The Times* of the 21st of January, they would find that his statements were perfectly accurate. *The Times* report of his speech of the 15th February made him (Mr. Ellis) say the accused were dismissed, which Mr. Meldon denied. What he did say was that they were discharged, which was perfectly true. The men were discharged and set at liberty, and Mr. Meldon went outside the Court; the prisoners were brought inside and convicted. He had nothing whatever to withdraw in this matter. He did not understand why it should be left to these magistrates to write to the papers, and why it was that the Chief Secretary, or his subordinates, did not rise in their places, and deal with the cases brought forward. He would now turn to another case—namely, that of the notorious Captain Seagrave, who had admitted that he had absolutely failed twice to pass the examination for the Army; that he had gone to Cape Town and served there in the Mounted Police; but who was now placed by the Government in the responsible position of Resident Magistrate in Ireland. A case came before this magistrate only on Thursday last, which was thus reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of Friday, 24th February—

> "At the sitting of the Court, Captain Seagrave said that, with the permission of the Chairman, he wanted to make a few remarks before the proceedings commenced. A meeting had been held on the Sunday after the last sitting of the Court, and several people spoke. One gentleman speaking, said that the reason they adjourned the Court that day was because they had a communication with Mr. Yates, District Inspector, who announced that he was not ready to take away any prisoners who might be convicted, and he wanted to deny that statement, and say it was a deliberate falsehood. The Bench had no communication whatever with the police. Father Kennedy said that he believed it was to him that Mr. Seagrave referred, for it was he who made the statement, and he made it upon what he considered reliable authority. He was informed by a person who was more or less in the confidence of those who had the direction of affairs there that the trial was to wind up abruptly, and that this course was adopted in consequence of the small number of police. As Mr. Seagrave thought proper to brand it as a deliberate falsehood—— Captain Seagrave: I am quite willing to withdraw that."

What would be thought in this country if a magistrate from the Bench made a speech in regard to the conduct of a person whom he was immediately afterwards going to try, and who, when the prisoner denied his statement that he, the prisoner, had uttered a deliberate falsehood, expressed his willingness to withdraw the statement? Such conduct was an outrage upon all ideas of justice. He was sensible of the great responsibility which attached to the words of hon. Gentlemen speaking in the House of Commons; but he had investigated these cases with some considerable attention, and he stood by every word he uttered on the 15th of February. This case certainly demanded an explanation from the right hon. Gentleman. The Government might be perfectly satisfied of this—that he and his hon. Friends would go on, undeterred by anything which was said, either in or out of the House, examining and criticizing the conduct of the Resident Magistrates of Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) was perfectly at liberty to criticize the conduct of Resident Magistrates or of anybody else who came under the cognizance of the House, and he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should be the last person to object to legitimate criticism; but the hon. Gentleman, in common with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) who had opened the debate upon this Vote, said that various cases had been from time to time brought under the notice of the Chief Secretary, and that he had not always examined into them. It had been his (Mr. A. J. Balfour's) practice to inquire into charges of this kind when they had been brought under his notice, and the result of his investigations had invariably been to show that the charges had no foundation; that they were made in a reckless Party spirit by some irresponsible journals in Ireland whose statements appeared to be readily accepted by English politicians of the stamp of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. E. Ellis). That hon. Gentleman quoted these articles in the country and in the House, and he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) conceived—

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, that what he had said in this matter on the 15th of February he had said in the House, and in the House only.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he apologized for his error, and wished every Gentleman had followed the example set by the hon. Member. He was extremely glad to hear that the hon. Gentleman had not repeated elsewhere accusations made no doubt in good faith, but, as he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) thought, recklessly, which he had more than once made in the House of Commons. He confessed to being unable to give a full account of all the cases which had been brought under his notice, but some observations had occurred to him in regard to some points which had been raised. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had in his speech continued the debate which, in one sense, was formally concluded on Thursday last. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) freely admitted that cases the right hon. Gentleman had brought before the notice of the Committee that night were not dealt with by him (Mr. A. J. Balfour) on Thursday last, partly because he had not the requisite information, and partly because it was absolutely impossible for a Minister of the Crown to deal with every point which was raised in a speech of an hour and three-quarters, even in a speech of equal length. The first case brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman tonight was that of a man who incited his mother to resist the law. He had made no inquiries in respect of this case, but would have done so had he known that it was to have been brought before the attention of the House. Certain observations, however, occurred to him upon the mere statement of the case as made by the right hon. Gentleman. It was well known to the House that there had been violent resistance to the police at Woodford. What, he presumed, occurred in this case was that there was a conspiracy or combination between the mother and the son, one of whom was probably the *de facto* tenant, and the other the judicial tenant of the holding in question, to resist the police; and if that were so, and he presumed it was so, there could be no objection to punishing the more responsible party of the two, whom he took to be the son.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he stated that the charge was not that of resisting the police, but of inciting the mother to resist the police.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the right hon. Gentleman saw something very remarkable in the fact that the solicitor engaged for the Crown was also the solicitor to the Land Court. Had it ever been heard of in Courts of Law that the prosecutor was to have the impartiality of a Judge? He perfectly admitted that if anybody who was Judge in a case was connected by any tie of interest with one of the litigants he would be unfit to try the case, but the fact that the Crown Prosecutor in charge of the case held views of his own could make no difference in the conduct of the Resident Magistrate. Further than that, the right hon. Gentleman, having given his narrative of the case, said—

> "I show you this as an instance of the terrible way in which Resident Magistrates, these removable magistrates, are doing their duty."

But, so far as he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) could make out, an irremovable Judge, who was in no way the servant of the Executive—namely, the County Court Judge, concurred in the sentence passed by the Resident Magistrate, and no one had pretended to assert that the County Court Judges of Ireland were wanting in law or in independence. Therefore, when he found that the County Court Judge, on reviewing all the circumstances of the case, thought the offence committed was so serious as to deserve a sentence of a month's imprisonment, he felt assured that the right hon. Gentleman, in complaining of the action of the Resident Magistrate in the matter, had got hold of the wrong end of the stick. Then, the right hon. Gentleman was extremely indignant at the treatment of Mr. John Roche, a friend of his, resident in the neighbourhood of Loughrea. Now, Mr. John Roche had never been proceeded against for anything whatever, except for breaking the law. If the right hon. Gentleman asked him to regard Mr. John Roche as a virtuous martyr, he referred him now, as he referred him on a previous occasion, to the Charge of the Lord Chief Baron the other day. He referred him to the observations of his Lordship, in the course of which, after quoting the words of Mr. John Roche, the learned Judge clearly indicated his opinion that reckless words of that kind had something to do with the ghastly and horrible murder, one of the most ghastly and horrible in the tragic annals of agrarian crime, which shortly after followed the denunciations which Mr. John Roche had been rash or criminal enough to make of the unhappy man who was subsequently killed. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) noticed that the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) followed in the track of the right hon. Gentleman, and was very indignant with him for the observations he made in regard to Mr. John Roche. He noticed, however, that though the hon. Gentleman had been anxious to defend Mr. John Roche, he had made no corresponding attempt to defend Mr. Francis Tully, the *fidus Achates* of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Finsbury (Mr. James Rowlands). The Government were asked on what principle they singled out Mr. John Roche for prosecution; and the right hon. Gentleman asked that question principally with reference to the midnight meeting at Woodford.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: And also in reference to the demonstration the other day.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid he could not give the right hon. Gentleman any information as to the recent demonstration. With regard to the midnight meeting at Woodford, the principal offender, no doubt, was the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien); and it might have been a question whether the hon. Member for North-East Cork ought not to have been proceeded against. As a matter of fact, the hon. Member was at the time undergoing a sentence of two months' imprisonment for using intimidatory language in August; and though the Government had been accused by the hon. Gentleman himself and by others of desiring the destruction of that hon. Gentleman, they had showed how incapable they were of carrying out that policy by not proceeding against that hon. Gentleman on the further charge, and in that way increasing his term of imprisonment, probably by one or two months. Whether they were right in that policy of mercy he did not intend to say; but they certainly adopted it with the best intentions. They could not attack the principal offender; and they did not proceed, they never thought of proceeding, no Government he ever heard of had proceeded, against every individual who took part in illegal assemblies of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the man who moved the chairman into the chair on that occasion took, as he said, no other part in that meeting. Why, what other part ought he to take? Could they conceive a much more important part than moving the chairman into the chair; was the man who took a part like that not identifying himself with the proceedings of the meeting; was he not showing that, if the meeting were illegal, he was one of the persons who were breaking the law; and could he turn round afterwards and say "they ought not to have selected me?"

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I pointed out that there were eight other persons who took an active part in the meeting and made speeches, many of them of violent character, and that not one of those persons was proceeded against; whereas this gentleman — Mr. John Roche—who but merely moved the priest into the chair, was singled out for prosecution.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not quite sure how the question of the selection of the persons prosecuted is brought under this Vote at all.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he would not allude further to the right hon. Gentleman's criticism upon that Vote. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) had referred to Mr. Meldon, the Resident Magistrate. As far as he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) could make out, Mr. Meldon clearly apprehended the character of the criticism made upon him by the hon. Gentleman. Was he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) not right in saying that that criticism consisted in accusing Mr. Meldon of having, after charges were dismissed by the magistrates in the ordinary course of law, come down from the Bench and committed the persons under the Crimes Act whose cases had been dismissed under the ordinary law?

Mr. J. E. ELLIS said, his statement was that Mr. Meldon went outside the Court. He did not say he came down from the Bench, because, as a matter of fact, he was not on the Bench. He was in the Court and heard the cases tried by others and the men discharged. He then went outside the Court, and, by his own admission, communicated with the police. The men were brought inside the Court again, Mr. Meldon went upon the Bench, and then, upon the remonstrance of prisoners' counsel, said he would adjourn the case to another day.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that in substance the hon. Gentleman's charge against Mr. Meldon was that he had mixed up his judicial and executive functions in an improper manner. Mr. Meldon was not acting judicially in the Court. He never acted judicially in regard to these prisoners at all; all he did was to remand them to where they were to be tried by the proper Resident Magistrates.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS: He did not remand them until he was remonstrated with by their counsel.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He was obliged to remand them to the proper Court. He never tried them himself, and he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not gather from the hon. Gentleman's statement that he could show that Mr. Meldon was in any way actuated by improper motives in the matter. Mr. Meldon's own statement was that, on the occasion referred to, certain charges of assault on the police were entered in the list of cases to be tried before the Local Justices, and when they were reached the prosecutor stated that it was not intended to proceed with them under the ordinary law, but under the Crimes Act, whereupon they were marked "no appearance." The prisoners were discharged; but it then became necessary to have informations sworn and warrants for arrest issued in order to make the accused amenable under the Crimes Act. The prisoners were re-arrested, and Mr. Meldon remanded them for trial. He did not adjudicate on the cases at all; he stated that the men were subsequently tried; but by what magistrates he did not even know. It was perfectly clear that Mr. Meldon was guilty of no dereliction of duty, and that he did in no sense mix up judicial and executive functions. It was perfectly absurd to found any complaint against Resident Magistrates because they were removable, and it was not true to say that they were the mere creatures of the Executive. The hon. Gentleman had, in somewhat vehement terms, announced that nothing the Government could say or do would prevent him from performing his duty in criticizing the conduct of Resident Magistrates. By all means let him criticize the conduct of the Resident Magistrates; but let him do it with justice and moderation—let him recollect that these men were carrying out most difficult and responsible duties.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS: For which they were never appointed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked the hon. Gentleman to recollect that these men were carrying out most difficult and responsible duties under circumstances as to the character of which the hon. Gentleman himself had probably little knowledge. Let him conceive these men in remote parts of Ireland, subject to virulent attacks of the Nationalist journals; let him grasp the fact that they had little or no power of defending themselves, and that they were practically obliged to sit still under that storm of obloquy, and he would then see that, if he was to take part in their accusation, under no circumstances ought he to add to the injustice from which he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) feared they had already suffered too much.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, that in his remarkable appeal on behalf of the Resident Magistrates of Ireland the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said the Resident Magistrates were suffering from a system of obloquy. He (Mr. Dillon) hoped before sitting down to show that that storm of obloquy was much more directed—and justly much more directed—against the men who conducted the system in the way it was conducted than against the Resident Magistrates themselves. He found fault in the strongest possible way with the conduct of some of the Resident Magistrates; but the blame that he sought to attach to the Resident Magistrates of Ireland sank into absolute insignificance compared with the blame which justly attached to the men who used those magistrates as their instruments. The real gravamen of the charge against these men was that they shaped their conduct in judging great and important cases in Ireland not according to the evidence laid before them, and not in an independent fashion, but with their eyes fixed upon the right hon. Gentleman and Dublin Castle. Every charge of want of impartiality and of subserviency to the Castle which he brought against the Resident Magistrates of Ireland fell with a hundredfold more force on the head of the men in Dublin Castle who kept under their heel these wretched men, who knew that they were removable—knew that they could, at a moment's notice be deprived of their daily bread if they did not carry out the behests of their masters. A Return of the Resident Magistrates of Ireland was furnished to the House last year, and he found that without a single exception the tenure of office of every one of them was the pleasure of the Executive. The Executive could remove these men, could punish them, could deprive them of their daily bread, and make themselves and their children starve without being called upon to specify a single reason. He (Mr. Dillon) asserted that within the last 18 months respectable and upright Resident Magistrates had been punished for no other offence than that they had given the people justice. Take the case of Captain Butler, a well-known gentleman in Ireland, and brother of the well-known Major Butler who was on General Wood's Staff in Egypt. This gentleman held one of the most important posts in the South of Ireland; he was the Resident Magistrate at Mallow, and made the arrangements for the reception of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. He gave great satisfaction to the Executive Government, and, strange to say, to a considerable extent to the people. He was, however, sent by the Government to try the case of 18 young men, who were charged with resisting the Sheriff's officers in connection with the Glenbeigh evictions. He (Mr. Dillon) was present at the trial, and when the Sheriff's officers were called upon to prove the warrant for the execution of the evictions they failed to show that they had any warrant. It was manifest to the whole Court that the Sheriff had been so careless as not to appoint a Deputy Sheriff, and that the officers had no right to evict the people. The 18 young men were, therefore, perfectly within their right in resisting the eviction. Captain Butler had the audacity to discharge the men in spite of the remonstrances of the Crown Prosecutor. What was the result? Captain Butler was removed to Cahirciveen in County Kerry, 35 miles from a railway station, where he had no opportunity of sending his children to school. He was perfectly banished because he dared to resist the browbeating of the Crown Prosecutor. Did they suppose that the case of Captain Butler was not a warning to the other Resident Magistrates in the South of Ireland, and that the right hon. Gentleman had not taken good care that he should not have any more cases like that of Captain Butler? Young men had been appointed Resident Magistrates within the last year or two, because they were known to be partizans, and because it was perfectly well known they were perfectly willing to do the Emergency work of the Government. It was a contemptible and atrocious system to use Emergency agents and notorious partizans, to place them over the heads of senior officers, and shift them from district to district to do the work of the Government and of the Castle. What was the object of this Vote they were now called upon to pass? They were asked for an extra Estimate. The original Estimate for personal allowances and travelling expenses of these magistrates was £4,500, but an additional Estimate of £3,750 could have no parallel in the whole Civil Service Estimates. The Supplementary Estimate was very nearly as large as the original Estimate. What was the reason? Was it because the country had become so much disturbed since the Crimes Act had been introduced. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman had said that the Crimes Act had reduced the country to a state of comparative peace, and yet they had these enormous travelling expenses of magistrates. In short, these were the travelling expenses of the Emergency men of the Castle, who went about the country sentencing all the enemies of the Government to hard labour. The reason why the travelling expenses were so great was that the right hon. Gentleman could not trust magistrates to adjudicate in their own districts, but must needs get Mr. Cecil Roche and two or three others of the same stamp and style to circulate round several districts, because they had proved themselves to be thoroughly reliable. He should like to know how much of this £3,750 went into Mr. Cecil Roche's pocket?—he should certainly think over £1,000. Let them inquire for a moment what justification there was for this enormous charge. The charge, undoubtedly, was the result of sending men about from county to county. Who were the men who were most sent about? At the top of the list stood the redoubtable Mr. Cecil Roche. Mr. Cecil Roche was a man who was appointed Resident Magistrate a little more than a year ago, and in the ordinary course of business he would not be called upon to adjudicate upon important cases under the Crimes Act over the heads of men who were his seniors in the service by 20 or 30 years' official standing. They were entitled to ask the Government on what grounds was it they had used Mr. Cecil Roche so largely for this purpose?—for he ventured to say that Mr. Cecil Roche had sent to prison, under the Coercion Act, four times as many persons as any other Resident Magistrate. What were this gentleman's qualifications? They would expect the first qualification would be a record which would raise him in the minds of the people among whom he was called upon to administer justice above all suspicion of partiality. Now, Mr. Cecil Roche was one of the orators of the Loyal and Patriotic Union who, in the month of June, 1886, perambulated this country and denounced the Irish Members as murderers and assassins, and the associates of assassins. Mr. Roche had written a letter to *The Times* stating that he had done all this for no pay and from pure motives of patriotism. The Committee had often heard, no doubt, of gratitude for favours to come; and if this magistrate had received no pay for those services, he had, at least, got appointed after the Election was over to a salary of £500 a-year. That was good pay, he thought, for the services this gentleman had rendered to the Government. He maintained that there was no more scandalous transaction on record in the history of English Government in Ireland than that a partizan and virulent orator of the Election of 1886 should now be sitting in uncontrolled judgment on the men whom he denounced only 18 months ago. They were told that they were most unjustly and most unfairly pouring opprobrium on the Resident Magistrates of Ireland. He thought it would be hard to frame language to condemn too strongly the appointment of Mr. Cecil Roche. A book was published periodically, known in Ireland as *The Constabulary Directory*. The custom in that book was to divide the Resident Magistrates into three classes—the first class containing the names of the seniors in the service, and so on. An extraordinary change had come about this year. When they turned to *The Constabulary Directory* they found that, whereas in the index the division of the classes remained, in the body of the book, for some occult purpose, the division was not to be found; but the magistrates were classed alphabetically. It was plain that this had been done for the purpose of throwing dust into the eyes of the people who had taken up *The Directory*, it was obviously done with the intention of concealing the fact that men who were only recently appointed were put over the heads of men old in the service. He took another case—the case of a man who, by his previous records and recent performances in Ireland, was grossly and manifestly disqualified for the position he held, and that was Captain Seagrave. He was a gentleman who was appointed quite recently, and who entered himself in the column of qualifications as in the Army. That, of course, was a commonplace qualification —a great number of these men were in the Army—but he asked them to remember that this man, who was now adjudicating in great political cases in Ireland, a man who, the other day, sentenced a Roman Catholic priest to two months' imprisonment for taking part in a meeting of the League on grossly insufficient evidence—this was the gentleman who was in supreme command at Mitchelstown, and who, on that occasion, exhibited incompetency, cowardice, and brutality. In cross-examination, Captain Seagrave admitted that he had had no legal training; that he had tried several times to get into the Home Army, but had failed; and that it was in Basutoland that he got his commission. He came home from Basutoland and settled in Mitchelstown. This was the man, a junior in the Service—a man whose ignorance and incapacity was confessed by himself—the Home Government selected for the most important trials in Ireland. He thought that the charges in respect to the quality of the magistrates selected by the Government to try political cases in Ireland were fully borne out by these two instances. But there was a third case he might give, and it was that of Mr. Thomas A. Dillon, who was selected to try Mr. Blunt. Mr. T. A. Dillon entered himself in the list of qualifications as a County Justice. As a matter of fact he was a broken down, rack-renting landlord, whose rents had been reduced recently by the Land Commission to the extent of 40 per cent, so he (Mr. Dillon) was informed. But whether that was so or not, Mr. T. A. Dillon's name appeared week after week in the black list of defaulting creditors with a judgment debt of £2,000 hanging over his head, and he was known to be connected with other disgraceful debts for which no judgment could be marked. This was the man who was selected to try English gentlemen for asserting the right of public meeting in Ireland. If the Government had any regard for public decency they would not use such disreputable and disgraceful instruments as the men he had described. He (Mr. Dillon) now desired to direct the attention of the Committee to certain facts which, to his mind, afforded irresistible proof that these men took their instructions from Dublin Castle. At the outset of the administration of the Coercion Act the custom of the Resident Magistrates was to give a sentence of two, three, or four months, or of such a duration as would allow of an appeal. That, of course, was the natural course to be adopted by men who did not want to take full responsibility on their own shoulders. That course prevailed until a certain remarkable oration was delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in which, under the guise of defending himself from the charge of allowing certain men to give bail and go about the country, he pointed out that as long as Resident Magistrates gave long sentences he could not prevent this being done. The magistrates immediately changed their course and proceeded to give short sentences, and this precluded men from the right of appeal. There were cases in which when a man had been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment and he had appealed, bail being accepted, he had on leaving the Court been re-arrested on another charge and committed to gaol for a month, and in this way been deprived of his liberty pending the time of the hearing of the appeal. Would anyone believe that this device—a most contemptible, and rascally trick—to rob men of their right to liberty between the time of the first trial and the appeal, was carried out simply and safely in the interest of justice? He thought it was much more likely that it was one of the many evil inventions of Dublin Castle. He contended that it was a great evil that the poor peasants of Ireland should be at the mercy of such men as the present Resident Magistrates, who, as a rule, were appointed simply owing to their partizanship in favour of the landlords. A monstrous deal of cant had been spoken about the cowardice and absurdity of drawing distinction between priest and peasant—between a Member of Parliament and an ordinary person in reference to conviction under the Coercion Act. As to treatment in prison, he would scorn to draw any distinction between a Member of Parliament and any ordinary man. He claimed that a peasant convicted of a political offence should be treated as a political prisoner; and bad as it might be to strike at the liberty of a private individual with loaded dice, or without the securities that surrounded the ordinary Criminal Law, he maintained that the evil was multiplied a hundred-fold when they so struck at the liberty of a Member of Parliament, for they struck at the liberty of every one of his constituents, and it was in that respect an infinitely greater offence than to deprive an individual of liberty. The grievances of the present system of Resident Magistrates were multiplied tenfold when one came to consider the class of cases they were made judges of. When the protection of a jury was taken away with the Law of Conspiracy as existing at present under the Coercion Act, there was no liberty for the subject. If political feelings ran high, these peripatetic dispensers of justice were regularly sending batches of men to gaol in so-called conspiracy cases, where not a particle of evidence of conspiracy was proved. In one case a magistrate supplied the lack of evidence by saying that he "used his common sense, and had not the slightest doubt that there was a conspiracy." He (Mr. Dillon) and some of his Colleagues had stood their trial in Dublin for conspiracy some time ago; and the Crown then spent several days endeavouring to prove a conspiracy, though the packed jury refused to believe it. However, with these Resident Magistrates there was no delay in the matter at all. They decided a question at once against the accused, probably stimulated by the fact that a modest increase of £100 or £200 a-year might be the result of their compliance with the wishes of the Executive. Such a condition of things was only calculated to cover the Government of Ireland with hatred and contempt. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and those who thought with him, were ever talking to the Irish Leaders about making the Irish people dislike the law. The Irish people would deserve to be kicked and trampled on and starved to death if they respected the law administered as it was at present. For his own part, he would be ashamed to call himself an Irishman, and ashamed of the people of Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would be welcome to treat them with the scorn and contempt which he delighted in showing towards them, if they respected such law. The supporters of the Government spoke of the want of respect for the law in Ireland; but when they said that they were in ignorance of the fact that the Irish people had never known what English law meant. Law, in its truest and highest sense, was unknown to the people of Ireland. He could produce, if he cared to do it now, a long string of testimonies extending from the days of Coke and Sir John Davys—the first English Attorney General they had in Ireland—in which those great lawyers, as the result of their experience, said that, where the law was honestly and impartially administered, there was no nation on the earth which loved and respected it more; but to expect that the Irish people would throw themselves down as before the Car of Juggernaut, or lick the feet of men whose greatest pride was to trample on them and kick them, was to expect what no man in that House would ever live to see. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and his myrmidons of Dublin Castle were the greatest enemies to law and order in Ireland. They were its only true enemies; and so long as this shameful and disgraceful system of administration of what was called "law," with its subservient and slavish tools, was persevered in, so long would that so-called law be scorned by the people of Ireland.

Mr. O'HEA (Donegal, W.) said, that notwithstanding the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had dealt with the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), that right hon. Gentleman had been able to justify the language he had used; and with regard to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), all the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had been able to reply was that the right hon. Gentleman was in the habit of taking as truth all that appeared in the Irish Provincial Press. But anyone who knew the Provincial Press in Ireland would admit that the reports which appeared in the columns of the most obscure papers were as reliable as the information supplied to the right hon. Gentleman by his officials in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had referred to several cases of sentences of one month's imprisonment, to be followed by other sentences of one month, and even to accumulative sentences amounting to three months, and that, too, in spite of all the applications to have the sentences increased so as to give the right of appeal. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) had referred to the case of Mr. Meldon, Resident Magistrate, in answer to which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary could only say that the story of the case was exaggerated; but the fact remained that Mr. Meldon had exceeded his duty, and acted as was usual with the Resident Magistrates in Ireland. He (Mr. O'Hea) had followed the administration of the Crimes Act since these Gentlemen began to put it in operation; and he would now refer to the case of Captain Plunkett, who perhaps exercised more authority under the Act than all the other Resident Magistrates together. There was no doubt that this gentleman wielded a sort of absolutism, so far as the Act was concerned. His hon. Friend the Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane) was arrested within one month of making a certain speech; he was charged with inciting persons to resist the law, and adopt the Plan of Campaign. The hon. Member for East Cork had been sentenced to cumulative sentences amounting to three months. His hon. Friend edited a paper, in which, with reference to a dispute that was all but settled, he said that the tenants were perfectly within their right in combining to bring the landlord to terms; he had in the course of his management of the journal exposed a condition of crime and vice which horrified every reader, and he received a message, which there was every reason to believe came from Captain Plunkett, remonstrating against the articles which had appeared. A prosecution was instituted against him, and he was brought before two Resident Magistrates. Dr. Hays was summoned as a witness as the person on whom it was said the language was likely to have a prejudicial effect, but the Government did not dare to bring him into court. He had, however, stated that he was not in any way afraid of the Plan of Campaign, and that the advice given he was glad of, because it was the means of an amicable settlement being arrived at. This Gentleman refused to take part in the case, and the consequence was that he was deprived of two positions which he held in connection with the Constabulary. This case showed the petty vindictiveness of the Exective in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the sentences inflicted by the Resident Magistrates, and said that they were invariably upheld when they came before a higher tribunal. But there were a number of cases which came before the Recorder of Cork, who was a Tory, and had frequently given expression to his Tory views, and these sentences were all reduced by one-half. This showed that the Resident Magistrates were not altogether infallible in the discharge of their duties. Again, Captain Plunkett was wanting in legal knowledge. A number of persons were summoned before a Court over which he presided, and charged with attending a meeting of the National League. The constable saw several persons going in the direction of the rooms, and told them that their object was illegal, and that they would be punished under the Act; the constables were not in a position to show that any meeting had been held, or that there was any contravention of the Crimes Act; but on the evidence that they were seen about the case was sufficient for this legal luminary, and although the constables had not established that they had done anything wrong, he said that the onus of proof lay upon the accused to show that they were innocent, and he proceeded to sentence them to imprisonment. It seemed to be this Magistrate's opinion that the legal principle was that every man's guilt must be assumed. Then there was the case of Colonel Carew, who had been mentioned in the course of the debate, and was the Presiding Magistrate at a trial in Tipperary. This Magistrate, in reply to the solicitor for the prisoners, said "I represent the Crown here," and on the solicitor objecting, he added, "I have received my orders from the Government, which I cannot disregard, and I do not feel called upon to give any explanation." He (Mr. O'Hea) could multiply cases of this kind were he not unwilling to trespass unduly on the time of the House. The qualifications of this Resident Magistrate were that he had spent several years in the 8th Hussars, and was afterwards in the Militia, in the bloodless campaigns of which service he had probably gained his spurs. The last case to which he would draw attention was noteworthy on several grounds. His hon. Friend the Member for East Clare (Mr. Cox) was sentenced to four months' imprisonment; he lodged an appeal, and immediately on leaving the Court he was arrested and brought before another tribunal. One of the magistrates was Mr. Roche, who—on the application to have the sentence increased so as to justify the right of appeal—said, that having regard to the persistent course of denouncing the law which had been pursued, he doubted whether a sentence of one month was adequate to the crime of the Gentleman before him. The speech of the hon. Member contained the advice to "shun crime and outrage as you would Satan," but he exhorted the people to maintain their allegiance to the National League, and that constituted the charge against him. The magistrates refused to increase the sentence against him. Another magistrate, however, had said that he could see nothing morally wrong in the speech which would not be an offence in any other country but Ireland. Here then they had it from the Bench that new offences had been created by the Crimes Act, although the Government had always denied that the Statute would have that effect, and he therefore agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) in saying that the administration of the Act was not alone a disgrace to England but a disgrace to civilization, and that the Resident Magistrates dare not do otherwise than carry out the behests of the Executive in Ireland.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): I desire, Sir, to occupy the attention of the Committee for a short time while I reply to the charges that have been made by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). The first case to which he referred was the case of Mr. Meldon, the Resident Magistrate, a gentleman who was appointed by Lord Spencer, and who was a practising barrister. It was charged that in some way or other he, whilst sitting on the Bench, mixed up his judicial and Executive duties most improperly. Mr. Meldon has addressed a letter to *The Times*, in which he clearly and distinctly states that the charges made against him were utterly unfounded. Mr. Meldon gave the most unqualified denial to the charges made.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: I rise to Order. The letter to which the hon. and learned Gentleman refers was written in reply to a speech of mine in which I alluded to Mr. Meldon by name; but I emphatically deny that I ever made such a charge against him as is conveyed in his letter.

MR. COURTNEY: The point is not a point of Order. If the hon. Member wishes to make an explanation he will have other opportunities.

MR. MADDEN: Of course, if no charge is made against Mr. Meldon, my task is ended. I understood the hon. Member for East Mayo, in the course of his speech, to charge Mr. Meldon with improper conduct, and I wish to show the Committee that there is altogether a misconception about the matter. The fact is, Mr. Meldon did not act as a magistrate on the occasion. What actually occurred on the occasion has been already detailed to the House. The statement that he mixed up his judicial with his Executive functions is a pure fiction. The next case to which the hon. Member referred was that of Mr. Thomas Dillon. The charge against Mr. Thomas A. Dillon, as presented, is that he had appeared in the black list. That sounds a very formidable position to occupy, but the black list is a list that appears in Dublin of persons against whom judgment is marked. It was even suggested that the judgment against Mr. Thomas Dillon was for a racing debt. The facts are these. Mr. Thomas Dillon is the owner of an encumbered estate, and this judgment is in reference to a mortgage on that estate. I will leave the Committee to say how fair it is to bring a charge of that kind.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): There are other charges.

MR. MADDEN: No doubt, there are other charges; but the charge by which it is sought to discredit Mr. Thomas Dillon is that he is the owner of an encumbered estate, the rents from which are unfortunately not sufficient to pay the incumbrance. It has also been said that Captain Butler, in consequence of some action of his, was removed from

Mallow to another position in Ireland. I have made inquiry, and I find that it was during the time that Colonel Sir Redvers Buller was in Ireland that he was removed. It was during the time that Sir Redvers Buller was responsible for the peace of part of Ireland that Captain Butler was removed, and I absolutely deny that it was in consequence of any judicial action on his part that his removal was brought about. It was said that the removal was in juxtaposition to certain action of his; but I altogether repudiate any idea that he was removed in consequence of that action. With regard to Mr. Cecil Roche, I think that gentleman has good reason to complain of the charges brought against him. When the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) opened the debate on the administration of the law in Ireland, he distinctly stated that Mr. Roche was the paid agent of the Loyal and Patriotic Union. Mr. Roche is a gentleman of honour, and he, too, has addressed a letter to *The Times*, in which he denies that charge point blank.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): He does not deny that he had his expenses paid.

MR. MADDEN: He denies that he was ever the paid agent of the Loyal and Patriotic Union. I cannot go beyond that denial. The hon. Member then stated that Mr. Roche had made use of certain strong language on some occasion; but Mr. Roche denies in the most positive way that he ever used the language attributed to him. What he did say was said long before he was promoted to the Bench. Mr. Roche complains that what he did say was grossly exaggerated, and the particular quotations attributed to him he entirely repudiates and denies. Two cases have been referred to by hon. Members as illustrating the charge that the Resident Magistrates convict on insufficient evidence, and that they lay down principles as to evidence that would not be adopted by lawyers. These two cases are, however, entirely misrepresented. One case was that tried before Mr. Eaton, R.M., and it was then said that Mr. Eaton stated publicly in Court that he did not want any direct evidence in order to find the prisoner guilty; that it was enough that the accused were seen on the previous Sunday coming from Mass with National League cards in their hats. That is an entire misrepresentation of what took place on that occasion. What Mr. Eaton said publicly in Court was that he did not want any evidence, or any direct evidence, of what occurred after the door was shut to show that it was a National League meeting. He also said that it was a mistake to suppose that direct evidence of what actually took place at the meeting was necessary to ensure a conviction. Now, in this case, there was distinct and conclusive evidence of the meeting, and of the intention of those holding it. No lawyer will be found to say that Mr. Eaton in that case laid down the law in a mistaken way. The meeting was proved to be a meeting of the League held for that object, and it was not necessary to prove what took place at the meeting. Another case referred to is the case of Captain Massey. He is a legally qualified R.M., and he was appointed by Lord Spencer. It is alleged that in a case tried in the County Kerry, persons were charged with taking part in an illegal meeting—namely, a meeting of a suppressed branch of the League, and that Captain Massey said that the onus of proof lay upon the accused. If that had been so it would have been a monstrous perversion of the law; but no such statement was made. It was proved by the most satisfactory evidence that the meeting was held, and the magistrate never said that any such onus of proof rested upon the accused. He commented on the fact of the meeting being held, and added that the accused were convicted in the absence of evidence to the contrary. The statement that the magistrate was satisfied that the meeting was held was totally different to the allegation of a conviction, because no evidence to the contrary was produced by the prisoners. Another incident that had been referred to was that in connection with certain statements of Colonel Carew when certain prisoners were brought before him. It was said that he stated that he had received instructions which he must not disobey. That simply meant that Colonel Carew had received certain instructions from the Divisional Magistrate, and that was that the prisoners should not be tried at Petty Sessions, but under the Crimes Act.

MR. O'HEA: Colonel Carew said that he represented the Crown.

Mr. MADDEN: I have no information on that point. But what I hope the Committee will look at was this—Was the transaction a just one? What did Colonel Carew do? He simply did what he was bound to do. Hon. Members opposite do not seem to exactly appreciate what Colonel Carew did. He received no instructions as to his judicial action, and he did not act judicially in the matter. The hon. Member for West Donegal (Mr. O'Hea) alluded to the appeals tried before the Recorder of Cork, and he said that sentences had been reduced by the Recorder for Cork. We all know that the reduction of a sentence by a County Court Judge often only means that, an increased sentence having been asked for, for the purpose of appeal, the Judge has properly reduced and adjusted it. The House has been, night after night, discussing the conduct of these Resident Magistrates; but what is the best test to which their decisions have been subjected? The best test is the test of appeals. There has been a large number of cases, but yet up to the 1st of January there was only one single case of a reversal of the decision, and that was upon new evidence, and since the 1st of January there has only been one reversal, and that was upon a technical point; yet it is said that these tribunals are unsatisfactory when there are these means of testing the decisions. If these men were acting as they were said to do, their decisions would be reversed. The County Court Judges, to whom the appeals lay—it should be remembered—have nothing to hope or fear from the Government. There is no promotion open to County Court Judges, as within recent memory no County Court Judge has been raised to a superior Judgeship. Their decisions are beyond suspicion. The fact is these charges are unfounded, and the best answer to them is that the decision of these magistrates are subjected to the practical test of appeal to the County Court Judges, and the decisions are upheld.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) said, that on the part of the Government the debate always degenerated into two classes of arguments. The first was the *tu quoque* argument, and the second was that some of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland had been appointed by Lord Spencer. Lord Spencer would forgive him (Mr. Stanhope) for saying that, at the time he was Lord Lieutenant, he made the appointments on the traditional Castle system, in more or less the same groove as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, though unquestionably with less partizanship. He (Mr. P. Stanhope) entirely refused to believe that the origin of their appointment had anything to do with the question of the present conduct of Resident Magistrates. He was surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) should think it was sufficient to bring forward a statement of these gentlemen in manuscript, and appeal to it as an absolute proof in favour of their views. He regretted to say that his experience had led him to believe that those statements were not always reliable. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary told them that he had already made three long speeches in these debates, and was consequently relieved from saying much on the present occasion. But in the whole of the speech he had just made the right hon. Gentleman never replied to a single statement of fact made by hon. Members on that side of the House. The only instances in which the right hon. Gentleman had dealt with facts were the memorable one, as the right hon. Gentleman admitted, of Hannah Connell, and the alleged conspiracy between mother and son. The Chief Secretary had spoken about conspiracy between mother and son. The right hon. Gentleman was an authority upon the question of family conspiracy; he understood that a conspiracy between uncle and nephew was a possible thing, and, therefore, he no doubt, thought it might also be applied in the case of mother and son. But these were merely hypothetical arguments showing the ordinary temper of the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the affairs of Ireland which he administered with so much grace. After all, what they desired to do was to produce facts, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman to oppose facts with other facts. He wished to state a few facts with regard to the conduct of Mr. Cecil Roche, facts which he had taken care to substantiate by sworn information. Mr. Cecil Roche, in a letter he had recently written to *The Times*, carefully abstained from saying he was not an agent of the Loyal and

Patriotic Union, and went about the country lecturing at the expense of that organization. No person ever imputed to Mr. Cecil Roche that he received a salary for his services, but people had asserted, and Mr. Cecil Roche had never denied it, that he received the payment of his expenses in connection with his services to the Loyal and Patriotic Union, and that he went careering about the country denouncing the Irish people for whom he was now called upon to administer justice. The point he (Mr. P. Stanhope) and his Friends wished to establish was that a gentleman who had been an ardent advocate of one class or clique in Ireland was not a gentleman who should be selected under the present circumstances to administer an exceedingly delicate Act of Parliament like the Crimes Act. He did not propose to call in question the magisterial decisions of Mr. Roche, for the very simple reason that he probably, like Colonel Carew and others, was merely the instrument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. No doubt Mr. Roche received his instructions from Dublin Castle, and all he did was in consonance with those instructions. But what he did call in question was the conduct of Mr. Roche in abandoning his magisterial duties in order to perform executive functions, and in performing such functions in a manner which even hon. Gentlemen opposite would perceive was unusual. He (Mr. Stanhope) had in his possession affidavits sworn by a certain number of gentlemen in the town of Tralee. They related to the case of his hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington), who was sentenced by Mr. Cecil Roche to a month's imprisonment. On that occasion Mr. Cecil Roche, having been on the Bench, and having pronounced the sentence upon the hon. Member, descended from the Bench and went out of the Court, where there were not more than 200 people assembled. These people being townsmen of his hon. Friend, cheered when they saw the hon. Gentleman being taken to prison. Mr. Roche rushed into the street, brandished his stick over his head, and ordered the police to charge the crowd. Mr. Roche, in answer to a letter of his (Mr. P. Stanhope's) said he acted on that occasion in deference to the orders of Colonel Turner; but he did not use his stick. The information he possessed showed, first of all, that Mr. Roche was so excited that it was quite possible he did not know whether he had his stick with him or not; and, secondly, that the effect of the charge was that a certain number of people were wounded, and that naturally great exasperation existed amongst the population of Tralee. The first evidence he had was that of the Rev. William Casey, parish priest of Abbeyfeale, in the county of Limerick. He said—

> "When Mr. Harrington appeared on the steps of the Court-house, this latter group set up a cheer, whereupon Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., rushed out of the Court and down the steps, brandishing a large stick, and called on the police to clear the street."

The next statement was that of Mr. Edward Murphy, who was Chairman of the Tralee Board of Guardians and a land agent; a most representative Gentleman. He said—

> "When Mr. Harrington came out, a slight cheer was given, upon which Mr. Roche, R.M., turning round, ordered the police from off the steps to clear the streets. I say that I believe the police had been prepared beforehand for this order, in proof of which I say I saw one of them pull his baton out of the sleeve of his tunic, and they, the police, immediately rushed on and batoned the people indiscriminately."

Mr. Daniel O'Riordan, a solicitor's clerk, swore in his affidavit—

> "I saw a number of people, about 150, in the street near the Court-house. When Mr. Harrington came out in custody a very slight cheer was given, whereupon Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., rushed out of the Court-house and down the steps in a very excited manner, and, without giving any warning, called on the police, who were drawn up outside, to clear the street, which they, led by him, immediately proceeded to do, batoning every one indiscriminately."

Mr. Thomas Slattery, Town Councillor of Tralee, swore an affidavit to a similar effect, and added that he himself was severely wounded in the baton charge. This was not an isolated instance of Mr. Roche's outrageous conduct. He (Mr. P. Stanhope) had a letter from a most respectable Catholic priest, Father White, of St. Joseph's, Miltown Malbay, who, having seen his (Mr. P. Stanhope's) account of the incident, wrote to him on the 27th of December in these terms—

> "On last Thursday week he (Mr. Roche) sentenced four hard-working artizans of

this town to a month with hard labour, solely because they refused to surrender their right at Common Law to give their work as it suited them. This was 'conspiracy' under the Coercion Act, though it was notorious and known to the police here that these men never conspired either with others or with one another. While being marched through the town on a market-day their friends cheered them. Some priests who, fortunately, were present kept the people back from the strong police escort. Not a stone was thrown, not a stick raised, not a blow of any kind attempted, and yet this Mr. Roche turned round like a a man out of his senses, brandishing and striking out with a stick or sword-cane and ordering the police to baton the people. I had to rescue one inoffensive old man who was struck down with a blow on the head, and I saw another man brutally kicked while on the ground. I pledge my honour, as a man, and my character as a priest, that no violence of any kind was committed from first to last except by the police under the direct command of Mr. Roche. Think of his shouting out to the people flying from the batons, 'Come on; I dare you to come on.'"

He wished to put a simple question to hon. Gentlemen opposite. What would be said if Sir James Ingham sentenced anybody to a month's imprisonment, and because the prisoner, when he was being driven away from the Court, was cheered by a number of his sympathizers, he rushed out of the Court in Bow Street with a stick in his hand and charged the crowd at the head of the police? He had no doubt they would be told this was done in Ireland and that Ireland could not be compared with England. He believed the ambition of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if he had any sentiments which could worthily be called ambition, was to govern Ireland on English principles, and therefore he invited him to apply English principles to Mr. Roche's conduct. If the right hon. Gentleman considered conduct of that sort would be proper in an English magistrate, let him publicly commend Mr. Roche for his conduct upon the occasion in question. If, on the contrary, such conduct was to be reprobated in an English magistrate, let the Chief Secretary reprobate it in the case of Mr. Roche. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottinghamshire (Mr. J. E. Ellis), that the actions of the Irish Resident Magistrates must be carefully scrutinized and constantly brought to the notice of the House. It was absurd to suppose that the second-hand refutations of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the third-hand refutations of his subordinates on the Treasury Bench, would suffice to contradict the statements he (Mr. P. Stanhope) and may others had advanced, supported as they were by positive proof, with regard to the conduct of Resident Magistrates in Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would take a Division on the Vote, in order that the House might have an opportunity of marking its disapproval of the unseemly conduct of many of these Resident Magistrates. It was no excuse to say that they were merely the agents of a Government whose actions they on the Opposition side of the House would continue to subject to very searching criticism. They were unable it was true to attack the right hon. Gentleman personally for the barbarous administration of the Act, but they would continue to do so in the person of his agents, and he firmly believed that when the conduct of these gentlemen was more universally known than at present it seemed to be, it would be strongly condemned by the public opinion of this country.

Mr. T. P. GILL said, there was no wonder hon. Gentlemen opposite displayed incredulity when the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wednesbury (Mr. P. Stanhope) was stating the facts about Mr. Cecil Roche, facts which had been vouched for upon oath, and which held the field until Mr. Cecil Roche, or someone on his behalf, came forward to contradict them. It was, perhaps, like pouring water on a drowned rat to say anything more about Mr. Cecil Roche; but this much might be said, that this habit of his of coming down from the bench and enjoying himself with a cudgel on the heads of the crowd was a constant one. It was not merely at Tralee, or at Milltown Malbay, but at other places that he had done this. At Dingle, the week after the Tralee incident, he got down from the Bench, went outside, and ordered a baton charge, taking part in it himself. Some of the crowd displaying their reluctance to submit to this sort of thing, Mr. Cecil Roche had them arrested. He then remounted the Bench and sentenced two men thus arrested to a month's imprisonment. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had, by his speech, only strengthened the allegations made against the Resident Magistrates. For instance, the hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) had charged Mr. Thomas A. Dillon with having had judgment marked against him on account of a gambling debt. That was an entire misrepresentation of the charge. What his hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) said was that there was a judgment for £2,000 marked against Mr. T. A. Dillon, and that there were other debts of Mr. T. A. Dillon's which could not be brought into the black list, because they were gambling debts. The whole answer to the allegations made in regard to Mr. Meldon appeared to be that he was appointed by Lord Spencer. They had had quite enough of that kind of thing. What was it to the unfortunate people who were sentenced under the Crimes Act, that one of these men was appointed by one Lord Lieutenant or by another? They had seen what Mr. Meldon and his like were capable of doing when the Government or the agents of the landlords made charges against the Representatives of the people or the people themselves. He would give an instance of how Mr. Meldon acted when a charge was brought against one of the minions of the landlord class by one of the unfortunate people. Mrs. Collins, wife of a struggling farmer in Tipperary, swore an information that on the 2nd February last a wood-ranger in the employment of Count Moore, named Hugh Peters, fired two shots over her head. Peters was placed under arrest; but when brought before Mr. Meldon, he was discharged without bail. Now, what would have been done in the case, say, of a tenant farmer who fired two shots over the head of the wife of a landlord? What answer did Mr. Meldon make to this unfortunate woman? He told her that she might, if she cared, receive an ordinary summons against the wood-ranger. That was all the interest the Crown, or the right hon. Gentleman's minions, took in the vindication of justice, when the person offended against was one of the people. It was the same kind of interest they took when they managed to let off the Emergency men who murdered the unfortunate man, down at Coolgreaney, and who were now roaming about the country armed with Winchester rifles. Reference had been made to the evidence brought forward at some of these trials; it was certainly of a most startling and extraordinary character. Let him refer to some evidence which was given against his hon. Friend the Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy), who was now undergoing six months' imprisonment in Galway Gaol. The police reporter upon whose notes Mr. Sheehy was convicted was called. He was asked if he wrote shorthand? He said he never learned shorthand. Then he was asked if he were a very fast writer, if he was not regarded as the fastest writer in the barracks. He replied—

> "I would not cast a slur on any man in the barracks by praising myself, but I believe I am the fastest writer."

Then he was asked—

> "While you would be writing a sentence how many sentences would the speaker get ahead of you?"—"He might get two or three." "Then when you completed your sentence, would you skip over what he had said in the meantime, and then catch him up again?"—"Yes; I would try and remember what he would say in the meantime." "When you say you would try and remember, what do you mean?"—"I mean that when I heard a sentence or two I would take it down, and pay no attention to what he would say in the meantime."—"When you had completed your note of any particular sentence, would you wait until he had completed a sentence, or would you take him up in the middle of a sentence?" "When I would have done writing down what I remembered at the time, I would wait until I remembered what Mr. Sheehy would say." "Now, if Mr. Sheehy used language, qualifying language in reference to what you took down, would you take it down?"—"I would if I were able." "Suppose while you were occupied in taking down a sentence which you considered improper, and he got two sentences ahead in which he qualified the language, did you miss that?" "Yes, I would not take that down, I did not take it down."

Now, the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy) had been taken from his place in the House of Commons and was now in gaol on evidence such as this. To illustrate that kind of reporting, the counsel of his hon. Friend subjected it to a test. He took up a newspaper and read out slowly a passage from a speech of one of the English delegates to Ireland. The constable took it down, and the report he produced was—

> "I as an Englishman have come here to-day. As these wrongs will cease. You have fought our Government for 700. As we. Let me tell

you what has naturally grown in the English mind. John McDonnell, come."

The Crown evidently did not think that evidence was such that they could decently ask for a conviction upon, and therefore they produced a speech his hon. Friend delivered at Clonmel. The hon. Member was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and then he was taken to Clonmel, where he was sentenced to another term of three months for the very speech a report of which was produced in evidence against him at the former trial. In the case of the hon. Member for West Waterford (Mr. Pyne), the evidence laid before the magistrate was of a similar character. The constable was subjected to a test similar to that applied in the case of the hon. Member for West Galway (Mr. Sheehy), and there he admitted that he took no note of the speech at the time it was delivered. Counsel for the defendant read out a portion of Mr. Parnell's speech in the House of Commons, and then asked the constable to give his version of it. The witness, however, was unable to recall accurately three sentences of the speech. Mr. Pyne was sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must refer to another hon. Member by the name of the constituency he represents.

MR. T. P. GILL said, he was referring to the hon. Gentleman in the character of a defendant. His hon. Friend was charged with making a second speech, and similar evidence was produced against him. Counsel for the hon. Member stated in indignant terms that the magistrates were sent there with orders to convict the defendant, and therefore it was no use attempting any defence. Very likely to supply right hon. Gentlemen opposite with an answer to such criticism from the Opposition Benches, in a flight of the highest virtue, the magistrates dismissed the charge. But, in the first case, the hon. Gentleman was sent to gaol for three months upon evidence which, in the second case, the magistrates themselves declared to be totally insufficient. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) concluded his speech by referring the whole controversy to the test of appeal, and he said—"After all, the test of the matter is what has been the result of the appeals." That was a very unfortunate reference when they had regard to the action of the Court of Exchequer the other day in reversing two decisions and in practically reversing a third, namely, that in the case of Mr. Blunt. In the case of the blacksmith, Sullivan, and in that of Mr. Walsh, of *The Wexford People*, the decisions had been quashed by the Superior Court. He could continue for hours citing instances of the gross injustice and brutality and wickedness of the way in which the Crimes Act was administered in Ireland; but he thought he had said enough in refutation of what the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had said, and to justify the contention that the Resident Magistrates had proved themselves the veriest tools of the Castle in the administration of this most infamous Act.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) was surprised the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had not thought it worth while to make any reply to the strong case made out by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wednesbury (Mr. P. Stanhope). He (Mr. Edward Harrington) did not complain of the punishment Mr. Cecil Roche inflicted upon him; but he did complain that that magistrate made up his mind as to the sentence before the hearing of the case was concluded. He himself knew he was to be committed to prison for a month, and half-an-hour before the sentence was passed, a covered car was in waiting outside the Court House to convey him to Tralee Gaol. That showed how much the magistrate acted on evidence. He asked that a case should be stated, but the magistrate declined to do so. His ground for asking that a case should be stated was that articles that appeared in his paper three months before there was a proclamation of the county of Kerry were read in evidence against him, to show he was defying the proclamation of the county. The Court, in its supreme wisdom, decided that that was a frivolous ground of application. As it turned out eventually, the very points he had raised were held to be good points. He did his best during the trial to restrain the people from indulging in any demonstration; but when he left the Court a few children, disobeying what was well known to be his wish, attempted to raise a cheer. No sooner had they done so than Mr. Roche rushed out and ordered the police to charge the people. The policemen, who had been drafted in from outlying districts, drew their batons, rushed upon the crowd and smashed heads right and left. The little children coming out of the Convent school were batoned and scattered in all directions. He saw Mr. Roche flourish his stick and rush amongst some priests and threaten them. So violent, sudden, and frantic was the charge, that one policeman actually rushed headlong through the window of a publican named Doyle. Colonel Turner—Divisional Magistrate for the County of Kerry—was present. He was either in charge on the occasion, or he had no business to be there at all. It was well known in Tralee that Colonel Turner and County Inspector Singleton expressed their abhorrence of the course pursued by Mr. Roche, and that they made representations to that effect to the Castle; but Mr. Roche was so useful in careering about the country, casting newsvendors and the like into gaol, that it was impossible to assail his position. In proof of this he might mention that the Town Councillors of Tralee, a body of gentlemen who represented all creeds and classes, unanimously drafted a representation to the Lord Lieutenant to the effect that in the interest of peace and order in Tralee it was necessary that a sworn investigation into the matter should be held, or that, as an alternative, Mr. Roche be removed to some other district. The Poor Law Guardians, all the representative Bodies, and the Catholic Dean of Tralee, a Unionist in politics, made similar representations; but they had not been acted upon, nor their receipt even acknowledged by the Castle authorities. While men like Mr. Roche retained the confidence of the Government, men of the stamp of Captain Butler, men who did their duty fearlessly and without favour, were sent to remote districts, where their services were little or never required. The present Government seemed to think it was a complete answer to say that these things happened in the time of Lord Spencer. His (Mr. Edward Harrington's) testimony was that things as vile as they could imagine had been done by Dublin Castle under every Administration. The Government had in regard to the affair at Tralee adopted the policy of Dublin Castle, for they had paid no heed whatever to the representations of the various public Bodies. Let it not be said that they made in the House charges that they would not make out of it. After he had completed his term of imprisonment in Tralee Gaol for merely publishing reports of meetings in a newspaper, so strongly did he feel the battering of helpless women and children for what he considered no crime, but for merely cheering him out of sympathy, that he wrote in his newspaper an article about the affair, making the charges which he had repeated here. He charged Colonel Turner with cowardice in permitting the command to be taken out of his hands by Mr. Roche, and charged Mr. Roche with having used a stick upon the people, and charged Frederick Bateman, the magistrate, with rowdyism. In the paper in which he made these charges he had stated to the Crown Prosecutor in Tralee his readiness to lodge in Court any guarantee for expenses if an action for libel were brought against him. His challenge, however, had not been taken up. Mr. Roche and the rest had been in no hurry to clear their character. The first time he appeared in public in the town of Tralee he expected to be picked up, not for anything which appeared in his paper, but for the attacks which he made on these people in this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would, he (Mr. Edward Harrington) thought, do well to interest himself in the case he was about to mention. Some time ago the house of Dr. O'Kane was attacked. Four or five men were arrested at Castleisland, after men had previously been arrested by the local magistrates, and Mr. Roche had let them out on small bail, although they were recognized as having been present at a Moonlighting affair. To show that they paid some attention to the local Press, the authorities had had these men re-arrested; but the prosecution had been conducted in such a half-hearted way that the depositions had been purposely vitiated. He thought that the Government were teaching the people of Ireland a very bad lesson by shielding one class of criminals. The nominal Crown Prosecutor in the case was Mr. M'Gillycuddy; the prisoners were defended by his cousin and partner, Mr. Morphy, who had the same office and sat at the same table with him. If men in that part of the country were accused of Moonlighting they had only to go to that office; they could not secure the services of Mr. M'Gillycuddy, as he was nominally the prosecutor, but they could get his partner as their solicitor, and then they would be sure to get off. If the Government gave people the idea that they shielded one class of criminals, he could assure them that they were teaching the people a bad lesson, and it was hard for him (Mr. Edward Harrington), and others like him who advised the people whenever they had an opportunity to refrain from committing crime, to produce any effect. His desire was that the authorities should be able to discover and punish real crime; but he did not believe that the right hon. Gentleman or his officials had any such desire. He did not charge the right hon. Gentleman with wilfully desiring to screen criminals; but he charged the right hon. Gentleman with that—which the right hon. Gentleman so flippantly charged others—namely, with a want of knowledge of the things which he had to adjudicate upon. There were numerous cases of maladministration in the County of Kerry; but he did not want to go into them on the present occasion. He did not wish to overload the weighty charges already made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wednesbury and others, and he would leave it to the Committee to say if they were satisfied with the silence of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in reference to these charges.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he had sought out some adjective which would adequately describe the magistrates whose zeal in the service of the Government was now under discussion. He did not think the term "Resident" properly described them, as the Committee was now asked to pay £8,000 for their nomadic habits, and he did not think "removable" would properly describe them, because he supposed they were certain to retain their positions so long as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) continued to occupy his present post. He might, perhaps, describe them as the kept magistrates of Dublin Castle, and he might say that a more corrupt and servile body of men than these Resident Magistrates never disgraced the magistracy of Ireland. One of them—Mr. Cecil Roche—had been a lecturer of the Royal and Patriotic Union. It was true—as was stated by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) that he (Mr. Cecil Roche) had written a letter to *The Times* declaring that he was not a paid lecturer. At all events, whether he was a paid lecturer or only got his travelling expenses, as he himself admitted, it was the fact that he was a lecturer for a partizan organization in the struggle now agitating this Kingdom, and, fresh and virgin from his violent speech in that great controversy, he was placed on the Judicial Bench there to deny the liberties of the very men he had been denouncing. The hon. and learned Solicitor General said Cecil Roche was paid only £500 a-year. Did not the hon. and learned Gentleman know very well that £500 a-year was sufficient to purchase numbers of the venal barristers of Ireland to do any dirty work, and, forsooth, Mr. Roche was to be considered a perfectly innocent gentleman because he was paid not during the delivery of his lectures but after. He had read with attention the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary during the Recess and in that House. The right hon. Gentleman stated that there was no difference between the laws of England and Ireland, except in the small matter of procedure. What did that little difference mean? If a person were tried in this country for a political offence, he would be tried by a Judge and a jury of his own class. In Ireland, however, there was no Judge independent of the Crown, and no jury; but political offenders were tried by two Resident Magistrates who were dependent on the right hon. Gentleman. If he heard a speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman on Tuesday, he should be able to forecast the judgments by Resident Magistrates on Thursday in Ireland. He charged the Irish Magistrates with acting in two capacities—as members of a judicial tribunal and as part of the Executive Government. This had been clearly done in the cases of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien), and of others. In the case of the hon. Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) on a cheer being raised as he left the Court, the magistrate seized a stick and headed the charge of the police upon the mob. No magistrate in England would have dared to have done such an act as that. Then people in Ireland were convicted on the evidence of so-called shorthand writers, who could not take down accurately two two words in ten, although shorthand writers ought to be equal to any emergency. Irish magistrates went where the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary pleased, and did what he pleased. The right hon. Gentleman began his career by summoning the Resident Magistrates to Dublin Castle, where he instructed them as to the sentences they should pronounce and as to the manner of their proceedings. Therefore, these so-called independent blameless magistrates, who ought to stand impartially and independently between the Crown and the people, were, in fact, the instructed and drilled tools of the right hon. Gentleman. Then, again, magistrates in England were never removed from place to place except for their own convenience and at their own request; but Irish magistrates were removed from one place to another as a punishment for their impartiality. Then, again, the crimes for which men and women had been sent to gaol were of the most ridiculous character—such as shouting the words of a popular song. The appeal to which the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had referred was to the County Court Judges—the most odious school of the Tory Party in Ireland. In Mr. Blunt's case the Judge said that he was present at a meeting where the Proclamation of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was burnt, an act, he said, of insurrection, almost amounting to treason. Could anything be more absurd? The inequality of the sentences was also to be noted. Yet the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary spoke of these magistrates as independent, high-minded men. The names of these men would stink in the nostrils of even the Tories 10 years hence. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland, in his ultra-saccharine tones, had boasted that the sentences of these magistrates had—except in one or two instances—been confirmed on appeal. Did not the hon. and learned Gentleman know that the County Court Judge before whom these appeals lay belonged to the most odious type of Tory in Ireland? Look at the judgment of Mr. Henn in the case of Mr. Blunt. Nothing more odious, more ridiculous, more unjudicial was ever given from a judgment seat, even by a Resident Magistrate. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was no lover of despotism, but he would say—away with this miserable sham and let them have in its place a candid and honest and bold despotism. Let the right hon. Gentleman openly abolish the Courts of Law, let him not seek to carryon an un-Constitutional system under a mask of constitutionalism, and then they would be able to face the question whether Ireland was to be governed like Russia or like England.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 195; Noes 124: Majority 71.—(Div. List, No. 15.)

CLASS IV.—SCIENCE AND ART.

(13.) £676, Supplementary, National Gallery.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he very much objected to this Vote. Perhaps, the hour being late, some arrangement could be made allowing for a discussion upon the Report stage. This expenditure seemed to arise from the desire of somebody to add two or three trumpery pictures to the National Collection over and above the large sum annually devoted to purchases.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, he thought this Vote demanded some discussion and explanation. In last year's Estimates, as presented to the House, no sum whatever was asked for the purchase of pictures, and on the 23rd of August—quite at the end of the Session, as his hon. Friend would recollect—there was a somewhat lengthened discussion of the matter, when his hon. Friend stated that a Supplementary Estimate would be necessary for the purpose. But his hon. Friend said most distinctly, as would be found on reference to the report of his words—and they were in answer to the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy—his hon. Friend said the money had not yet been handed over by the Treasury; but, so far as any expenditure by the National Gallery Trustees was concerned, he would undertake to say that they had not spent any of the fees received from the public, which might be estimated as amounting to £15,000 before the end of the financial year. Then his hon. Friend went on to say that no expenditure for the purposes of the National Gallery would be incurred until the money had been voted by the House. Yet, looking over the Estimates, it appeared that the National Gallery had spent the sum of £676. He was not aware whether these pictures had yet been exhibited; perhaps his hon. Friend could say? It was rather hard, however, to press his hon. Friend upon these matters, because the functions of his Office were so multifarious, it could hardly to be expected that he should be acquainted with the working of the National Gallery, and might be unable to say whether the pictures had been exhibited or not. Speaking as one of the public, he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) should take strong exception to the expenditure of money on this particular purpose, following out in this considerations and arguments he had placed before successive Secretaries of the Treasury, that the money devoted to pictures should be expended only on first-rate works of art, and not spent in acquiring possession of pictures which might gratify the particular fancies of the Director of the National Gallery, but which could be of no great interest to the public. He doubted if his hon. Friend or any other Member of the Committee was familiar with the name even of the painter, Mocetto. For the information of his hon. Friend he might say that this artist was an Italian painter whose works were of great rarity, few if any of his examples being known. It was rather a strong measure to give £250 for these panel pictures, which he had not yet seen, but which, before the Report came on, he would endeavour to see. Next in the list came a picture to which he imagined no exception would be taken; but then last came a "Dutch portrait by a painter unknown." He, for one, as representing the taxpayers of the country, altogether objected to any sum of money being expended on pictures by unknown painters. He did not care whether it was £50,000 or 50*d.*, and he would be borne out, he knew, by a large portion of the public and also some of the Trustees of the National Gallery, who were opposed to the purchase but were outvoted. He would say again what he had frequently repeated in the House—the expenditure in buying pictures should be directed only to the acquisition of first-class works of art, and not buying pictures by unknown painters, even though for small sums.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he was afraid his right hon. and learned Friend had not left him much time to answer his questions. He would not venture in the face of so high an authority to question a judgment on a work of Art, but when his right hon. and learned Friend admitted that he had not seen the pictures, he did somewhat discount the value of his own criticism. As to what was said last year, he then endeavoured to explain that in consequence of the Vote having been suspended for some years, in order to pay off the expenditure which had exceeded the annual average, nothing was put down in the Votes last year. He endeavoured to explain that an appeal having been made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Treasury had consented to hold a sum of money at the disposal of the Trustees of the National Gallery, but not as money to be expended this year; so it happened that this sum now asked for was in anticipation of the Vote to be taken next year, and by so much would the amount of £2,000 which would have been placed at the disposal of the Gallery next year be reduced.

Vote *agreed to.*

And it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

EAST INDIA [PURCHASE AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS].

REPORT.

Resolutions [February 24] *reported.*

Resolution 1 read a first and second time, and *agreed to.*

Resolution 2 read a first and second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the said Resolution."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, if it were in order to do so, without offering opposition, to ask for an explanation, he should like to do so. The explanation he desired had reference to the latter part of the Resolutions. The Secretary of State for India was authorized to raise £10,000,000 for the construction of railways through the agency of companies. This had the appearance of a departure from the policy of constructing railways by the Government, for the Resolution bound the Government to the construction through the agency of companies and not by the Government. The Committee which considered the matter a few years since recommended that both methods should be open to the Government. He was very much against using the agency of a Company, thinking it an expensive and a demoralizing system for the Government to borrow the money and commit the construction to a Company. But he did not desire to raise a debate after 12 o'clock upon this stage of the measure; he would simply ask whether the policy of the Secretary of State was that set forth in the Resolution, and was there to be no more direct construction by the Government.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, if the hon. Member would allow the formal stage to be taken, the Bill would then be printed and circulated, and then he would see exactly what was going to be carried out. He could assure the hon. Member that there was no intention on the part of the Secretary of State to depart in any way from the principle laid down by the Committee of 1884. This part of the Bill merely authorized the Government, when it was cheaper for the Government to borrow the money and lend it to the companies, to do so, instead of guaranteeing loans raised by the companies. It was not intended to supersede the action of Government, but only in borrowing to obtain better terms.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution 3 read a first and second time, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir JOHN GORST and Mr. JACKSON.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 143.]

MOTIONS.

SUNDAY CLOSING ACTS (IRELAND).

MOTION FOR A COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the operation of the Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland)."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, he did not wish to object to the appointment of this Committee; but he desired that timely Notice should be given of the Members nominated, in order that the constitution of the Committee might meet the wishes of both sides. It was a very vexed question, and the investigation must take a good deal of time. He would ask the Chief Secretary not to move the appointment of the Members of the Committee for three weeks after giving Notice of the names, and then to allow three weeks to elapse before beginning the inquiry. The subject would require much investigation, and the fetching over of many witnesses from Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he could quite understand that such inquiry would require time and so forth before its commencement. The nomination would take place in the usual course; but he would take care the Committee should not sit for a fortnight after that.

MR. J. O'CONNOR hoped it would be extended to three weeks.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that was a rather long interval.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the operation of the Sunday Closing Act.

COMPANIES' ACTS CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Companies' Acts.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. James Maclean, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Mowbray, and Mr. Lees.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 144.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Liability of Employers for Injuries to their Workmen, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, and Mr. Forwood.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 145.]

METALLIFEROUS MINES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Bill to extend "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," to the iron ore mines of Cumberland and Lancashire, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Mr. Burt.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 146.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (ARREARS OF RENT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to amend "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," with respect to Arrears of Rent, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, and Mr. Sinclair.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 147.]

SHERIFF COURTS (SCOTLAND) EXTRACTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Caldwell, Bill to simplify the forms of Extracts of Decrees in the Sheriff Courts of Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Caldwell, Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Sir Archibald Campbell, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Anstruther, and Mr. Cunninghame Graham.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 148.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the First Lord of the Treasury to inform the House what would be the probable course of Business on Thursday?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he proposed then to ask the House to dispose of the remaining Supplementary Votes in Committee, and, anticipating that that would not occupy much time, he would make the next Business the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), if agreeable to the latter.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he had given Notice of two Amendments in Supply; but probably would not take up more than 10 minutes in dealing with them.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, assuming that Supply would occupy but a short time, the suggested arrangement was satisfactory.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 28th February, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Liability of Trustees * (24).

Second Reading—County Courts Consolidation (5); Mortmain and Charitable Uses (16).

NEW PEER.

The Right Honourable Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, Baronet, G.C.M.G., having been created Baron Knutsford of Knutsford in the County Palatine of Chester—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: The Bill is one of those recommended by the Statute Law Revision Committee. Its preparation has been under my own cognizance as affecting one of the departments over which the Lord Chancellor presides. The consolidation into one Act of the very large number of existing Acts is in itself so desirable an object, both generally and in particular with reference to the work of Statute Law revision, that I hope this Bill will be proceeded with and passed without raising questions as to amendment of the County Courts Acts. For instance, the subject of increasing the jurisdiction is a large one, about which there is a great deal to be said, and as to which there is so much divergence of opinion that if I were to postpone the consolidation until that subject was discussed there would certainly not be time for such legislation this year, and the desirable measure which I am now recommending would be indefinitely postponed.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD HERSCHELL said, he entirely agreed with the Lord Chancellor as to the importance of consolidating these Acts. He had been urged on various points to introduce Amendments into this Bill; but recognizing the impossibility of passing a Consolidation Bill of this description if Amendments were to be pressed, he should not feel justified in taking that course in connection with this measure.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

MORTMAIN AND CHARITABLE USES BILL.—(No. 16.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): This Bill, of which I beg to move the second reading, is one of a series recommended and prepared by the Statute Law Revision Committee. The Lord Chancellor for the time being is head of that Body, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that during my tenure of Office great progress has been made in their work, which I have had the pleasure of furthering to the best of my opportunities. A new edition of the Statutes, revised, is about to be published, which, besides many improvements in the letter-press, will have the advantage of being much more convenient in size and at a price of about 7*s.* or 8*s.*, not more than a third of the cost of the existing edition. The work of revision goes hand in hand with consolidation, and the new edition will go a long way towards bringing the whole Statute Law into a compact, intelligible form. The public have greatly to thank the noble and learned Lord, whom I see in his place (Lord Thring), for this valuable result, and for his continuing to give so much valuable and disinterested labour to this not very grateful task. I hope that this Bill, which is one of pure consolidation, will pass speedily through your Lordships' House, and that it may be equally prosperous in "another place," as the first volume of the new edition to which I have referred is awaiting the repeal of the ancient statutes repealed by this Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

After some remarks from Lord THRING,

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

SWEATING SYSTEM.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, in rising to call attention to the Report to the Board of Trade on the sweating system at the East End of London by the labour correspondent of the Board, and to move a Resolution, said, he wished to confine himself strictly to the consideration of matters to which his Motion alluded. But, in doing so, he desired to guard himself from the supposition that the evils which he should bring before their Lordships were confined to the particular trade and locality about which he intended to speak. As a matter of fact, the evils under what was commonly and very graphically described as the sweating system, were evils which were shared by a great many trades and a great many localities throughout the country. Indeed, in the larger sense, they might be said to be evils which were felt throughout the whole manufacturing interest of the country. They reached right down to the roots of society in that respect. In treating of this subject of the evils of the sweating system, which were caused by purely natural causes, it was obvious that he was touching upon the fringe of a very much larger question; that, in fact, the greatest of the problems of the present time was touched upon. And that problem was whether, under the present circumstances of the world, under the extraordinary advance which science had made, and which enabled the inhabitants of different parts of the world, and the products of the labour of different parts of the world, to be brought so easily and quickly together—whether, under those circumstances, it was, or would long be, possible for a manufacturing country like this to maintain its labouring population at a fair standard of decency or living without endangering the interests of its great manufacturing industries; or whether, on the other hand, in order to maintain those industries, the labour of the country would be forced to degrade itself down to the lowest form of foreign labour with which it might be brought into competition. That was a very great subject, a very great problem; and he did not intend at present to touch upon it at all. In a lesser sense the evils of this sweating system were shared by a great many people. That was a matter on which he hoped to speak at a future time. What he wished to endeavour to do now was to call attention to a very great and crying evil which existed in connection with the trade for ready-made clothing in the East of London. The evils which existed there, as he had said, were caused by natural laws, which in themselves were not by any means of necessity unwholesome in any degree. They were brought about by the perfection of machinery, the increase of population, foreign immigration, and by the development of a great trade in ready-made clothing, brought about to a great extent by the natural exigencies of that trade. But his belief was that, though the causes were perfectly natural in themselves, they had been allowed to run riot and had not been put under proper control, and had thus produced the present terrible state of things. For the last half-century this has been more or less an evil, and it had been brought before the attention of the public from time to time. But in former days the evil was comparatively slight. The tailoring trade was carried on as between the customer, the consumer, the master tailor, and the journeyman. The system of letting out work consisted of the journeyman taking the work home to complete it, which was a very natural, proper, and wholesome state of things. The journeyman was a skilled artizan. He completed the article by the making of which he gained his living. But the circumstances of the trade were completely changed; they were entirely revolutionized. The necessity for a supply of cheap clothing for consumption at home, but chiefly, he believed, for exportation, had caused the change. The work was now parcelled out, not, as before, between the master tailor and the journeyman, but it was given out to several contractors. These middlemen intervened between the consumer and the ultimate producer who made it. And the labour itself was most minutely sub-divided. As many as six or seven completely different sets of workmen and women were employed in the making of a single garment; and the result was that the people employed, being able to make some particular fraction of the aritcle, were absolutely unable to turn their attention to any other business or trade. It was impossible for them to make a living in any other way, and they were, therefore, practically bound hand-and-foot, and were entirely at the mercy of their masters. These evils had been greatly aggravated by the intense competition in the trade, which was, to a great extent, the result of foreign immigration. The condition of the victims of the system might be said, with perfect truth, to be a condition of slavery with all its disadvantages and none of its advantages. The people were practically in a state of servitude, and entirely dependent upon their masters. The owner of a real slave was, at any rate, bound to support him; but no such obligation was imposed upon the employer in the case of this white slavery. The Report which had been published disclosed a state of things in the East End which was disgraceful to a civilized State, and if it were irremediable, it might well be said to be the despair of a civilized community. All the circumstances of the trade, the hours of labour, the rate of remuneration, and the sanitary conditions under which the work was done, were disgraceful. The Report stated that the average number of hours of labour was 14 per diem, but that 16 and even 18 hours were by no means uncommon. Let them try to realize what 18 hours' work meant. It left only six out of the 24 for rest and for the enjoyment of things which made life endurable. In this extraordinary trade overtime was not counted. Any number of hours ranging between 12 and 24 were paid for as one day's work. For the work tolerably good wages were in some cases paid—that was to say, they would be fairly good if the work was constant and lasted; but unfortunately it only continued for a brief period in the year. Mr. Burnett in his Report said—

> "The busy season of the trade lasts only for three months of the 12, and during the other nine months the workers do not average more than half-time. Not only is the slack season the worse for the workers in the important matter of earnings, but, strange as it may appear, many of them are also then most cruelly victimized as to the hours they are called upon to work. The sweater so arranges matters that all the work to be done must be got out on the three last days of the week. Thus he will send for his hands, or so many of them as he may require, to start on Thursday morning, and tells them he has received a certain quantity of work, which must be out by the Friday night or the Saturday morning. Work will then commence at 7 o'clock on the morning of Thursday and go on right through the night and up to 4 o'clock on the Friday afternoon. If there is a special pressure of work, real or imaginary, it will be carried on to 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening. For this spell of from 33 to 36 hours the men will receive two days' pay. If they are called upon to work fractions of a day, eight hours is half-a-day and four hours a quarter-day."

It was almost impossible to believe that human beings could exist in such conditions as were here described. The protection of legislation had failed to secure for the women engaged in this business immunity from intolerable sufferings. So great were the exigencies of the trade that the women were obliged to work just as hard as the men. It was the practice to parcel work out, and a great number of men and women were employed in making one garment. The work was executed step by step, and the men and women had to keep abreast in the performance of their allotted shares. In the evidence of the chief Factory Inspector, the following pregnant question and answer appeared:—

> "It may be asked why do females work so late, or why do small masters and men live such lives of slavery? The answer is that females are bound to accept the general terms; that although employment to 10, 11, or 12 o'clock at night is distasteful to them, because they are not paid for it, yet, having been brought up in this trade, which unfits them for other employment, they are obliged to submit to the custom that has grown up for years, and if objected to, and another employer sought, the cause of leaving would be a bar to a fresh engagement."

The following extracts from Mr. Burnett's Report showed how miserable was the position which the unfortunate women occupied:—

> "One trouser machinist is mentioned to have earned 11*s.* 11*d.* in a very good week, a second trouser finisher, who is paid 4*d.* per pair for large, thick trousers, which she gets from a woman in the same house, who herself gets them from a sub-contractor, could make 6*s.* or 7*s.* per week. Another trouser maker can only earn 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per day, out of which she has thread to find. With regard to the earnings of the women engaged in making vests, we find among those mentioned in his Report one who could not earn 5*s.* a week even by working from 7 a.m. to 12 or 1 a.m., and sometimes sat up till 4 o'clock in the morning to finish work, while another in good trade can make 2*s.* a day. Turning to the manufacture of children's clothes, we find that one woman who works for a female sweater makes knickerbockers at 1½*d.* a pair, and can earn 5*s.* 6*d.* per week. Another makes children's suits—coat and knickers—for 4½*d.* and 2*d.* for finishing, but has cotton to find. Working 10 and 11 hours per day can make 4*s.* 3*d.* per week. A third case cited by Mr. Burnett is that of a woman of 55 and one of 24 who make children's suits of two garments. The prices for making the whole, except a little braiding done after the work is sent back, range from 3*d.* to 11*d.*, with cotton to find. One week they started at 6 in the morning and worked until midnight each day, and made much above the average on suits at 3*s.* per dozen. Their total was 8*s.* 6*d.* for the week, or 4*s.* 3*d.* each. Their average weekly earnings they estimate at 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.*—enough to pay the rent of their one little room and find them in tea and bread."

In fact, the whole thing was summed up by Mr. Burnett in his Report when he stated that it was only by low wages and resolute slave-driving that the small sweaters could make money. It might be right that by the sweat of his brow man should eat bread, and there was dignity in ordinary work; but there was not only no dignity, there was great degradation, in the work to which these unfortunate people were subjected; and the sweat of their brows and of their bodies and souls unfortunately did not yield a sufficiency of bread, and this exorbitant amount of labour for inordinately small remuneration was exacted under the worst sanitary description which it was impossible to describe. Large workshops were the exception. In the "dens" of the sweaters, as they were called, there was not the slightest attempt at decency; men and women worked together for many consecutive hours, penned up in small rooms; and basements, garrets, backyards, wash-houses, and all sorts of unlikely places were the abodes of the sweaters. The Report of Mr. Burnett on these points was confirmed by that of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops, who said—

> "To add to the evils of the system of overwork pursued by these people we must note the over-crowded, ill-ventilated, and excessively hot state of the work-rooms, where the men work divested of their upper garments, and in profuse perspiration from the vapour given off by ironing clothes under a wet cloth, and close to a large, open coke fire, it is surprising how these people can live under such conditions. In too many instances dwelling-houses, often out of repair and erected without any view of ever being applied to such uses, are utilized for industrial pursuits, for which they are entirely unfitted by construction."

On this point Mr. Burnett said—

> "The character of the workshops, or places used as workshops, varies considerably; the smaller sweaters, as has already been remarked, use part of their dwelling accommodation, and in the vast majority of cases work is carried on under conditions in the highest degree filthy and insanitary. In small rooms not more than nine or ten feet square, heated by a coke fire for the pressers' irons, and at night lighted by flaring gas jets, six, eight, ten, and even a dozen workers may be crowded. The conditions of the Public Health Acts and of the Factory and Workshop Regulation Acts are utterly disregarded, and existing systems of inspection are entirely inadequate to enforce their provisions."

In a case heard at the Police Court, Mr. Leighton, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, said of a place in which work was carried on—

> "The stench and foul vapours about the place were very bad; a more unhealthy state of things it would be impossible to imagine."

As regarded hours of labour, earnings, and sanitary surroundings, the condition of these people was more deplorable than that of any body of working men in any portion of the civilized or uncivilized world. To his mind their condition was infinitely worse than that of absolute slavery. At any rate, the slave was the property of his owner, and from mere selfish motives a man would not damage his own property; an owner would not underfeed or overwork a slave so as to lessen his value. But these people, who were nominally free men and women, free citizens of a free country, were just as much bound by their environment as slaves were; and they might die of starvation or rot of disease and their masters would not suffer one farthing of damage. It was not strange to find that women were driven upon the streets, and even the strongest men among the machinists and pressers were killed out in the course of eight or ten years. What a glorious product this was of the civilization of our age—what a noble result of the 19th century, with all its science! The consequence of free competition, which political economists told them was so beneficial, was that men and women had to work 18 hours a-day for merely starvation wages, that women were driven to a life of dishonour as being less degraded than the horrible circumstances which attended a life of honest toil, and that the working life of a strong man was limited to eight or ten years. He had not words to express what he felt on the subject. He wished to appeal, not to emotions, but to the sense of justice, of right and wrong, and to statesmanship. The question was whether these evils were remediable or not. That depended upon what their causes were. The main cause was undoubtedly competition. The depression of agriculture had surcharged the towns with the population of the country, and the depression of trade during the last 10 or 12 years had thrown a great number of men out of employment. The inevitable result had been a pressing down of the labouring population, and men had been driven to seek lower forms of occupation. This applied to all work except the highest forms of skilled labour. This main cause of our trouble had been greatly aggravated by the fact that we had been deluged by a stream of the cheapest kind of foreign labour. Mr. Burnett said—

> "The number of English workers is gradually being reduced owing to the severity of a competition in which those who can subsist on least are sure to be victorious. The supply of cheap labour has of late years been enormous, and when there was the slightest difficulty in obtaining it at prices offered, there was no difficulty in obtaining more people from abroad."

The influx of foreign labour had added greatly to the sufferings of British toilers employed in the cheap clothing trade; indeed, it had driven British labour out of that trade; and, as there was no lower depth in the labour world, those who had been displaced had either gone upon the rates or had disappeared by starvation. He could not see the sense of talking about emigration while we were permitting an exhaustless supply of foreign labour to flow into this country. We had plenty of social problems and difficulties of our own without undertaking those of other nations. Another cause of existing evils was the great sub-division of labour. Cheapness was the one essential of the cheap clothing trade; and the necessity that articles should be produced as cheaply as possible led to the work being minutely sub-divided so that men and women would spend their whole time in basting, felling, buttonholing, running sewing machines, and manufacturing portions of waistcoats or trousers. In itself this was to some extent inevitable; but it was an unfortunate state of things. This system turned men into nothing better than mere machines. It made them work entirely mechanically, and consequently rendered them absolutely incapable of turning their hands to any other kind of work. The two causes which he believed were responsible for the evils which surrounded this trade were the dependence of the people upon their masters and competition, aggravated by foreign immigration. He would not be bold enough to suggest any legislation to meet the case; in fact, he was not at all sure that any legislation was necessary. His own impression was that if the existing law were carried into effect the evil would disappear. But if legislation were necessary he should not shrink for a moment from applying it. He was quite aware that any legislation on the subject would be supposed to be running counter to sound economic theories. But he had very little respect for some economic theories which were held by certain people to be axiomatically true. He had very little sympathy with that phase of Liberal opinion—using the word in the Party sense—which resisted the Factory Acts and the Acts regulating the labour of women and children in mines, and which, practically speaking, had opposed itself to almost all the legislation which had been of the slightest benefit to the working classes. He had, if possible, less sympathy with the other half of Radical opinion, which looked to what it called collectivity or Communism to afford a relief to the working classes. The former he looked upon as imbecility, or a harmless form of lunacy; the latter as a very dangerous form of lunacy. Of course Communism, if spoken of merely academically, was practically innocuous, but when it became positive it was absolutely destructive, not so much to the classes to whom it was intended to be applied, but to the classes below them, whom it was intended to benefit. But he had a firm belief in steering a middle course between these two phases of thought. He did not believe either in falling down and worshipping the science of political economy, or in running counter to it, but he did believe that the first duty of statesmanship was so to control and direct and neutralize the law as to benefit the human beings with whom it had to deal. If legislation were necessary in this matter he should certainly advocate it, but all that was required was that the existing law should be properly enforced. As Mr. Burnett said in his Report, how could two or three Inspectors keep in check a multitude of these sweating dens in the East of London? The Inspectors really did their work admirably, and it was no fault of theirs that these evils existed. The fault lay in the fact that the Inspectors were not sufficiently numerous, and that they and the sanitary authorities did not pull well together; and on that point he trusted the Government would find it possible to put the law into execution. Either the law ought to be repealed or put into force. It was a ridiculous and scandalous thing that Parliament should pass Factory and Sanitary Acts regulating the hours of labour of women and children, and that those Acts should be grossly violated. Another point was that the penalty inflicted in cases of conviction was a great deal too small, and he was glad to find that he was supported in that view by Mr. Bushby, the police magistrate. The penalty ought to be so great as to make it not worth a man's while to run the chance of conviction. There was only one other point to which he would like to call the attention of the House. It might be argued, and it was a very fair argument, that any legislation or any increased efficiency given to the Executive would increase the cost of production, and so cause loss. That was an important matter, and one that had to be faced. The trade was a large one, amounting to something like £4,000,000 a-year. At present we had nothing whatever to fear from foreign competition, and, as a matter of fact, the trade was in our own hands. Australia alone took goods of this kind from us to the value of £1,691,709. There was no import of ready-made clothing into this country. On the other hand, this country might have something to fear if the cost of production were unduly raised, but he did not believe that carrying out the law would in any way tend to increase the cost of production. As a matter of fact, the cost of production was immensely increased by the peculiarity of a trade which employed so large a number of middlemen and contractors. The effect of efficiently carrying out the law would be, not to drive the trade out of the country, but to remove the work from these horrible dens into the larger workshops, as to which he believed there had been little or no complaint. Loss of trade had always been put forward whenever an attempt had been made to ameliorate the condition of the people employed in a particular trade. The regulation of the labour of women and children in coal mines had not destroyed the coal trade, and he ventured to prophesy that if the ready-made clothing trade were taken in hand and subjected to proper conditions it would not be found that on that account, at any rate, the trade left this country; but, at all events, he insisted that it was a gross absurdity not to enforce the law or to repeal the law. It was ridiculous to argue that it was necessary to retain the trade by allowing the law of the land to be broken. If the trade could not exist if the law was obeyed, then he could understand the argument that the law ought to be repealed. If, on the other hand, the law was a good one, it was most illogical not to enforce it, even if there was a risk—and he did not believe there was—of losing the export trade. Now, he admitted that that matter was a very difficult one. He submitted that he had said enough to show that it was a very grave one; that a very grave evil existed in their midst; that there was an ulcer in the body politic which, if it could be cured, ought not to be neglected. The subject was one that eminently required deep and careful inquiry to be made into it. It was obvious all through the Report to which he had referred how much such an inquiry was needed. A great deal of the most valuable matter in that Report was taken at second-hand from the Reports issued by various societies and associations. Mr. Burnett himself admitted the great difficulty of obtaining accurate information, and, therefore, he submitted to their Lordships the great desirability of inquiring most carefully and minutely into all the circumstances of that trade. He did not wish to say anything whatever—he hoped that he had not said anything—detrimental to the character of the employers in that business. He dared say that in some cases the sweaters made exorbitant profits. He believed that in many others, according to the Report, they certainly did not. In any case he did not blame them. He believed that many of them were as much driven by the exigencies of the trade as the sweaters' workpeople. He had just had a letter put into his hands in reference to the sweaters' profits. The writer said he sent him there with a boy's knickerbocker suit that was made by a poor woman last week; that the price paid for the entire making of that suit was 1*s*. 2*d*.; that he could not say how much the sweater might have made, but some clue to it might be obtained from the fact that the materials and the making together cost, on the whole, 5*s*. 10½*d*., while the selling price to the public was 16*s*. 11*d*. There was certainly a large margin between 5*s*. 10½*d*., the cost of production, and 16*s*. 11*d*., the selling price of the article. As regarded an inquiry, he did not know exactly whether it would be best conducted by a Royal Commission or by a Committee of their Lordships' House; but for many reasons he believed that the best form of inquiry would be by a Committee of that House. To be useful such an inquiry must be a searching one, and must be armed with sufficient powers—with powers to examine witnesses on oath, and to indemnify those witnesses who might inculpate themselves by being forced to admit that they had broken the law. He did not think that such an inquiry could fail to be productive of great good. It would search into the very root of the matter; it would enable Parliament to ascertain facts; it would enable Her Majesty's Government to decide whether that great evil which existed among them was remediable; whether, if remediable, it could be cured by carrying into force the law which now existed, or whether further legislation was necessary in order to relieve them from that grave scandal and to give adequate protection to those unfortunate, poor, helpless people. In conclusion, he begged to move that a Committee of that House be appointed to inquire into the sweating system at the East End of London.

LORD SANDHURST, in seconding the Motion, remarked that the subject of foreign pauper immigration was so inseparably bound up with the question of the sweating system that it was almost impossible to say anything about the one without alluding to the other. At the same time, he recognized the propriety of touching lightly on that immigration, because it now formed the subject of an investigation. Those unfortunate foreign immigrants often arrived in this country in the greatest state of destitution, and were soon swept into the sweating shops, where they underwent all the miseries which the noble Earl had that evening so well described. The condition of life in the countries whence these people came enabled them to subsist on very little, their food, he was told, being composed frequently of nothing but stewed fish heads and decayed vegetables. Another kind of immigration which should not be lost sight of in an inquiry of that kind was that which proceeded from the country districts, and which, as he gathered, was increasing at a rapid rate owing to the want of employment in the Provinces. He would, therefore, ask Her Majesty's Government, if they were disposed to grant the proposed inquiry, whether it might not be possible to enlarge its scope so as to make it also embrace that part of the subject? It might appear to their Lordships almost incredible that within three or four miles of that House a state of things involving so much human misery could possibly exist as was to be found at the East End of London. Some of these poor people made artificial flowers at 1*d*. per gross, and by dint of hard work might possibly earn 7*d*. a-day. Another trade was that of match-box making. He had entered a house in Shoreditch lately where a girl supported the family of four by making these boxes, at the rate of 2¼*d*. per gross. The father sometimes made a shilling or two by hawking. They occupied a room about half the size of the lavatory of this House, for which they paid 2*s*. 6*d*. rent. Then there was pill-box making, a light kind of work, which required the most constant application, and by which only the most wretched pittance could be obtained. Such a state of things made the poor ready listeners to agitators. When we lightly condemn demonstrations as nuisances, he thought their Lordships ought not to sit with folded hands merely deploring the grave evil that existed, but ought to see whether they could not find out its real causes, and, if possible, suggest some mode of remedying or of mitigating it. If the Government granted this inquiry, there would be three sources of information open to their Lordships—the extremely valuable Report of the Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, the inquiry into the immigration of paupers, and the present inquiry with regard to the sweating system. These three inquiries might be useful hereafter as the basis for future legislation.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the sweating system at the east end of London, and to report thereon to the House; and that the witnesses before the said Select Committee be examined on oath."—(*The Earl of Dunraven.*)

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, that while he quite recognized that the subject touched the whole question of pauperism, he thought it would be an unfortunate circumstance if the Government, supposing they intended to grant the inquiry, were so to enlarge the reference as to include other and important subjects. One advantage of the inquiry would be that information would be obtained as to several efforts which had been made by several needlewomen's agencies to meet the evil to some degree. For instance, there had been established a Needlewomen's Co-operative Association, through whose agency it was hoped, by reducing the number of stages through which work had to pass, to raise the wages of workers. Then there was another co-operative women's association established by several benevolent ladies, which had been worked with considerable success. One great evil which had not been touched upon by the Mover or Seconder of the Motion was what was known as the learners' system. A certain class of employers were in the habit of advertising for female workers, the understanding being that they were to be taught the trade, but were to receive no wages during the first three months they were employed. At the end of that time, however, the majority of the workers were discharged, having received no wages, and without any prospect of redress. He thought this was a matter which ought to be attended to.

LORD ABERDARE said, he wished that his noble Friend (the Earl of Dunraven) had not needlessly gone out of his way to impart a political complexion to this subject. The noble Earl said that the Factory Acts and all legislation of that kind had been always opposed by the Liberal Party and political economists. Such accusations were altogether unfounded. It was true that the two great measures which had been the foundation of all this legislation were brought forward by an eminent man, who happened to be a Member of the Conservative Party; but he did his utmost, and successfully, to dissociate his action altogether from Party feeling —he meant the Earl of Shaftesbury. That noble Earl brought forward two great measures as to the evils connected with the working of mines and factories. While, however, there were Members of the Liberal Party who were opposed to the measures, there were quite as eminent Members of the Conservative Party who objected to them. Among the most conspicuous opponents in 1845 were Sir Robert Peel and his then Home Secretary, Sir James Graham. The publication of the life of Lord Shaftesbury had made many of their Lordships acquainted with the horrible and degrading evils connected with the working of our mines, which had, to some extent, passed out of memory. Two years ago he had the pleasure of meeting a man well acquainted with the social position of the working man in Europe, M. de Laveleye. He was told by M. de Laveleye, who had just come from a visit to the colliery districts in the North of England, that he was acquainted with nearly every population in Europe, and that he had not met any in which the standard of comfort was so great, and the life of the workmen so fully raised from the degrading position which formerly characterized it. He further pointed out that he himself, while connected with the Home Department, brought in a measure designed largely to extend factory legislation, and that no one could doubt that there had been a great improvement in the condition of the working classes due to factory as well as sanitary legislation. Forty years ago very nearly a similar state of things existed as was to be found now. This was shown not only by the public attention drawn to the question by the publication of Hood's *Song of the Shirt* and Kingsley's *Alton Locke*, but by the Report of a Commission appointed by a daily newspaper, *The Morning Chronicle*, which gave almost exactly the same account of the evils existing as that given by the noble Earl, except that at that time there was not the same amount of foreign competing labour. He fully admitted that the sweating system created a great deal of misery in the East End. Speaking generally, there probably never was a time when the wage-earning class secured for themselves a larger proportion of the profits obtained by capital and labour. Underneath this general prosperity, however, there was a great mass of misery and distress, much of which resulted from this sweating system; and he should be glad to see what could be done to remedy this state of things. Much, he thought, might be effected by a better application of existing laws, and he should like to see the experiment tried of strictly enforcing those laws in some district and regulating the trade in regard to hours of labour and overcrowding; and he believed that the result would be found in some degree satisfactory, and that the effect would be to increase the value of such labour. If, instead of 16 or 17 hours a-day, the women only worked nine or 10 hours, he believed that they would in the end receive better wages. If the necessary measures were taken for enforcing the law, though the evils of this sweating system might not thereby be absolutely removed, still, he thought, they would be greatly reduced.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, he thought he spoke the mind of the whole Bench of Bishops when he expressed the deepest interest in this subject, and an earnest hope that the Government would grant the Commission of Inquiry, and that it, he trusted, would be an inquiry full and minute. The fact that there existed great misery in connection with this sweating system was being constantly borne in upon them; but what was wanted was a systematic and comprehensive knowledge of the whole subject. No doubt, the working population was, in some respects, never better off than at present; but underneath this improved condition of many there existed a great abyss of misery that required thorough investigation. The Factories and Workshops Acts had, so far as they could be applied, no doubt effected much good; but no application of those Acts could adequately deal with the evils of the sweating system as it existed in the East End, for, owing to various reasons, some of which were economical and financial, the system of production could not be carried on in the East End in large factories, and the Workshops and Factories Acts were wholly inadequate to deal with the countless small hovels in which the cheap work was done. By means of inspection they could not really obtain satisfactory results, for, as one of the Reports that had been referred to had pointed out, the presence of the Inspector in any neighbourhood soon became known; preparations were at once made for his visit; the crowded workers disappeared from "the dens;" and when he arrived the real state of things could not be discovered by him. Then, as to the system of fines—these were so light, and bore so small a proportion to the profits to be made by breaking the law, that they were not in the least deterrent. In any system of fines, care ought to be taken that the fines fell upon the right persons. There were a vast number of sweaters who were as miserable as the people who were called their victims. Much work passed through four or five ranks of middlemen between the original employer and the workers themselves. The lowest class of sweaters were themselves sweated, and could scarcely keep soul and body together. The number of people engaged in this trade in the East End was enormous; the foreign Jews alone were estimated to number 16,000; and so large a class reduced to such misery in the midst of a vast city was a great danger underlying our social institutions. When they considered the largeness of this class, the insanitary condition in which it lived, the physical and mental decay which it must involve from generation to generation, and the necessary absolute lack of almost any care bestowed by parents on their children, they must all feel convinced that Christianity and religion could do no better work than to endeavour to discover some remedy for this grievous state of things. He felt sure that such an endeavour would receive the co-operation of all Parties.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, he must thank the noble Earl for bringing forward this subject, and treating it in so exhaustive a manner; but he should be sorry if it were supposed, from the remarks of the noble Earl who had so ably introduced the subject, that any one of their Lordships, or either Party in that House, was not deeply anxious to find a remedy for the evils which had been spoken of, and to promote the well-being of the poor. The sweating system was a term not easily understood; but it appeared to be so called by analogy to the sweating of coinage, and it meant an abuse of the contract system, by which an undue amount of labour was got out of the poorer classes for inadequate wages. If any satisfaction at all could be got out of so melancholy a subject as this, it was, perhaps, to be found in the fact that almost the whole of the unfortunate people engaged in this sweating system in the East End were not our fellow-subjects, but were either Polish Jews, or Germans, or people of other nationalities. Nineteen-twentieths of those engaged in coat-making and trousers-making by the contract system were foreigners. This contract system, so far as the British tailor was concerned, was practically extinct. English tailors now worked in the master tailor's own shop, under foremen. They were all aware of the great depression that had occurred in the trade and the agriculture of the country. But while rents and the profits of trade had been reduced, very little had been heard of a reduction in wages; absolute want of employment there was; but it might be taken as a fact that the wage-earning class had suffered least of all from the depression. Thus, in the trunk-making trade, prices paid to contractors had fallen in the last three years 53 per cent, while wages had risen 10 per cent. Similarly, in the saddle and harness-making trade, though prices had fallen, wages had not fallen in the same proportion. This clothes-making trade, however, was under very different conditions, and those engaged in it were, for various reasons, unable, by means of combination, to keep up the price of their labour. They landed in this country in a state of destitution; they could not speak a word of English; and, worst of all, they were unable to trust each other. Some time ago some of them met together, and agreed not to accept less than a certain wage; but the next day some of the very persons who thus agreed went and accepted a lower wage. All attempts at combination had entirely broken down. There was also another reason why this sweating system continued. English workmen would do a fair day's work, but it was found necessary in the case of these foreigners to have a system of constant supervision, such as that obtained by this system of sub-contracts. A considerable amount of misconception existed as to the scope of the Factories and Workshops Act. From the operation of its provisions were expressly excluded two classes of workshops — domestic workshops, in which the only persons employed were members of the same family dwelling there, and those "conducted on the system of not employing children or young persons therein." With these the Inspectors of the Home Office had no power to deal. The Local Authority, however, had power under that Act and under the Public Health Act, 1875, to deal with the insanitary or overcrowded state of workshops as nuisances, and it was more to the action of the Local Authorities that we must look in this matter than to the action of the Government Inspectors. Nor had the Inspectors any power, even where children and young persons were employed, to deal with the surroundings or access to these workshops. It was practically impossible for them to control the sanitary conditions which might obtain in and around the workshops themselves. Another great difficulty was due to the fact that the sweaters were constantly changing their system—sometimes they employed all men, sometimes men and women, and at other times women and children. The investigations of the Inspector were thus made all the more difficult. The Government had not been entirely idle in this matter. An inquiry had been pursued by one of the Inspectors to the Home Office as to the observance of the factory regulations with regard to sanitary matters, hours of meal time, and the cleanliness and ventilation of the workshops, and with regard to overtime at night work. But it was extremely difficult for any successful prosecutions in these cases, because if the Inspector went alone his evidence was unsupported and was contradicted by the evidence of the master and *employés,* and it was impossible to secure a conviction. There were about 2,000 of these workrooms employing about 20,000 people. In 1884 the Inspectors visited and inspected 1,478 workrooms and made the following Report. There were 724 workrooms in which men only were employed, and these were exempt from the Factory Act; 387 workrooms over the sanitary condition of which the Inspectors had no control; and 367 workrooms which in all things were subject to the Factory Act. The condition of the premises in the first two classes was most unsatisfactory in 907 out of the 1,111 cases. In the third class they were unsatisfactory in 235 out of 367 cases. Lists, with the names and addresses, were forwarded to the Local Authorities, who effected much improvement. During the last six months another inquiry had been made, in the course of which 276 workrooms under the Act had been visited—216 were found to have sufficient cubic space, and 48 insufficient; 158 were clean and in a sanitary condition, and 102 were not. The Inspector paid 169 visits to sweaters' workrooms at meal times and at night. In 14 instances he discovered irregularities; but in only four cases could he secure sufficient evidence to prosecute. In three of these cases a conviction was obtained, and one case was still pending. It ought to be borne in mind that these foreign Jews were not accustomed to English ideas of cleanliness; and, being unable to speak English, they were debarred from that social intercourse with their English neighbours which might have led them to follow their example. The Local Authorities had jurisdiction over the premises in which the workshops were contained under the law which applied to ordinary dwelling-houses; but filthy habits, failure of pipes, taps, and defective drains all endangered health. The landlord, however, who only looked for his rent, would take no voluntary action. In the Report—1886-7—of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter in Leman Street, out of 1,162 persons received no fewer than 434 returned themselves as being without a calling, which was a most serious proportion among adult males; and it was from this class almost entirely that the workshops of sweaters were being recruited. The noble Earl who introduced the subject had visited the sweaters with righteous indignation; but they were really to be commiserated, for they were themselves in a very difficult position. The contractors were constantly lowering the prices, and the sweaters were compelled to lower the wages. One of them, asked if he were a sweater, said—"Certainly, I am a sweater. I sweat from 6 o'clock in the morning to midnight six days out of the seven, and my earnings are exceedingly small." The sweater had to put up with profits not greater than those of his best hands. One reason why this evil went on increasing was, he thought, the idea prevalent in foreign countries that the streets of London were paved with gold, and that foreigners had only to come here to find plenty of work. He had heard it said that advertisements were even inserted in foreign papers in the Jewish language announcing that there was plenty of work to be obtained in London. With regard to the remedies mentioned in Mr. Burnett's Report for the existing state of things, it had, first of all, been suggested that the Factory Acts should be applied to men. For his part, he should be very sorry to see any such extension. No doubt, it was necessary for the protection of some classes of the population, such as women and children, that legislation should step in, for they were not in a position to protect themselves; but he should be very sorry if anything was done by their Lordships to interfere with the means of full-grown men obtaining a livelihood in the severe struggle for existence. Another suggestion was that there should be a limitation of hours; and to this, again, what he had said as to the extension of the Acts to men in a great measure applied. It had also been urged that the Government contracts should not be given out to sweaters. But in the case of Government contracts there was no cause for complaint, for the prices paid were considerably higher than generally pre-prevailed for lower-class clothes. Thus the Government paid 2*s.* for the making of a postman's coat, whereas a well-finished coat, with linings and trimmings, was made by these unfortunate people for 1*s.* 2*d.* or 1*s.* 4*d.* at the most. It was also suggested that a Commission of Inquiry should be held. He quite agreed with his noble Friend who had brought forward this subject that it was one of great importance. It had been brought prominently under notice by the recent Report of Mr. Burnett—a man eminently qualified to deal with the subject, having been secretary for many years of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, a trade union which, in 1886, had a membership of 51,689, and possessed 432 branches in different parts of the Empire, in the United States, and in France. But Mr. Burnett had himself experienced the difficulties of obtaining full and correct information on this subject, owing to the unwillingness of people to come forward and give evidence. There was also a great conflict of evidence between that of the sweaters and that of the workers. He thought it was desirable that the two classes should be confronted before a competent tribunal such as was now suggested, and that the evidence should be well sifted. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Sandhurst) had suggested that the inquiry should assume a larger sphere; but this subject was one of great difficulty and importance, and he thought that a Committee appointed to inquire into it would have quite enough to do, and, moreover, there was already a Committee of the other House appointed to inquire into the kindred subject of foreign pauper immigration. He, therefore, did not think that the terms of the noble Earl's Motion ought to be extended. Care ought to be taken not to drive the trade away altogether from this country, which would be a considerable loss. Possibly, if these dens were to be entirely swept away, there would be a danger of the trade being driven abroad, and of the finished articles coming into this country instead of being made here. With so many noble Lords in that House who were philanthropists and took a deep interest in all questions affecting the social welfare of the people, he believed that a Committee of their

Lordships' House, which would exhaustively inquire into and report upon the whole subject, would receive the confidence and respect of the public. On behalf of Her Majesty's Government, he had to say that they would assent to the Motion of the noble Earl.

Motion *agreed to.*

LIABILITY OF TRUSTEES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law relating to the duties and liability of trustees—Was *presented* by The Lord Herschell; read 1ª. (No. 24.)

FIRE AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, EXETER.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Address for,

Reply of the local magistrates to the Report of Captain Shaw on the late fire at Exeter.—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Address *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 28*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Members Sworn—Edward Brodie Hoare, esquire, *for* Hampstead Borough; The honble. William Henry Wentworth Fitzwilliam, *for* York, West Riding, Southern Part (Doncaster Division).

Supply—*considered in Committee — Resolutions* [February 27] *reported.*

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Grand Junction Water, *put off;* Metropolitan Outer Circle Railway.

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Speeches in Parliament * [149]; Parliamentary Elections (Seamen's Votes) * [150]; Intestates Estates * [151].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

GRAND JUNCTION WATER BILL

(*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) moved, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months. He opposed the Bill because, in addition to the injury it inflicted upon the localities which it affected, it was a most objectionable measure in the public interest. It was perfectly unnecessary to speak of the value of the River Thames. The River Thames at the present moment was not only of the greatest benefit to the inhabitants on its banks, but it was used by the people of London as a playground and a health resort. The Bill took fresh powers to acquire land in the parish of Dorney, near to Surley Hall, above Windsor, for the purposes of their undertaking, but it had a much wider scope than it purported to have. The real object of the Bill was to enable the Company to move the whole of its works from Hampton, where they were now placed, higher up the River; invading an entirely new district, while the old district would not be used at all. The promoters of the Bill knew very well that no more water would be allowed to be taken out of the River Thames. They knew that a provision of that kind would never be sanctioned by the House of Commons for one moment, and therefore, in order to blind the House, they inserted in the Bill words to provide that no more water should be taken out of the Thames than was now taken. But what they did was to take power to intercept the water before it reached the Thames. He failed to see the difference of taking the water out of the Thames and intercepting it before it reached that River. So far as the water in the River was concerned, the Conservators were able to test the quantity taken out. If it were intercepted before it reached the River there would be no check whatever upon them, and they could practically take any quantity they pleased without limit. If the sources were tapped from which the Thames was fed, and all the springs taken away, the River would be diminished by a quantity which it was impossible to estimate. The River itself would not be diminished by a known quantity, but by intercepting the sources it would be diminished by an unknown quantity which it was impossible to estimate. It was believed that the effect of the proposed works of the Company would be to reduce the water in the Thames in the summer months, which at the present moment was very low, by one-sixth of its present flow. The inhabitants living along the banks of the River altogether objected to the Bill. Another objection to the measure was that it contained no safeguard or protection at all as to the quantity of water that would be taken. There was no provision whatever by which to check the amount that might be taken, and nothing could prevent the Company from taking more than they might be authorized to take. He trusted that the House would forgive him for moving the rejection of the Bill in this manner, but it was a measure which would seriously injure his own constituents. He had the honour of representing a constituency which lived along the banks of the Thames for 16 miles—all the way from Staines to Teddington Lock. They were of opinion that their existence depended on the manner in which the House treated this measure; many of them obtained their livelihood from the River; if not directly, at all events indirectly, from those who came down to fish and enjoy the boating. If this Bill were passed their occupation would be gone, and, therefore, their interests would be seriously affected. They felt that if a large quantity of water was taken from the River the effect of the diminution of the volume of water would very much diminish the speed of the flow, the consequence being that the River would silt up in a manner very detrimental to the traffic. In the course of last summer the River silted up in a serious manner just below the point where the Grand Junction Company propose to take the water, and if any further quantity of water was taken away the traffic upon the River at that part might be virtually destroyed. The next point was that in the summer time the water would not be bank high, and great quantities of mud would be exposed to the daily action of the sun, causing a large amount of effluvia to arise, which would be most injurious to the health of the inhabitants on the banks. If the Bill passed it would materially affect the River at Richmond and Twickenham. It was almost possible now during the summer to walk across the River at certain points, but if this Bill passed it would be left almost dry. He thought the House would be exceedingly jealous before they consented to do anything further that might be calculated to injure the River. Windsor and Eton were anxious about their water supply. They had lately purchased their works, and feared the supply might be tapped; but at any rate, if this Bill passed, and it did diminish the water in the River, they knew they would be unable to work the machinery by which they supplied themselves with water. There was another matter of great importance. If these works were constructed it was feared that the foundations of Windsor Chapel would be affected, and the safety of the Castle itself imperilled. A Report had been made to the Dean and Chapter some time ago that the lack of water was already undermining the foundations of the Chapel. If the water was contracted still further the probable result would be a subsidence of the soil. It was feared that if this Bill passed the whole of the water beneath the Castle mound might be drawn off. Another point was this—in the dry summer of last year there were visible marks in Winsdor Forest that, the water being taken away from the trees, they showed great signs of decay in consequence. If any quantity of water were permanently taken away the trees in Windsor Forest would be seriously injured. Then, again, the market gardeners were afraid that their land would no longer be fit for the purposes for which it was now utilized, seeing that they were entirely dependent for their supply of water on the water proposed to be drained off by this Company. In addition, the roads in the locality would be rendered useless to those who lived there. He would only point out what occurred at Hampton. At the present moment the roads had been so much taken up by the Water Companies that the Local Authorities had had to buy land in order to put in sewers. The tramway which was about to be formed in the neighbourhood had been stopped, and the inhabitants could not obtain the communication which they ought to have, because the Water Company were interfering with them. As far as London was concerned there was another very serious point. If the water of the Upper Thames were impounded great injury would be done to the scouring power of the River, and the ebb and flow of sewage would constantly be going on between London and Woolwich. The sewage, instead of being carried off by the return water, would be allowed to go backwards and forwards with the tide. He wished to know why the Conservators of the River Thames had not taken distinct action in the matter? Parliament had placed in their hands the preservation of the River Thames. At the present moment there were a large number of Water Companies, which supplied the Metropolis with water, and he wished to know if the Conservators were likely to receive a larger sum from the Grand Junction Company if they consented to this proposal, and did not treat it in the way it deserved. He thought it was extremely hard that the Conservators should bring criminal prosecutions against persons who polluted the water, and yet were willing to part with the water bodily for a profit, although the inhabitants of London got no benefit from the expenditure. There should be no question that the water supply of the Metropolis ought to belong to the Metropolis, and that would come to pass before very long. The way in which the Water Companies at the present moment treated the public certainly failed to meet with universal approbation. They cut off the water from the poor, and the way in which they raised the rates and made the people pay for the concessions which were given to them did not commend them to public approbation. He wished to know how long was that House prepared to give to these Water Companies privileges for which the public must hereafter pay? There could be no doubt that Lord Cross's Bill would have been a good measure for the people of London. If that Bill had been carried the Metropolis would have been much better off in regard to its water supply than it was at present. He feared that they would never get the same terms again. Since then the Water Companies had spent no less than £1,600,000 on works, all of which would have to be paid for. Until there was one grand plan for the entire supply of the Metropolis, all money expended in this way would be money thrown away. How long was Parliament going to allow these Companies to spend money over which they would have no control. The Company did not propose to raise further capital, which made the scheme all the more objectionable, as if they used their unexhausted powers the capital so used would not be liable to the restrictions Companies applying for new powers had to submit to. Personally, he should resist the proposals contained in the Bill in every way. He objected to the second reading, because he did not think that the money of the ratepayers should be spent in order to oppose the Bill in Committee. He understood that the Government intended to support the Bill. At the present moment the Company could increase their works without injuring the taxpayers or the people of London. When the House gave further powers to the Southwark and Vauxhall Company, they accompanied their powers with a sinking fund to pay off the capital authorized to be raised within a certain term. Therefore, in every shape the measure was most objectionable. The last Report of the Local Government Board spoke of the increasing purity of the River. He believed that at the present moment the water supply of London was more pure than that supplied either to Birmingham or Glasgow. No doubt the water had been rendered year by year more pure through the exercise of the provisions which Parliament had imposed upon the Water Companies. He hoped the House would throw out this Bill on the second reading, and not put the parties who were opposing it to the enormous expense which an investigation upstairs would entail. He begged to move the rejection of the Bill.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he rose for the purpose of seconding the rejection of the Bill. It seemed to him that the measure would not only do an injury to the community, but that it was framed in such a way that it was a positive insult to the House. It assumed that the Members of that House were perfect fools; it assumed that they did not know that a river was fed by its tributaries. He supposed the Company thought that the House of Commons imagined that the whole of the Thames water came down in the shape of rain from the sky. He would read one of the clauses of the Bill in order to show what he meant—namely, the 10th clause, which said—

> "The Company may from time to time by means of the works by this Act authorized, take, collect, and divert into their now existing reservoirs and works, and the works by this Act authorized, and therein impound and thence distribute the waters of the River Thames and

its tributaries, and of any of the other streams and waters shown on the deposited Plans or on or near the site of the works, by this Act authorized, or on any land, for the time being, belonging to the Company: Provided that nothing herein contained shall authorize the Company to take from the River Thames a larger quantity of water than they are authorized to take under the powers of the Acts hereinbefore recited."

That meant that the Company should not take in water they had not power to take at the present moment when they claimed to take any water they liked from the tributaries of the Thames. The hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) who opposed the Bill, had spoken in the interests of the inhabitants above Teddington Lock. He (Mr. Labouchere) spoke on behalf of those below Teddington Lock. At the present moment so much water was taken from the River that its volume was diminished by about one-third. The consequence was that the mud was carried up by the tide and deposited, the tide not being strong enough to sweep it away. Any hon. Member could see that for himself by looking at the opposite side of the River from the House of Commons. Under these circumstances, he did not think that they should give power to any Company whatever to take water from the tributaries of the Thames. He understood that Mr. Joseph Lucas had made a survey of the water-bearing strata of the Thames Valley. That matter was a large one, and ought to be treated by the House; but it ought not to be taken piecemeal. No Company should be allowed to go to that House and ask for powers which were calculated to injure a river which was of so much importance to Londoners. He had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, that no doubt a formidable coalition had manifested itself against the Bill, and he was interested in that coalition, because on previous occasions he had taken part in it, and he had found himself in alliance with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Dixon-Hartland). On this occasion, however, he would ask the House not to be guided by those hon. Members. The hon. Member for Uxbridge, who moved the rejection of the Bill, drew a gloomy picture of what would happen if the Bill were passed. He had made statements of an alarming character. In the first place, he said that the Thames would run dry; that the mud would be uncovered and exposed in consequence of the Thames running dry, which would produce a pestilential effluvia that would be dangerous to health, and might lead to loss of life; that Windsor Castle would subside and possibly tumble into the River; that all the trees in Windsor Forest would decay and die; that every road in the neighbouring locality would become impassable, and cease to be of any use whatever to public traffic. No doubt these were statements of an alarming character; but they were statements which he thought the House would agree could not be taken on the mere assertion of the hon. Member for Uxbridge.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he was quite sure that the noble Lord did not wish to misrepresent him. He had not made those statements, but he had said that they were brought forward by those who were opposed to the Bill as statements of its probable result.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that might be so; but, at any rate, the hon. Member had endeavoured to influence the House by repeating the statements. It was obvious that they were statements which required careful examination. They were allegations which could not be allowed to rest upon any *ex parte* statement of facts. If the hon. Member was correct in the forecast he had made as to the result of the Bill, no Committee of the House of Commons would hesitate for one moment in rejecting the measure. But the question was, were they correct? The statements which had been made as to the effect of the Bill upon Windsor Castle and the Thames, and all the other effects he had stated to the House, were not questions which the House could, on a second reading stage, examine for themselves. He thought it would be an unprecedented thing if any *bonâ fide* project for carrying out a great public improvement, such as an addition to the water supply of London, were thrown out on the second reading. He thought he was right in saying that there was no precedent whatever. What was the question that ought to be decided by the Bill? It was essentially a scientific one, on which the evidence of scientific men must be heard. What was the question? It was this—Whether the River Thames and all the amenities of the River Thames would vanish if this Water Bill were passed? He would ask the House with great confidence whether that was a question they could decide in a debate on the second reading? It was a question upon which evidence must be called and thoroughly sifted by a Committee upstairs. What would be the position of the House if it took upon itself on an *ex parte* statement a project such as this, which might be productive of the greatest possible advantage to a very large number of people? In the speeches of the hon. Member for Northampton and the hon. Member for Uxbridge not one word was said about a most important part of the community—the 500,000 of the population of London who had no recognized representation in that House and no local self-government of their own, and who, if the House did not protect them with the greatest possible care, might suffer great injury if the Bill were rejected. The present Company averred that they were not at the present moment in a position to supply 500,000 of the population of the Metropolis with water unless they got these powers. That was their statement, and the hon. Member for Northampton would hardly deny that any Gas or Water Company, or any other Company, had privileges which should be protected by the House. He maintained that the House could not in common justice to a large population, without authorized information, throw out a Bill of this kind upon any *ex parte* statement. The Bill undoubtedly ought to be allowed to go upstairs. He had only one more point to bring before the House, but it was a point of great importance. The Inspector of the Local Government Board, who was appointed by the Board to report yearly on the condition of the Metropolitan water supply, had been made aware of this project and had reported upon it. The document was long, and therefore he would not read it, but if any hon. Member would turn to the document he would find that the Inspector had reported in favourable terms on the scheme, and there was not one word in it about all the terrible results which the hon. Member for Uxbridge had stated. He found nothing in it about Windsor Castle, or the trees of Windsor Forest, or the pestilential effluvia, but he did find this passage—

> "There can be no question that if the Directors succeed in carrying out this project the Company will greatly improve its position."

[*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Yes; but this position was that of a Company authorized and bound to supply London with water. The hon. Members for Northampton and Uxbridge had no consideration for the consumers; they thought only of the people who made a playground of the Thames; whereas he (Lord Randolph Churchill) thought of those who were dependent for their supply of water upon schemes of this kind. The Report went on to say—

> "The consumers, numbering nearly 500,000 persons, will benefit by having at command a larger, and, so far as the upper source is concerned, a better supply than heretofore. But this project, by the possibilities it introduces, may fairly be regarded as the initiatory step towards the improvement of the water supply of all the Thames-deriving Companies, involving the interests of more than 2,500,000 people."

He asked the House if this was a project they ought to reject peremptorily on the second reading without any examination—without the slightest consideration for the interests of the Metropolis, or for the 2,500,000 of the population who, for all they knew, were dependent for their water on this supply? He appealed with great confidence to Her Majesty's Government and the Chairman of Committees to say whether he was not perfectly justified in his contention that this was a Bill which the House was bound to send upstairs? If, after a due examination, after studying the evidence, the House was dissatisfied with the decision of the Committee the whole question could be brought before the House again. He implored the House in the interests of the inhabitants of London not to reject the Bill.

Mr. RICHARDSON - GARDNER (Windsor) said, he intended to oppose the second reading of the Bill. He did so, not on the general grounds which had been brought forward by previous speakers, but as the Representative of a very large constituency, and a very ancient constituency, on the borders of the Thames. He was anxious to point out how their interests would be very materially affected if this measure were passed. The Corporation of Windsor—the town he had the honour to represent—had lately purchased, or were about to purchase, for the only question remaining to be settled was the amount of the purchase money which was now under arbitration by the Board of Works, a quantity of land which was to be devoted for the purpose of securing the health of the inhabitants of the town. Not only were they entering into this arrangement, but they were engaged with the present generation to pay the sum of money it was necessary to raise, although the scheme was for the benefit of generations that were to come. What would be the result to the Corporation of Windsor and its water works if this Bill passed? The measure authorized the Company to take 300 acres of land contiguous to Windsor and Eton, where the promoters meant to make shafts and adits. By doing so they would draw from the strata the water out of probably 50,000 or 100,000 acres in the immediate neighbourhood. The Bill authorized the Company to draw water which might be found in or under any lands acquired by the Company. But they could not limit themselves to the water found in or under the lands they required, because this particular piece of land was like the neck of a bottle, and would suck in and withdraw all the water out of the chalk formation. What would be the consequence to the inhabitants of Windsor and Eton? It would be found after the Corporation had purchased the land to which he referred, and had spent a large sum of money upon it, that all their wells would be tapped and dried. What security, therefore, could they have for supplying Windsor and Eaton with water, which was undoubtedly as important to those places as the supply to the inhabitants of London? The Company knew very well that the land they proposed to acquire contained a large quantity of water. With regard to the national property contained in Windsor, and particularly Windsor Castle, he would not follow all the arguments of his hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill, but he would say this—that some 20 years ago there was a conflagration in Windsor Castle, and the authorities, being very much alarmed at what had occurred, immediately constructed works for wells in a high position in Windsor Forest, so that the water from certain towers then erected might find its way to Windsor Castle. If a fire were to occur there again, and these wells had been dried by the works of the Grand Junction Company, a very serious calamity might occur. He was told that the Company had made some suggestions to the Board of Works which might be satisfactory to them, but he thought that whatever terms they might offer, or whatever suggestions they might make, it would be much better for the Board of Works to rely upon and preserve the sources of supply they had now, rather than trust to others which they knew not of. There were other reasons why this Bill should not be read a second time; but, seeing that it was a Private Bill, he would not enter into them, but he would leave the measure to the judgment of the House, simply intimating that he should record his vote against it.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, as the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had appealed to the Government to give its support to the Bill, he wished to say a few words in answer to that appeal in regard to the course which he would recommend the House to take upon the measure. In the first place, he would point out to the House that this was no wanton application on the part of the Company, but that it was absolutely necessary for them to come to Parliament for additional powers in regard to the supply of water. The Report of the Water Examiner in London to the Local Government Board pointed out clearly last year that the demands upon the resources of this Company had approached almost perilously to the limits of supply. He would only read one paragraph of the Report in order to show what the opinion of the Water Examiner was—

"The expansion of the demand for water in the district supplied by the Grand Junction

Company, and the circumstances under which the supply was carried out during the past two summers, when it approximated closely on two or three occasions to 22,000,000 gallons daily, showed that the time had arrived when a further enlargement of the works must be arranged for."

The House would see that it was consequently imperative on the Company to come to Parliament for further powers in connection with a supply of water. The question next arose whether the Company could get the enormous supply they absolutely required in the neighbourhood of their existing works. From the evidence before the House it was evident that they could not obtain the supply in the neighbourhood of their existing works, and that if they were by any means enabled to do so, it would not be a satisfactory one, in consequence of the building operations now going on. The next question was whether the proposed source of supply was, from a sanitary point of view, a good one. On that point he thought there could be no question whatever. The source from which it was proposed to obtain the supply was an infinitely superior one to that which the Company at present drew upon. Therefore, whether the House looked at the needs of the Company or the source from which they proposed to obtain a supply, the application would be found to be a justifiable one. No doubt the objections which had been raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) were of a serious nature. He had no desire to express any opinion upon those objections on the part of the Government, but he agreed with his noble Friend the Member for South Paddington that that was a question in regard to which the House was not in a position to come to a satisfactory decision. It must of necessity be a matter to be inquired into in the usual manner by a Committee of the House of Commons. The position the Government took in the matter was this —they recommended the House to pass the second reading, in order that the Bill might go before a Select Committee, where all the objections which had been raised would be fully considered, and the question would be decided upon its merits.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said he intended to ask the House to reject the Bill for precisely the reasons that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) asked the House to pass it, and not for any of those matters which had been put to the House, no doubt accurately enough, by the hon. Members who had moved and seconded the rejection of the measure, but for a matter upon which the House was perfectly competent to pass an opinion. He spoke on behalf of the population of London. He would put this to the noble Lord and those who thought of voting with him. The proposal was to give to a private Company power to take from the Thames, which was already falling very short year by year, for the benefit of that Company's pocket, water which they were to sell at a profit, and which they should go further away to find, instead of reducing that which was now an insufficient supply. The noble Lord said that the House was not competent to judge of the question. There were matters within the knowledge of the House which they could not help recognizing. One of them was that the Thames for years, except in seasons of flood, had been deficient in volume, and was growing more deficient year by year. His own experience might not be of much value, but he frequently visited the district from which this water was proposed to be taken. He was fishing there only on Saturday last, and, therefore, he spoke with some knowledge when he said that the Thames was not more than two or three inches higher in mid-winter than it generally was in the drought of summer. It used to be that the Thames was only low in summer, but that was not the case now. It was proposed that the Grand Junction Company should take the water away and sell it, and they were told that that was a matter upon which a Committee upstairs could form a better opinion than the House itself. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board intimated that the Government were prepared to support the second reading of the Bill. He was very sorry to hear it. In the interests of the people of London he was sorry to hear such an announcement. He maintained that the Government would do better to prevent that which was an important source of health, because a well-fed river was always a source of health, from being further interfered with by a private Company which would soon have to be bought up in some of the arrangements which were about to be made. He asked the House to reject the scheme. They were told that the Company must have water—that was to say that the Company must have goods to sell. Let the Company then get their goods from a longer distance by the means which science had placed in their hands, just as Glasgow and Manchester had to do. Why should a private Company be allowed to convert the Thames into a muddy ditch simply for their own benefit? The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said the source from which the Company proposed to take their supply was a superior source to that from which they obtained it now. That was quite true; but why should the River itself have its volume of water extracted, and mere sewage, filth, and mud retained in it? He asked the House to reject the Bill as an impertinent attempt on the part of a private Company to make money out of the health of the people.

MR. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.) wished to point out that the arguments used by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington and the President of the Local Government Board were arguments which should induce the House to look at the question, not from the point of view taken by the Grand Junction Company, but from the point of view of the supply of water to London generally. It might be necessary for this Company for sanitary purposes to remove their works from Hampton to Windsor on account of the pollution of the supply by cesspools. It might, therefore, be necessary to withdraw the water supply from Hampton and for the works to be removed to some other place. On the other hand, his hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had pointed out a number of evils which would be created if the Bill were passed. The proper course, then, was to refer the whole question of the water supply of London to a Committee. It was not a question pertaining to this one Company alone, but it was a question pertaining to the entire water supply of the Metropolis, and that being so, he ventured to suggest that those who opposed the Bill should come to an understanding that the matter should be referred to a Committee in order that the whole question of the supply of water to London should be thoroughly gone into.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.), in supporting the Amendment, said, he hoped the House would allow him to say a few words, as he regarded himself to some extent as an expert, being himself the Chairman of a large Water Company. The intention of the promoters of the Bill appeared to be twofold. First, to obtain a superior supply of water; and, secondly, to take no more water out at Windsor than they now took out at Hampton. They were told that the water supply at Hampton was impure. He thought that they ought not to condone the laxity of the Thames Conservancy Board, who, against the interests of the riparian owners, allowed to be poured into the Thames millions of gallons of sewage. He thought it was wrong that the water of the Thames should be injured owing to the laxity of the Conservancy Board. The argument was that the Company would not take more water at Windsor than at Hampton; but that argument could hardly be held by any man of business, because the difference consisted in taking water 20 miles higher up the River. It was just the same as taking a glass of water out of a nine-gallon cask instead of a water bottle, seeing that the volume of water at Hampton was only one-third of that at Windsor. He hoped the House would vote against the second reading as a protest against the laxity of the Thames Conservancy Board, and in order to prevent the inhabitants of Windsor and Eaton from being subjected to the despoiling of the most beautiful prospect near London.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he would not detain the House long; but he would recommend hon. Members not to depart from the usual course, but to remit the consideration of the Bill to a Select Committee. Many allegations had been made on both sides in reference to the Bill that were contradictory to each other, and it was quite impossible that the House could, as a rule, from mere impressions, derived from different statements, come to a right conclusion with regard to them. Every one of the statements made in course of the discussion could be investigated before a Committee upstairs, where the constituents of the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) and the hon. Member for Windsor (Mr. Richardson-Gardner) would be able to protect their own interests. He did not see why the persons represented by the hon. Members for Uxbridge and Windsor should not defend their interests before a Select Committee appointed by the House to inquire into all the vexed questions raised by the Bill. The junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had made a powerful impression by appealing to larger considerations relating to the character and state of the Thames. Now, the Thames would be represented before the Committee by the Thames Conservancy Board, who were to appear in opposition to the Bill; and it would be their first duty to show distinctly the effect of the operation of the Bill upon the condition and volume of the water. That was a question which it was absolutely necessary to decide on its merits. If the hon. Member for Northampton had displayed his usual candour in dealing with the House he would have told them, when he spoke of the low level of the Thames at this time of the year—namely, mid-winter—that there was an unusually dry summer and an unusually dry winter.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that except after a flooded winter a few years ago, the Thames in mid-winter had been invariably low for the last 10 years.

Mr COURTNEY said, that was a new allegation, but it was one that could be investigated by a Select Committee. There was nothing that the Committee would not have power to examine into with regard to the effect of the operations of the Company, if the Bill were read a second time. So far as a general review of the Thames was concerned, there was only one point which a Committee would not originally inquire into, and that was the probable general effect of the operations of the Company upon the beauty of the Thames. He did not know whether any particular persons would have power to appear before the Committee upon that matter. In reference to the general effect upon the Thames and its banks, he would suggest that if the House consented to read the Bill a second time, as he hoped it would, it might be expedient to agree to an Instruction to the Committee to consider what the effect of the Bill might be upon the beauty of the Thames, and what safeguards could be introduced in order to protect the River under that aspect of the case. Subject to that suggestion he did not know a single issue raised in the Bill which could not be fairly and properly considered by a Private Bill Committee, and which certainly could not be properly decided by the House itself.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) remarked that there was one point which had not been gone into, and that was how the Bill would affect the whole supply of water to London. Many persons thought that the water supply of the Metropolis was not in a satisfactory position, and required to be considered as a whole. Therefore, every Bill passed by Parliament which tended to increase and emphasize the present system by retarding the carrying out of a larger and better supply of water for the whole of London, was one which required careful consideration. That was the view he took of the matter, because in his judgment what was required was that the entire system of the Metropolitan water supply should be carefully investigated. The more formidable and larger the Water Companies became, the more difficult it would be in future to re-arrange and consolidate the whole of the water supply of London. Therefore, as they were about to enter upon domestic legislation, he thought the best course for the House to pursue, would be to wait until the entire subject could be inquired into by a Select Committee. He thought the Bill should be referred to a Committee to consider the whole question of the water supply of London.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 104; Noes 188: Majority 84. (Div. List No. 16.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

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MERCHANT SEAMEN—CASE OF THE NEGRO RILEY.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to the case of a negro named Riley, who, having been charged by his captain with an offence at sea, which he strenuously denied, was detained in prison at Hull, under repeated remands, the prosecutor not appearing to maintain the charge, for 109 days, and was discharged last week by the magistrate in default of the prosecution appearance; and, whether the accused, having been discharged under such circumstances, is entitled to any remedy for his long detention?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this case. The failure of the prosecution to appear was due to the fact that the ship in which the witnesses were travelling to this country was condemned as unfit at Bermuda, and the crew were paid off and discharged. The record of the Naval Court, held at the British Vice Consulate at Pensacola, which found the prisoner guilty of assault and remitted him to this country for trial, was left at Bermuda; and the captain, who was the prosecutor, was ill in bed. Under these circumstances, the prisoner, who had been in custody since the 25th of October, was discharged by the magistrate; but it was not a case in which I could advise that any compensation should be given.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA — GRANT OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there is any truth in the rumour that it has been in contemplation to grant responsible Government to Western Australia, having a population of under 45,000 souls, and a territory of 1,000,000 square miles, and whether Parliament will be consulted before any steps are taken to encourage or approve any such movements by the Colonial Office; whether he will state the quantity of Government lands which have been already alienated by the Goverment of the Colony, with the approval of the Colonial Office, distinguishing land sold from land leased, and will state the average price obtained per acre in each case; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, a Return of all land grants, sales, or dealings by the Colonial Government during the past 10 years, stating the names of the grantees or lessees respectively, and, in the case of Sydicates or public Companies who have been Concessionaires, giving the names of the members of such Syndicates or Companies, and the terms and conditions of the Concessions in each case?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that it is not proposed, in the event of responsible Government being introduced into Western Australia, to give to the present population the control of the whole of the Crown Lands within the boundaries of the Colony. It would be necessary to pass an Act before responsible Government could be established, so that Parliament will have full opportunity of considering the proposals, should they be proceeded with, before they can be carried out. Her Majesty's Government cannot, however, undertake to consult Parliament before deciding whether a Bill for the purpose should be introduced. The particulars of leases, sales, and grants of Crown Lands in Western Australia are not recorded in this country, and would, therefore, have to be obtained from the Colony. There would be no objection to procure them, in the event of a proposal being made to Parliament for legislation on the subject of the hon. Member's Question.

In further answer to MR. KING,

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he was not able to lay the Returns asked for on the Table, but would make inquiry.

In answer to Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.),

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, the approval of the Colonial Office would be necessary to any scheme proposed.

CRIMINAL LAW—SENTENCES OF FLOGGING.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, since recent legislation reserves the punishment of flogging for offences attended by violence, he will bring in a Bill to repeal the provisions of 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV. c. 28, under which William

Roberts was recently sentenced at Liverpool Assizes to 30 lashes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have consulted with the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice, and they concur in the opinion that the section in question should be repealed. Steps will accordingly be taken by the Government to effect its repeal.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—JOHN SULLIVAN, BLACKSMITH — CAPTAIN MASSEY, R.M.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether John Sullivan, blacksmith, whose sentence of one month's imprisonment, under the Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, was set aside by the Court of Exchequer on the ground of there being no evidence to justify a conviction, was tried, convicted, and sentenced by Captain Massey, R.M.; whether at Tarbert, County Kerry, in January, certain persons were convicted by the same Captain Massey, R.M., of the offence of being present at a meeting of the Irish National League; whether in passing sentence Captain Massey declared—

> "It had been established to his satisfaction that a meeting had been held; that that fact raised the presumption that it was a National League meeting; and that the onus of proving that it was not a National League meeting rested on the accused;"

and, whether Captain Massey, R.M., is one of the magistrates of the sufficiency of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant has satisfied himself, as required by "The Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887?"

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: John Sullivan was tried, with four others, on a charge of conspiracy to Boycott, before Mr. Macdermott, R.M., and Captain Massey, R.M., and sentenced to one month's imprisonment. This sentence was set aside by the Court of Exchequer on account of the absence of evidence of a Boycotting conspiracy in Sullivan's case. Evidence of such a conspiracy had been given in the first of the cases heard by the magistrates, but it was not formally repeated in Sullivan's case; and, while the magistrates had had full oral evidence of it, it did not appear on the deposition inspected by the Superior Court, which, therefore, had no judicial knowledge of it existence. As regards the cases heard at Tarbert Petty Sessions, Captain Massey, R.M., reports that the statement quoted is altogether erroneous. Appeals, however, have been taken against the convictions; and I am, therefore, precluded from entering further into the matter. Captain Massey was one of the legally qualified Resident Magistrates under the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882, and has been re-appointed as one of the magistrates of the sufficiency of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant has satisfied himself, as required by the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS — PROMOTION TO THE LOWER DIVISION.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the List of Writers to be promoted to the Lower Division of the Civil Service lately issued is to be considered as a final one?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The consideration of copyists' claims in the greater part of the Public Offices is completed, and there will be no further promotions to the Lower Division so far as these Offices are concerned. Two or three Departments are still under consideration.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1887—ACTION OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Colonial Governments have initiated legislation for the prevention of the import and sale of falsely and fraudulently marked goods, and so as to bring Colonial Law into harmony with "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887?"

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The greater number of Colonies have not yet replied to the Circular Despatch addressed to them by the Secretary of State in September last, urging legislation in harmony with the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887; but all the answers, as far as received, have been in favour of such legislation. The Secretary of State is now addressing a reminder to those Colonies which have not answered.

EGYPT—LIGHTHOUSES IN THE RED SEA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Is he aware that for 1,000 miles up the Red Sea there is no lighthouse; is he aware that the light dues of the Red Sea amount to £60,000 a year, and only £30,000 a year is expended on lights; is he aware that a very large number of valuable vessels, with cargo, have been wrecked during the past few years in the Red Sea, and that great peril and anxiety attends the navigation of those waters to British seamen; and, will he communicate these facts to the Egyptian or Turkish Government, and urge immediate attention to the danger alluded to?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): From Perim Light there is no light in the usual track of vessels for 840 miles. The facts stated in the second paragraph are approximately correct; but reductions in the dues are intended. The Egyptian Government are now erecting a new and valuable light on Shadwan out of their receipts, and one was erected two or three years ago on the outlying spit of Perim. Wrecks have occurred in the southern part of the Red Sea; and it is desirable that certain additional lights should be placed to guard against the existing dangers. Communications on the subject have been, and are, going on with the Governments concerned.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—MR. O'CALLAGHAN, SUB-COMMISSIONER.

MR. DILLON (Mayo E.) (for Mr. M'CARTAN) (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. O'Callaghan, who is one of the Sub-Commissioners appointed for the County of Down, is a landlord whose rents were largely reduced by the Land Commission.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Having regard to the pretty general reduction of rents in Ireland, I do not think it at all improbable that Mr. O'Callaghan may have had reductions made in any rent which may be payable to him. The Land Commissioners, however, inform me that they do not consider that they are called upon to investigate his private affairs. They are perfectly satisfied with his qualifications, and the manner in which he discharges his duties as an Assistant-Commissioner.

IRELAND—BOYCOTTING—DEATH OF MICHAEL SULLIVAN, CAR DRIVER, KILLARNEY.

MR. SHEEHAN (Kerry, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to a paragraph recently current in the newspapers about the sudden death of Michael Sullivan, car driver, Killarney, Whether there is any truth in the allegation that deceased was Boycotted, and died of starvation; if he has read the evidence of the wife of deceased, in which she states that her husband "took a good dinner, and had a cup of tea before going to bed" on the night he died; whether Dr. Hickson deposed that deceased was in a weak state of health, and was affected with heart disease, which was the cause of his death; and, if the verdict of the jury was, that "Michael Sullivan died on 16th February, 1888, of syncope or failure of the heart's action?"

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The man referred to does not appear to have been Boycotted, or to have died of starvation. The evidence before the Coroner showed that death appeared to have been caused from the effect stated in the Question.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1887—LABELS ON GOODS—"FOREIGN MAKE."

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If under the Merchandise Marks Bill it is permitted to import goods with only numbers and letters on the boxes and labels, or would it be an infringement of the Act to add the words yards or dozens after the goods are warehoused for the purposes of sale? The hon. Gentleman also asked, If under the Merchandise Marks Bill it will be sufficient to have the words "Foreign make" plainly marked on such goods as ribbons, gloves, hosiery, and other textile fabrics, without mentioning the particular country of manufacture?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: Under the Merchandise Marks Act there would be no objection to the importation of goods with only numbers and letters on the boxes and labels. Hon. Members will not expect me to express any opinion as to the legality or otherwise of anything that may be done to the goods after they have passed beyond the control of the Customs Authorities. The words "foreign make," though not quite clear, would suffice to pass goods unless they bear the mark of a manufacturer or dealer in this country, in which case the Act requires a direct indication of the country of origin, though I prefer the words "made abroad."

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPEAL OF JEREMIAH BREEN, OF BEAUFORT, KILLARNEY.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Jeremiah Breen, of Beaufort, Killarney, appealed in a land case from the decision of the Sub-Commissioners sitting at Killarney in March, 1884; that three years elapsed before his case was listed for hearing by the Head Commission sitting in Killarney in March, 1887; that the sitting of the Head Commission was then adjourned till August, and that meantime Breen's case was removed from the list; when it is probable his appeal will be heard, as it has now been pending four years; and, what was the old rent, and what is the "fair rent" fixed in March, 1884, by the Sub-Commissioners?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Land Commissioners had informed him that the facts were precisely as stated in the Question. The delay, however, was due to the fact that the tenant had not thought it necessary to apply for a re-hearing in time under the Rules of December, 1883. The application would, in due course, appear in the list for hearing at the next sitting of the Killarney Sub-Commission, the date of whose sitting had not, however, been fixed. The old rent was £25 10*s.* and the judicial rent £21 10*s.*

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say whether it is the fact that during those four years the tenant has had to pay the old rent; and, also, how he can explain that it is the fault of the tenant for not having had his application listed, when, as a matter of fact, the tenant's case was listed in March, 1887, when the Head Land Commission then adjourned as a mark of respect to the memory of the late Mr. Vernon, and that the name of the case then disappeared from the list?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I cannot answer the first part of the Question as to what rent the tenant has had to pay. The sitting of the Court of Appeal in March, 1887, could not be held, as Mr. J. E. Vernon died in that month, and the Commission was incapable of discharging any judicial functions until his successor was appointed. I have no information about the last part of the Question, and I should rather be inclined to think that the statement is inaccurate.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: That allegation is the whole point of the Question—that his name was on the list of appeals for hearing before the Head Commission in Killarney, in March, 1887. That was three years after his case had first been heard. That then, when it came on to be heard in March, the adjournment took place in consequence of the death of Mr. Vernon, and that then the tenant's name disappeared from the list which was published in November. I wish to know if there is any explanation of that?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: If the hon. Member will renew that portion of his Question I will inquire about it.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I shall do so.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—FAILURE OF THE 9·2-INCH GUNS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, What proportion of the 9·2 guns have failed; who made them; and, whether any more are being constructed of the same pattern?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Twenty-seven 9·2-inch guns have now been proved, of which, if cracking the liner be regarded as failure, five have failed on proof. The guns which cracked their liners were all made in the Royal Gun Factories; but the liners were obtained by contract; and as all which cracked were from one maker, while none made elsewhere cracked, the presumption arises that some peculiarity in the steel may account for the result. The pattern has, however, been altered with regard to the fitting in of the liner.

ARMY (ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT)—INSPECTION AND RECEPTION OF LEATHER.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Judge Advocate General with regard to certain transactions in connection with the inspection and reception of certain leather at the Ordnance Store Department at Woolwich; whether it is true, as stated in the Report, that—

> "In a great many cases the sealed pattern attached to the specification was a very inferior pattern of the articles described;"

whether, as regards hides,—

> "The specification described the very best class of hides, whereas both the sealed pattern and the sample were universally of a quality and dressing inferior to that described in the specification;"

whether a contractor, whose attention was "called to the condition of the hides," stated in evidence,—

> "I accept no responsibility about them, because, when I send in hides properly dressed, and they have been approved by the Inspector, there is an end of the matter, so far as I am concerned;"

and, whether the Government will consider the advisability of establishing a system, under which, after a certain number of articles had been found not to be equal to be specification, the contract should be considered void, and the whole of the goods returned to the contractor?

MR. HANBURY (Preston) wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could say who was the official who was responsible; and what action the War Office proposed to take in regard to the retention of that official in the Public Service?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): My right hon. and learned Friend the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Marriott), to whom I am much indebted for having undertaken an inquiry as to the inspection of leather at Woolwich at my request last year, has now presented a Report which is of a serious character, and is engaging the earnest attention of the Government. As regards Question No. 22, which the hon. Member proposes to put, I would ask him to postpone it until Thursday. The bearing of the Report upon individuals must be dealt with as a whole. I am not sure that I ought not to ask the House to allow me to deal with it, not in the form of an answer to a Question, but in reply to the Motion of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), when I can explain fully the views of the Government on the subject. As regards Question No. 21, the Report seems to me to be, generally speaking, fully supported by the evidence, and contains the three statements quoted by the hon. Member. I may say that I propose in future to withhold tenders, either temporarily or permanently, from firms who persistently neglect to work fully up to standards and specifications. In the case of one contract, which was completed, the defective articles have been, as I mentioned the other day, returned to the contractor, and he has been directed to replace them.

MR. HOWELL inquired, whether the persons mentioned in the Report as responsible were being continued in the employment of the Government in the positions they occupied?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I would rather answer all Questions concerning individuals on Thursday.

MR. HANBURY wanted to know whether the right hon. Gentleman would undertake that Messrs. Dunn and Moody, who had performed a great public service in bringing this subject before the public, should suffer no detriment whatever, either at the War Office or in the Department with which they were connected?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I would rather reserve all I have to say about individuals till I can speak of them as a whole. I admit that Messrs. Moody and Dunn undoubtedly rendered a public service.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked whether, having regard to the seriousness and importance of the subject, the Government would afford an early opportunity of discussing it in a graver way than by mere Questions?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I think that is a Question which ought to be addressed to my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would, in the course of his statement, whenever he made it, say whether there was not at the War Office a list of contractors kept by the Superintendent of Contracts; whether it was decided some time ago to remove from that list the names of Messrs. Ross and Co.; and whether that Order was afterwards rescinded?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I will answer that Question when the proper time comes.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, If men holding more than one croft of the aggregate rental of £4 and upwards per annum in Gairloch, and elsewhere in the Highlands, are precluded from voting in School Board elections, because the rent of any one of their holdings does not come up to £4 per annum?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Endinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): This is purely a legal Question. I refer the hon. Member to Section 12, Sub-section 2, of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, for a statement of the qualification for electors on School Board elections.

POLICE (METROPOLIS)—STREET ROBBERIES IN ST. LUKE'S.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received from Mr. Preston, Vestry Clerk of St. Luke's, a detailed statement of the many street robberies in that parish, together with a copy of the Correspondence between the Vestry Clerk and the Commissioners of Police; whether it is true, that in a letter of the 27th January last from the Commissioners it was stated—

> "That the police have done all that can be reasonably required of them; there is nothing to justify any supposition that they are unable to deal with crime in the locality referred to;"

whether, in reply to that letter on the 8th February, Mr. Preston, the Vestry Clerk, supplied to the Commissioners of Police a second list of street robberies in St. Luke's, to which he has received a reply from one of the Assistant Commissioners, stating, that he—

> "Has to acquaint you that he has made careful inquiry into the statement made by you, which, however, confirms the view previously expressed by him as to the adequacy of the police arrangements in the district;"

and, if this decision of the Commissioner of Police is accurate, that they decline to take any further precautions for the protection of life and property in the parish of St. Luke, will he institute an investigation into the statements of the Vestry, and see that the necessary protection is afforded to the inhabitants?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have received such a communication. The letters of the Commissioner of the 27th of January and the 8th of February were in the terms quoted. The Chief Commissioner, after careful inquiry, has come to the conclusion that the state of crime in the locality is, on the whole, normal; that, except in two or three cases, the offenders have been apprehended; that, under these circumstances, the police of the locality are sufficient to protect the public. I will make further inquiry into the statements of the Vestry with a view to secure necessary protection to the inhabitants.

CENTRAL AFRICA—THE SLAVE TRADE —ATTACK ON PRESBYTERIAN MISSION STATIONS.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the attack by organized bands of Arab slave dealers on the Presbyterian Mission Stations near Lake Nyassa, and the precarious position of the Missionaries and the British Consuls, O'Neill and Hawes; whether Her Majesty's Government has taken, or will take, any steps to assist them; whether he is aware that the African Lake Company, if empowered by Charter to enter into alliance with friendly tribes and assisted by Government, is prepared to equip and maintain an armed police force among the friendly tribes on the northern shores of Lake Nyassa, and to place a gunboat on that lake for the suppression of the rapidly increasing slave trade on its shores; and, whether Government will consider the advisability of treating with the African Lake Company as to the grant of the requisite powers?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, E.): The latest Report from the region in question is from Consul Hawes, dated December 10. He had found Consul O'Neill and the other whites encamped in safety on the north shore of Lake Nyassa. An advance was then contemplated against the Arabs, by whom they had been attacked, and whom they had repulsed with the assistance of friendly Natives. The Nyassa Consul, Mr. Hawes, and Consul O'Neill, of Mozambique, who happened to be travelling in the neighbourhood, repaired to the assistance of the Station menaced by the Arabs. The House will see that Her Majesty's Government could not undertake responsibilities in connection with settlements, established without their concurrence, situate several hundred miles from the sea coast, in a district inhabited by warlike tribes and infested by slave-trading Arabs. Her Majesty's Government have no knowledge of the power of the African Lakes Company to protect life and property in the remote regions where these events occurred; and they are not in a position to confer administrative power over a district which is not under their control.

PENSIONS—CIVIL LIST OF KING GEORGE III.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the statement that the ages of the pensioners now living, who 68 years ago were on the Civil List of King George III., varied from 75 to 92 years, was intended to convey that some of such persons began to receive pensions at the age of seven years, and perhaps earlier, or whether such pensions were for two or more lives; when the persons now aged from 75 to 92 began to receive a pension, and at what ages respectively; on what grounds these pensions were granted; and, why, as they were all charged on the Consolidated Fund last year, the life certificates, which should be produced before payment, were not in all cases required?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Member will find answers to the first three paragraphs of his Question, in far greater detail than I could give them here, in the Report of the Select Committee on Pensions in 1838. As regards the last part of the Question, I have to explain that a charge on the Consolidated Fund does not necessarily mean a payment. It is a provision against an anticipated payment, resembling the insertion of a sum in the Estimates. In the case of a pension no payment would be made, or would be passed by the Audit Office, unless supported by a life certificate.

MR. HANBURY asked, whether the hon. Gentleman admitted that some of these pensions began to run at the age of seven years?

MR. JACKSON: If the hon. Member desires to get information I will refer him to the pages of the Report, in which he will find the name and the full particulars of each of these cases.

MR. HANBURY: These pensions were all charged on the Consolidated Fund during the past year. The hon. Member told me the other day that in one case no certificate was received for three years. Was that pension paid or not? ["Order!"]

MR. JACKSON: A charge on the Consolidated Fund is not the same thing as a payment out of the Consolidated Fund. It is a charge on the Consolidated Fund as a provisional payment which may become due. In the case to which the hon. Gentleman referred, I have made the most searching inquiries, and have satisfied myself that the payment has not been made.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Can the hon. Gentleman inform us whether, in the case of one of the pensions paid seven years ago, the pensioner must have been 136 years of age?

MR. JACKSON said, perhaps the hon. Member referred to the case of a pensioner who was 107 years of age; but he could not answer his Question without further particulars and Notice.

CRIMINAL LAW—RELEASE OF COPE, A CONVICT.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of a convict Cope, *alias* Stockley, arrested at Birmingham on suspicion of having committed various burglaries since his recent release on ticket-of-leave; whether it is the fact that no information of his release was published to the police until several weeks after his release, and not until some days after his re-arrest; and, whether he will undertake that in future due notice shall be published to the police of the intended release on ticket-of-leave of such convicts?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; it is not a fact that no information of this convict's release was published to the police until after his re-arrest. On his release he went to Staffordshire, to the police of which place his discharge from prison had been duly notified by the authorities of Chatham Prison. He reported himself there; but left in a few days without notifying his change of address. I have just received a telegram from the Chief Constable of Birmingham, who says that no blame whatever attaches to the Staffordshire police or to the convict authorities. Due notice always is given of the intended release of a convict.

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—TWEED FISHERIES ACTS—AMENDMENT.

MR. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill this Session to amend the Tweed Fisheries Acts, with the view of remedying the anomalies and grievances in the existing Acts complained of in Petitions signed by all classes of the community?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Yes, Sir; it is the intention of the Government to introduce a general Bill relating to salmon fisheries in Scotland, including the Tweed Fisheries.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—AWARD OF THE MERIT GRANT.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster), asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, in view of the general dissatisfaction expressed by witnesses before the Royal Commission on Education as to the method of awarding the Merit Grant, he will undertake to issue more exact instructions in the forthcoming Code, so that Her Majesty's Inspectors may be able to award the Grant in a more uniform manner?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): I am aware that some dissatisfaction was expressed as to the working of the Merit Grant; but the instructions on the subject are already very full and clear, and I am afraid it would be difficult to amplify them without prejudice to the freedom an Inspector should possess to take all the circumstances into account in assessing the Grant.

BURMAH (UPPER) — THE TEAK FORESTS.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government have now obtained the information promised on 4th August, 1887, with respect to the teak forests in Upper Burmah; whether it is intended to continue the monopoly of the Bombay Burmah Trading Company; and, what decision the Government has arrived at respecting future lessees of these forests?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Government has no information as to the replies addressed to Memorialists on the subject of the teak forests of Burmah, nor has he reason to think that any replies have yet been given. The negotiations with the Bombay Burmah Trading Company have not yet been finally concluded. The further arrangements in reference to these forests are still under consideration.

POST OFFICE—IRREGULAR DELIVERY OF THE IRISH MAILS.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has seen a communication in *The Standard* of Saturday, complaining of the serious irregularity in the delivery of Irish mails, which, arriving at Euston at 6 a.m., were not delivered till 12·30 p.m., or six and a quarter hours after arrival; whether a sum of two guineas per annum was demanded for the privilege of giving the letters to messengers who might be sent to the District Office for them; and, whether, if there be foundation for these charges, he will take immediate steps to have the difficulties removed which impede the delivery of Irish letters?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The letter to which the hon. Member calls my attention referred, I understand, to the Postal District of Bow. I find that a revision of the postal arrangements there is now under consideration, and it is proposed to establish a new delivery of letters, commencing at about 10 a.m. The Irish letters for the District, which do not reach London in time for the first delivery, would fall into this delivery, and would thus be accelerated by about two hours. The difficulty in this case has been that the total number of letters has not hitherto been sufficient to warrant the expense of making an additional delivery, and they are barely sufficient at the present time. The charge mentioned of two guineas a-year was for a private box at the District Office, and is the usual charge.

TRUCK ACT, 1887—PAYMENT OF WAGES.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether there is anything in the provisions of the Truck Act passed last Session which renders it illegal for any employer to give his workmen beer or cider, in addition to their wages, if such gift does not form any part of a contract for wages?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that there is nothing in the provisions of the Truck Act passed last Session to make it illegal for an employer to give his workmen beer or cider in addition to his wages, if such gift does not form any part of the contract for services.

INTERNATIONAL SUGAR BOUNTIES CONFERENCE—THE BANQUET AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Under what head will appear the charge for the expenses in connection with the banquet given at the Foreign Office in November last to the delegates to the International Sugar Bounties Conference, or by whom those expenses have been defrayed; under what head will appear the expenses connected with the visit of the hon. Member for the Toxteth Division of Liverpool (Baron Henry de Worms) to Paris, Brussels, Berlin, and The Hague, in relation to the suppression of the bounties; and, if he can state to the House the amount of these expenses?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member for Cavan will, no doubt, be pleased to hear that there is no charge whatever upon the public in connection with the dinner referred to in the first part of his Question. With regard to the second part of the Question, the hon. Member for the Toxteth Division of Liverpool visited Paris, Brussels, Berlin, and The Hague for an important public object; but his mission was not of a character calculated, or intended, to involve any public charge whatever. The hon. Member undertook this journey solely out of zeal to the Public Service, and the public are greatly indebted to him for what he has done.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES—RE-APPOINTMENT.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government propose to accede to the suggestion of the late Select Committee on Army and Navy Estimates, that it should be re-appointed; and, whether the Government propose the appointment of a Select Committee on the Civil Service Estimates?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member asks me a Question with regard to the Select Committee appointed on the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington

(Lord Randolph Churchill) last year. I will, therefore, take the opportunity of referring to a Question of which the noble Lord has given me private Notice, so that I may answer upon the whole question of the treatment of the Estimates on this occasion. It is the intention of the Government to go considerably further than the re-appointment of the Committee over which the noble Lord presided last year. The Government are most anxious that opportunities should be afforded hon. Members of informing themselves as to the details of the Estimates, as far as it is possible for them to do so, and to have the assistance of hon. Members in regard to the creation of expenditure, which is frequently pressed on the Government in detail by hon. Gentlemen in the House by Questions and Motions; and it is the intention, therefore, of the Government to propose the appointment of three Select Committees on the Estimates—one to which the Army Estimates will be referred; another to which the Navy Estimates will be referred; and one for the consideration of the Votes proposed for the Revenue Departments and the Post Office. The Government are of opinion that it will be necessary to frame the References to the Committees in terms which will restrain them from the consideration of any questions tending to the increase of the charge for those Services. I believe the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) has given Notice for a Committee with reference to the form in which the Estimates shall be presented, and the mode in which they shall be considered. It is intended to ask the House to concur in the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman as to the appointment of a Committee of the House to consider the extremely important question as to the degree in which modifications might, with advantage to the public interest, be made in the forms which govern the discussion of the Estimates in Committee and on Report to the House, with the view of at once effecting an economy of the time of the House, and of securing a more regular and effective examination of the expenditure of the country than has taken place in recent years. The House will see by the appointment of these various Committees that the Government is thoroughly in earnest in endeavouring to secure to Members full opportunity for an effective control over expenditure, while the Executive Government must, of course, retain undiminished responsibility for all questions of policy.

MOROCCO—ALLEGED OUTRAGE UPON A BRITISH SUBJECT.

Sir JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he had seen the telegrams in *The Times* of yesterday and today reporting an outrage upon a British subject in Morocco, according to which the house of a Jewish woman—a widow and a British subject, residing in Tangiers—had been entered, herself and children ill-treated, and a boy of 15, the natural son of a brother, residing with her, forcibly taken away and baptized? He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would carefully inquire into the statement that the British Consul had notice of the threatened outbreak, but took no steps to prevent it? He would further ask him whether the Government would take steps to inquire into the whole matter, and endeavour to obtain restitution of the boy and reparation for the outrage? He should also like to know whether there was any foundation for the statement that such outrages seemed likely to be of frequent occurrence?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The attention of the Marquess of Salisbury has been called to the case of the widow Athias. Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco has been instructed by telegraph to report upon the case, and to telegraph what action he has taken. I have no reason to believe that Sir William Kirby Green is at all backward in protecting British subjects. Everything that is proper will be done.

THEATRES (LONDON AND THE PROVINCES) — CONSTRUCTION — LEGISLATION.

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) inquired, Whether the Government had decided to promote a Bill dealing with the subject of theatres; and, if so, when it would be introduced?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr.

MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The question is still under the consideration of the Government, who will shortly come to a decision.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the imprisonment of Mr. Flynn, a Member of this House:—

Limerick, Ireland,
26th February, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that on yesterday, the 25th instant, at Kanturk, county Cork, James C. Flynn, Esq., Member of Parliament for the North Division of the County of Cork, was convicted of an offence against the 2nd Section, Sub-section 1, of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, and sentenced by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, constituted under the said Act, to be imprisoned in Her Majesty's Male Prison at Cork for the period of twenty-one days without hard labour.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. B. IRWIN,
Resident Magistrate,
and Chairman of the said Court.

The Right honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons,
London.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE.)—II. CLOSURE OF DEBATE.—RESOLUTION.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SECOND NIGHT.]

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had now to ask the House to proceed with the second Resolution, which was as follows:—

"That Questions for the Closure of Debate under Standing Order XIVA. shall be decided in the affirmative, if, when a Division be taken, it appears by the numbers declared from the Chair that not less than One Hundred Members voted in the Majority in support of the Motion."

That Resolution was intended to reduce the majority required to enforce the closure from 200 to 100. He had no doubt that it would be received with regret, and possibly with dissatisfaction by many Members of the House. A proposal of that character was not made with any satisfaction by the Government; but they felt that it was essential in order that the House might proceed to the discharge of its duties. The experience they had last Session satisfied the Government that an alteration of the Rule was necessary. It might be said that this was too great a power to place in the hands of any Party; but he relied upon the fact that there was a discretion vested in the Chair which would prevent the power being exercised arbitrarily or unnecessarily. On two occasions the Chairman of Committees did exercise that power when it was proposed to apply the closure. He did not intend to revive the discussion which lasted over so many days during the last Session of Parliament, and he would only ask the House to consent to this modification of the Rule, as he believed it to be in the interest of the House itself in order to promote the due despatch of Public Business. He earnestly appealed to the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) not to press the Amendment of which he had given Notice, which would make it necessary for the majority on a Division upon a Motion for the Closure to exceed the minority by at least 50 votes, a proposal that he believed would not be found possible to work in practice. Thus, if the minority numbered 180, it would require that the majority should be 230. He begged to move Rule 2.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Questions for the Closure of Debate under Standing Order XIVA. shall be decided in the affirmative, if, when a Division be taken, it appears by the numbers declared from the Chair that not less than One Hundred Members voted in the Majority in support of the Motion."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town), in rising to move, at the end of the Question, to add the following words:—

"Provided always, that should the Question for the Closure of Debate be decided in the negative, no similar Motion shall be made on the same Question until after the time of two hours has elapsed,"

said, he did not feel it necessary to oppose the Rule itself; but what he proposed was that when the House had once negatived the application of the closure, two hours should elapse before it was put again. He thought some such provision was necessary in order to maintain the dignity of the House itself. He did not think that it would be a dignified proceeding to give power to put the Rule in force time after time at short intervals. As the Rule stood the Government of the day would have power of sending out their Whips and bringing in their men, and of putting a Rule in force before anything in the shape of discussion could have occurred after a similar proposal had been negatived. He thought that the House should be protected by permitting some interval to elapse before the Rule was put in operation after it had once been distinctly refused, and he was of opinion that an interval of two hours was not unreasonable. If the Rule were adopted as it stood, he was afraid that it would have a tendency to lower the debates in that House in the esteem of the country, and he was afraid it would prevent the establishment of a good feeling in the House itself. He would not trouble the House by entering into a debate upon the general principle of closure. He would simply say that he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman opposite as to the propriety of amending the Rule; but he did not think that the safeguard suggested in the Amendment was an unreasonable one, or one that ought to be rejected.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question to add words "Provided always that should the Question for the Closure of Debate be decided in the negative, no similar Motion shall be made on the same Question until after the time of two hours has elapsed."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he rose upon a point of Order to ask Mr. Speaker, whether the putting of this Amendment would preclude the discussion of the earlier part of the Rule? Would hon. Members be precluded from discussing the earlier part of the Resolution at all?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes; and I waited purposely before calling on the hon. Gentleman to move his Amendment, in order to give the House an opportunity of discussing the Rule as it stands.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, he wished to oppose the Rule as it stood, and he should like to know if he would be in Order in making some observations upon that subject now?

Mr. SPEAKER: The most regular course would be to discuss the Amendment before the House, or for the hon. Member for the Town Division of Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) to withdraw it with the leave of the House.

Mr. DILLWYN said, he wished to consult the convenience of the House, and in consenting to withdraw the Amendment he hoped he should not lose the opportunity of moving it at a later hour if necessary.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he wished to give the reasons why he objected to the Rule proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had expressed accurately the feelings of some Members of the House, when he said that the Rule would be received with a feeling of regret, and possibly even of dissatisfaction. He (Mr. Chaplin) confessed, for his own part, that he always had shrunk, and shrunk at the present moment from going any further in the direction of Closure of Debate than they had gone already. He had always entertained an exceeding dislike to the principle of closure, and he had only consented to accept it as it stood embodied in the existing Rules as an unavoidable necessity. At the same time he saw no reason for strengthening the Rule at the present moment. The experience of last Session had shown conclusively that the present Closure Rule was sufficiently drastic to enable the Government to pass any measure in spite of the most extreme obstruction that could be brought to bear against it. They were told that it was exceedingly difficult under the existing Rule to enforce the closure. For his own part he did not wish to see the closure made more easy than it was at present. He looked upon it as a dangerous weapon to place in the hands of any Government, and he regarded it as equally dangerous whether placed in the hands of a Liberal or a Tory Administration, and that it would lead in the future to probably both of two things—namely, a step in the direction of closure by a bare majority, and to its being made use of as a Party weapon. More than that, the Rule did not seem to meet what it was necessary to deal with at the present moment. What they wanted to deal with was the extreme loquacity and verbosity of hon. Members. He was quite willing to put a stop to the abuse of the freedom of speech in that House by individual Members; but he objected to go further in the direction of the Closure of Debate. For those reasons, he should feel obliged to oppose the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he thought the Liberal Party in that House had reason to congratulate themselves on the present state of affairs. It would be in the recollection of the House that the proposal of the Closure of Debate came in the first instance from a Liberal Government, and it was a measure which had the approval of every thoroughly democratic Assembly in the world. Whatever humble share the Irish Party might have taken in the debates, they had to a certain extent earned the gratitude of the Liberal Party for having brought about such a state of things. He could recollect the time which was not so very long ago, when he sat through 14 weary nights witnessing the most extraordinary and scandalous obstruction which was offered by the then Fourth Party, backed up by the present occupants of the Front Bench opposite, to the Liberal proposal for the closure. Now, however, they found the Conservative Party adjusting the rope round their own necks. It was a spectacle that filled the breasts of the Home Rule Members with the greatest possible satisfaction. As he said, they were putting a rope round their own necks. He trusted the Irish Members would very soon have the opportunity of getting hold of the end of the rope and pulling it, which they would do very tightly. In the meantime they had every reason for congratulating themselves that a great obstacle to the passing of a Home Rule Bill had been cleared out of the way. In the past he had never had any great reverence or affection for that House; but he was beginning to feel more affection for it now than he ever had for it before. He would, however, say this, that he thought the Conservative Party were committing a great mistake in extending this Rule. The proposal was to choke all discussions that were distasteful to the majority. It was a proposition that would always be used against the minority. The Conservative Party were bound to be the minority in the long run, and a proposal which would enable the majority to choke discussion so easily was a proposal which would always tend to a considerable extent to increase the tyranny of the majority. He thought that the Tory Party in giving increased stringency to the Rule, or in proposing the Rule at all, were making a considerable mistake in view of their own interests, and in view of the fact that for centuries the business of this great country had been carried on without recourse to such methods. He thought the Government ought to have tried whether, by other means, the Public Business could not be carried on, trusting to the traditions of respect for the House and reverence for its character. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had protested against the closure, but wished to see it directed against particular individuals in order to put a stop to verbosity; but it was very doubtful whether the verbosity of the right hon. Gentleman himself would not compare favourably with that of any other Member. The right hon. Gentleman had conveyed to the House what the true root of all this trouble was—namely, that the Government sought for some years to except the Irish Members from the ordinary courtesies which ought to be extended to every Member of the House. They had attempted to except a considerable number of Members from those courtesies and to cut off from them those privileges which ought to be the right of every man in the House. Hon. Members had brought this punishment upon themselves. He doubted very much whether the Irish Party would suffer most from the closure. He thought that, on the contrary, the Conservative Party would suffer more, and he had not the slightest intention of offering any opposition to the proposed Rule.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he did not think it would contribute to any public purpose if he were to refer with any minuteness to the proceedings in the Parliament before last, as the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) had done. He would only make this remark. The hon. Member spoke severely in condemnation of the obstruction of what he called the Fourth Party. The conduct of that Party might have been very bad; but in their opposition to closure, to whatever length it was carried, they always enjoyed the fullest sympathy of the Irish Party. He therefore doubted whether it lay in the mouth of the hon. Member to hold the Fourth Party up to execration. Passing away from that subject, he was really anxious to clear himself from all responsibility for this great change. He had been alluded to in the autumn by many Members on his own side of the House as being a person of the most dangerous Radical opinions and proclivities; as being disposed to import into that House a most drastic measure of closure; and one hon. Member had gone to the extent of warning his audience against his (Lord Randolph Churchill's) revolutionary principles. Well, his advocacy of the closure was limited to the form in which it was proposed last year. That was the form he had always had in his mind; it was the form he had pressed upon his Colleagues, and when it was adopted by the House, all his desire in regard to the closure was satisfied. They were now asked to reduce the number required from 200 to 100, in order to make it possible to carry the Closure of Debate. He was not at all without sympathy for the feelings of the right hon. Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) on this matter. He thought it would have been well if the Government had exhibited a little more patience than they had manifested, and had endeavoured to rub on a little longer, in order to give a more complete control to the Rule as it was passed last year. There were many reasons why such a course should have been taken. In the first place, the Government had succeeeded in carrying a most drastic and almost revolutionary change in the Procedure of the House of Commons. Last year the difficulty in applying the closure was felt after 12 o'clock, in the small hours of the morning. It was naturally felt that it was not necessary to keep so large a body of Members in attendance in order to support the closure; but he could not see what serious difficulty there ought to be if the Unionist Party, animated in their desire to see the Public Business carried on, tried to keep 200 Members in the House out of a Party which was said to number 350 until 12 o'clock. He, therefore, thought the Government might have been content with the Resolution which was passed last year. Another reason why he thought the Government might have rubbed on with the old Rule was that the character of the Resolution which they intended to propose this year was hardly such as ought to be forced through the House by the drastic application of the closure. The Government were about to bring forward Resolutions which ought not to excite Party feelings; and the Irish policy of the Government did not require to be supported by the closure, seeing that it was not likely to receive the same kind of opposition which it met with last Session. Another reason why the Government should not have proposed an alteration of the Rule was that they had had public declarations from the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and of still more value and importance from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), that what was known as Obstruction would not be countenanced either by the Leader of the Opposition or by the Leader of the Irish Party, and that if there was any repetition of what occurred last Session it would not be with their sanction or approval. If he (Lord Randolph Churchill) had had the great honour of remaining with the Government, he should certainly have advised the propriety of leaving the Rule alone at present. He understood the Government to tell the House that it was perfectly impossible to make any progress with Public Business without the application of the closure. If that was their honest opinion, it was obvious that, however much any Member on that—the Ministerial—side of the House might question the soundness of their reasons, it was hardly possible to offer any opposition. He thought, however, that the Rule, as now proposed, was wholly unnecessary. That was merely a personal opinion, but he wished to place it on record, because he declined to be responsible for any of the consequences that might result from the extension of the closure in time to come.

Mr. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) said, he wished to remind the House of what occurred last Session.

When it was proposed that the majority should consist of 200, he had moved to omit 200 in order to substitute 120. That proposal was negatived, so that he was unable to move his Amendment to substitute 120 as the quorum. His proposition received support from both sides of the House, though it was opposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). It was negatived, and 200 found its way into the Rule. The Leader of the House said that if he were beginning again he would be inclined to propose a smaller number than 200. That encouraged him to hope that this year the right hon. Gentleman would propose to reduce the quorum not only to 120, but still lower. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) said that the experience of last Session had shown that it was unnecessary to have a more drastic closure; but he (Mr. Craig Sellar) would like to call the attention of the House to what happened in the month of March, only five days after his Amendment was rejected, with regard to the number necessary for the closure. There were essential Votes which had to be carried in Committee of Supply on that evening—Votes on account in the Civil Service Estimates and in the Navy Estimates. The Leader of the House said it was absolutely necessary that they should be carried in the course of the evening. The discussion went on till a quarter past 1 without any of the Votes being passed. At that hour the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) moved the adjournment of the debate, and that Motion was discussed, with some acrimony, till 3.30, when a Division showed 199 in favour of going on with the Business and 61 against it, so that the absence of a single Member prevented the closure being applied to the debate on a night when it was essential to get the Votes. The closure accordingly was not adopted, and the debate went on. At 5.30 another Division was taken, and as a quorum was found to be present, 210 Members voted for the closure, and it was applied, and one of the Votes was carried. But this majority did not continue in the House; in the next Division it fell to 141. After that four Divisions were taken, and still there was no quorum present. On every occasion the quorum was higher than the 120 he had proposed, but did not reach 200. At 1.10 in the afternoon, 250 Members were present and voted for the closure, and the essential Votes were carried, after a sitting of 22 hours. During the rest of the Session the quorum was frequently short of the necessary 200. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had now come forward with a proposal to reduce the quorum to a manageable number. The House—by which he meant the majority—must be master of its own time. The majority were sent there to carry on the Business of the country. But if it were not master of its own time it could not carry on the Business of the country. He hoped that in future the closure would be more frequently resorted to for the purpose of carrying on Public Business. He was convinced that no Minister of the Crown would ever be able systematically to abuse the Closure Rule. There were always enough men of independent mind in the House who would resist such a proposal even from the most arbitrary Minister, and they would be supported by the country outside. No Minister who attempted to abuse the Rule would again have a majority in that House, or would come back again as a Minister of the Crown.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he very much regretted that his right hon. Friend below him (Mr. W. H. Smith) should have found it necessary to propose this New Rule. He (Sir Robert Fowler) would have supported last year a proposal to substitute 150 for 200 as the quorum. He did not consider that number an unreasonable one, as the Members of the Government were always over 30 in number, and, therefore, to have 150 present only meant that 120 independent Members should come down to support the Government. The experience of last Session showed that at certain times there was great difficulty in securing the attendance of 200 Members; but it must not be forgotten that the Rule they had passed for curtailing late Sittings would very much diminish that difficulty. He therefore regretted that this proposal should have been made.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, that an Amendment stood on the Paper in his name to the effect that the majority should exceed the minority by at least 50 votes; but, at the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, he would not press it. He thought, however, that they were making a great mistake in weaving a rope for their own necks. Last year he had proposed a proportional majority of half as many again, and to get rid of the 200 limit. His right hon. Friend had opposed both, but now he himself proposed to do away with the 200, and he believed that the right hon. Gentleman would in the future regret his opposition to the proposal that there should in all cases be a substantial majority of 50. He very much regretted the course which the right hon. Gentleman had taken; but, as he was a hearty supporter of the right hon. Gentleman, he would not move his Amendment. In common with many other Conservative Members, he was pledged, when he entered the House, against closure by a bare majority. Last Session there was a difficulty in applying the closure, because often it was found that the necessary quorum was not present. On six divisions only was the majority less than half as many again of the minority, but on no single occasion did the majority exeed the minority by less than 50.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, that he had always supported a Rule of Closure in the House. He thought the House ought to have complete control over its time, and that, therefore, any Resolution to make the closure more effective in regard to giving power to the House itself to regulate the time of its discussions, he would cordially support. The mere fact that a majority of the House, represented by the Government of the day, should have charge of the Closure of Debate, by making the Motion for it, would be exercised under a sense of responsibility and generally with discretion. The Government were always the party of action; it was the minority that was the party of inaction. So it was the interest of the former to get on with as little friction as possible. His objection was, that last year the Government had introduced a most unfortunate provision into the Closure Rule. Instead of making the House and the Government of the day responsible for the use of the closure, the Government had hauled in the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, and made them responsible. As he had thought then, and as he continued strongly to think now, it was most desirable that the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees should be outside the action of any objectionable Rules which were calculated to bring them into friction with the House of Commons. Therefore, although he would support with the greatest pleasure a Rule to make the closure more effective, speaking only for himself, he was unwilling to vote for this change, because it would be much more frequently applied and must necessarily increase the responsibility of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees in giving judgment as to whether the Rule should be applied or not. He thought now, as in last year, that the Government were making a great mistake, and were endangering the position of the Chair by making the Speaker or Chairman of Committees give any opinion whatever upon the application of this Rule. Although he would at once have voted for the proposal that the majority should consist of only 100, if the Speaker and Chairman had not been introduced into the question, he was not disposed now to vote for it when it was to facilitate an application of the closure which would bring the Speaker and the Chairman into collision with the House unnecessarily.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University) said, he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House had announced that he spoke for himself only, and that he did not commit right hon. Gentlemen who sat with him. For his own part, if he (Mr. Raikes) had intervened earlier in the debate, he would have ventured to recommend the proposed alterations upon the very arguments which the right hon. Gentleman had used against it. He confessed that if this Rule were to be applied only by a bare majority of the House—provided that majority exceeded 100—in his opinion it would be a matter of very grave consideration for the House; but, having regard to the fact that the Rule last year had most wisely, and as experience had shown most fortunately, interposed the authority of the Chair as a protection to the minority, he thought that it was possible to trust to a bare majority, if consisting of 100 or over, the right of closing a debate when the Chair had sanctioned that Question being put to the House. As it was said last year, and the experience of last Session proved it, the rights of the minority would never be endangered in the House so long as the Chair was filled as it was last year. The experience of last year furnished, indeed, the precise material which enabled the Government to recommend the proposed extension of the Rule, and without that experience they would not be in a position to make the recommendation. Many hon. Members of the House were in favour of something like a proportional majority. But the House had always shrunk from an express concession to a minority of the right to decide a question, and had preferred to deal with this proposal rather from the view of exacting a sufficient proportion in order to give effect to the wish of the majority. He was not ashamed to say that he was one of those who opposed the Standing Order establishing the closure when it was introduced by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); but the principle having been accepted by the House, it became their duty, as practical men, to make it effective, and not ineffective, in its operation. There were many cases in which it was impossible to have a large quorum; and, in view of the earlier Sittings of the House, it would most likely be found that during the dinner hour the House would be more sparsely attended than in the past. The House of Commons could not "eat its cake and have it," and if hon. Members were determined to go to bed earlier, there must be some method of shortening the debates. Although the Rule might endanger liberty of debate if passed without the Proviso which required the previous assent of the Chair, he believed that so long as that most important and beneficial Proviso was retained, the House might safely trust itself to the operation of the Rule as his right hon. Friend proposed to amend it.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, the debate proved once more that time brought round its revenges. In 1882 the Conservative Party were opposed to the application of the closure in any form whatever; but having tried it with certain diminished safeguards, they were now reduced to a proposal for applying it without any real safeguard whatever. Now, the closure might be a good or a bad thing, according to the purpose for which it was applied. It might not only be useful, but necessary, to apply it, in order to put a stop to loquacity and verbosity; but when used to force through the House an unpopular measure, it might be made an instrument of oppression. Last year the closure was applied some 30 or 40 times; but, as far as he recollected, it was almost exclusively applied to one measure which was hateful to five-sixths of the Members affected by it, and which a large minority of the rest of the House could not even now mention without shame and indignation. Under such circumstances, he did not feel inclined to trust to one-seventh part of the House of Commons the power of stifling a discussion which a large section of the House might desire to continue. He agreed with the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) that the change already made in the Sittings of the House really altered the state of things altogether. It was a great hardship, as used to be the case, to compel 200 Members to sit up until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning; but there would be no difficulty in inducing 200 out of a Party which numbered 350 to remain in attendance until 12 o'clock, if it were considered really necessary to press forward legislation.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he had been unable to discover in what direction the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) tended. When the right hon. Gentleman was himself Chairman of Committees, he was about the first man to pay due deference to the rights of private Members; but when he did not fill an official position, he voted in every obstructive Division, and his example had been constantly quoted. The right hon. Gentleman had only used one real argument, and that was, that now the House had passed the 12 o'clock Rule, they ought to get through their Business quicker. Personally, he (Colonel Nolan) saw no reason why they should not continue the quorum of 200. There were always some 60 or 70 political hacks connected with every Government—he did not use the term disrespectfully—who might be certainly relied upon to support the Government of the day; and now it would be simply necessary for the Whips to secure the attendance of some 30 or 40 more—which, as a rule, would be supplied from the ranks of the Government themselves, and the Ministry would always be sure of their majority. He defied the Government to do that if they retained 200 as a quorum, and required so large a number of Members to sit up until all hours of the morning. It was not fair to charge the obstruction in the House of Commons upon Members for Ireland, which it had been the custom to do since the time when Mr. J. Lowther and the right hon. Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) first began to obstruct. Under the circumstances, he should vote against the Rule.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, in order that there might be no doubt about a matter of this importance, he would ask what would be the effect of the Rule now proposed upon the existing Closure Rule? Would the second alternative in the existing Rule which pointed to the opposition of not less than 40 Members, and the support of more than 100, be superseded if the Rule now proposed were passed by the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: The new Rule would be the only Rule of Closure as far as the numbers were concerned, and the alternative which the hon. Baronet referred to would entirely disappear.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, he rose to make a personal explanation. He thought he had heard the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan) accuse him of having been guilty of obstruction. He altogether repudiated such conduct, and he desired to add that the only time when he was accused of these proceedings he had the honour of being defended by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), who came forward in the most gallant manner and absolved him from the charge of having done anything of the kind.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he could quite understand the reluctance with which his proposal had been received by some hon. Members on that side of the House to make any further alteration in the Closure Rule. It was because he had sat in his place from the meeting to the rising of the House during a whole Session that he felt compelled to come forward and ask the House to give this additional facility for the conduct of Business of the House. He was one of those who in 1882 expressed reluctance to accept any form of closure at all. He was then under the impression that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) might have exercised an authority and influence in the House which would have enabled them to get through the Business without invoking the closure; but once the House had adopted the closure, in the nature of things it became necessary to make it effective. They had, he was sorry to say, parted with the old traditions of the House which sufficed for the efficient conduct of Business; and if anything could bring them back, no one would be more glad than he to endeavour to do so. Therefore it was that the Rule wanted strengthening, for there were periods in the course of the evening when any hon. Member who took an impartial view of the conduct of Business would say that it was for the advantage of the country and of the House that the discussion should be then terminated. He believed the course now proposed to be necessary, and that the safeguards which surrounded it would make it impossible for any Minister to abuse it.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that the principle which found favour with some of his hon. Friends on the Select Committee on Procedure, by which the closure should be guarded against abuse, was to secure that a certain number of persons should be present when the vote was taken; but his own opinion was that the present quorum of 200 was no guarantee whatever against injustice being done. The feeling which animated hon. Members in voting was not altered whether they had 200 or 100 present. With 200 they might be guarded against surprise; they could not apply the closure as often with 200 as they might with 100. But they did not safeguard that it would be applied more justly had they 600 Members. With regard to the diminution from 200 to 100, he confessed he had no fear that regard to justice would be any the less. But he always regarded closure by bare majority as one of the greatest perils to that House. He utterly distrusted mere majorities of that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) secured that closure should be on the initiation of the Chair. Undoubtedly that was a safeguard. Now the security was that the Chair must consent. That was a most alarming responsibility to put upon the Chair, and he confessed that he himself had felt it. [Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] He heard the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) say "Hear, hear!" but he would press upon him that he must make his choice whether the burden rested with the Chair, or whether he would secure some other guarantee than that of the presence of a certain number of Members. If they were going to relieve the Chair, as he thought it could be relieved, of responsibility, then they must come to some other guarantee than that of the mere presence of numbers—either a certain proportion or a certain minimum balance, as suggested by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Sydney Gedge). The fact that the House had adopted new and shorter hours was, to his mind, a very strong reason in favour of the present proposed change, and he disagreed with what the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) said about new hours. If they were to have shorter hours they must have the means of more expeditious work.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, he could not allow the Question to be put without stating his firm belief that if the Conservative Party were sitting on the other side of the House they would oppose this proposal. He had always been among those who were opposed to closure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had shown by his action in 1882 that the House had deteriorated from what it was in olden days. It was not required then, but now it was said that the Business of the House could not go on without it. He regretted that his right hon. Friend had thought it necessary to introduce this question again. He agreed with the hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) that if they altered the Closure Rule at all, they should have required a proportional majority, so that it might be seen whether the opinion of the House was in favour of the closure or not. The proposal was now that the question should be decided by a bare majority. He, for one, did not agree to that principle. He could only regret that this was the view of the Government; and he felt from a Conservative point of view that when some of those very important questions now rife and talked of by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway came to be decided in that House, they would find they had by the Rule of Closure made a rope for their own necks. They might find on that question of the deepest importance, the Church of England, that this Rule would be turned against themselves. He, therefore, entered his strongest protest against the proposal of his right hon. Friend.

MR. DILLWYN said, he should not trouble the House with any remarks on the subject of the Amendment which he had placed on the Paper relating to this Rule.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 256; Noes 134: Majority 122.

AYES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Ainslie, W. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anderson, C. H.
Anstruther, H. T.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atkinson, H. J.
Baden-Powell, Sir G S.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, T. C.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Beckett, W.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Bolton, J. C.
Bond, G. H.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Lord H.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Charrington, S.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cobb, H. P.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, A. C.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Crawford, D.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.

Cubitt, right hon. G.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fenwick, C.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. H. W.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flower, C.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fry, L.
Gardner, H.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grenall, Sir G.
Grey, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hankey, F. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hoyle, I.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Johnston, W.
Joicey, J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. J. G. S.
Legh, T. W.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
MacInnes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Lagan, P.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Parker, hon. F.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, H. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Picton, J. A.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Price, T. P.
Raikes, right hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rathbone, W.
Reid, R. T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, right hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, E.
Round, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Saunderson, Colonel E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Simon, Sir J.
Sinclair, W. P.
Slagg, J.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stewart, M. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Wayman, T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
West, Colonel W. C.
Whitbread, S.
Whitmore, C. A.
Will, J. S.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Wilson, H. J.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, C.
Wright, H. S.
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, C. T. D.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Allison, R. A.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Biggar, J. G.
Blane, A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Conway, M.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cremer, W. R.
Cross, H. S.
Dillon, J.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dodds, J.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Esslemont, P.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fulton, J. F.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Halsey, T. F.
Harrington, E.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heath, A. R.
Hooper, J.
Howell, G.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunter, W. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Jennings, L. J.

Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenny, C. S.
Kerans, F. H.
Kilbride, D.
Lalor, R.
Leahy, J.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lockwood, F.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Mattinson, M. W.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Newark, Viscount
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Kelly, J.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Powell, F. S.
Power, P. J.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reed, H. B.
Richard, H.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Schwann, C. E.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Watt, H.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Williams, A. J.
Wilson, I.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.

Resolved, That Questions for the Closure of Debate under Standing Order XIVA shall be decided in the affirmative, if, when a Division be taken, it appears by the numbers declared from the Chair that not less than One Hundred Members voted in the Majority in support of the Motion.

III.—DISORDERLY CONDUCT.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move the third Rule against "disorderly conduct," said, he proposed the Rule with great regret; but scenes that were in the memory of hon. Members, and which occurred during the last Session, showed the necessity of such a Rule. The Government felt that if the House was to maintain its ancient character, power should be given to the Speaker or the Chairman of Committee to name a Member on the spot when the conduct of the Member was grossly disorderly. He thought the Rule would recommend itself to the good feeling of hon. Members on both sides of the House, for it was not directed against any one section of Members, but against disorderly Members generally whoever they might be.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do order Members whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's sitting; and that the Sergeant-at-Arms do act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair, in pursuance of this Resolution. But if, on any occasion, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman deems that his powers under this Standing Order are inadequate, he may name such Member or Members in pursuance of the Standing Order (Order in Debate), or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members.
>
> "Provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate), shall forthwith withdraw from the precincts of the House, subject, however, in the case of such suspended Members, to the proviso in that Standing Order regarding their service on Private Bill Committees."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, he wished to say a few words on this proposal of the Government; and, first, with regard to the last words of the first paragraph—

> "Or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of any such Member or Members."

He could not understand what was the meaning of those words. There were two alternatives. First, that the Chair might order a Member to withdraw from the House altogether, which was a ready way of putting an end to disorderly conduct; secondly, the Speaker or Chairman might act under the Rule and name a Member in pursuance of the Standing Order. But he might also call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of the Member. The two first cases were governed by Rules which prevented debate; but this last proposal would immediately throw the whole question open, and there would be a debate as to whether the hon. Member had been so disorderly as to justify the punishment which might be given. It seemed to him, therefore, that instead of saving time this Rule would certainly waste time, and instead of quelling disorder it would rise to greater heat. Then, with regard to the latter part of the Rule, he would ask the right hon.

Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) whether there had been any practical inconvenience in allowing a Member who had been suspended to remain within the precincts of the House? If in practice that had not been the case, then, he said, this was a needless aggravation of the punishment. They called on a Member to be in his place to serve on a Committee on a Private Bill, and yet they were to exclude him from all other service. He could not think that this was necessary. If the authorities of the House were to say that it was necessary, then he submitted that it should be in the judgment of the Chair, at the moment, if necessary, to order the Member to withdraw from the precincts of the House. One could hardly imagine such a case; but in case of need the decision should lie with the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means. Upon the general question of this Rule he pointed out that it was a grave and new power to place in the hands of the Chair. He was not prepared to say that he did not think some cause might have arisen for increased power in this direction. It was, after all, a mitigation of the severity of the existing Rule, which ordered that, if a Member was named for disorderly conduct, he should be suspended for at least a week. The present Rule was so far a mitigation that it provided for suspension for one night and no longer. It was true that this was left entirely in the discretion of the Speaker and the Chairman; and after the best consideration he had been able to give to the subject, he was not unwilling to intrust that limited power to those high officials, believing as he did that when the responsibility rested entirely upon them, and when they were not afterwards sheltered in any way by a Vote of the House, they would be very slow to exercise these powers. And it was, after all, a question on which the Speaker or the Chairman were able at once to pronounce judgment. They were witnesses of the disorder; and, that being so, he thought they might safely be trusted never to suspend the Member under this Rule unless the disorder was gross and patent. That brought him to the consideration of a point on which he desired to address the House. He trusted that if ever this Rule were put in operation, both those high officials would have regard to the fact whether or not there had been provocation. He did feel, after what had happened in the House in recent years, that there was some necessity for making a protest on that ground. They had heard hon. Members in that House make charges against other hon. Members which he ventured to say, if such things continued, would make it impossible to hope for order in debate. They were quite aware of the decision which Mr. Speaker had given when appealed to; and he knew that it was strictly in accordance with precedent — namely, that a Member making a charge made it upon his own responsibility. That was the decision in old days; but in old days with that decision there went this security, that it was quite certain that if the hon. Member made a heinous charge against another, and failed to go to the proof, he would meet with the contempt of all Parties in the House. He was not so sure that that security existed now. Those were days when Parliament was jealous of the honour of every Member who sat in that House; those were the days before Parliament had surrendered its guardianship of the honour and character of its Members; those were the days before it was not the fashion to tell hon. Members against whom charges were made in that House—"If you think you are aggrieved, you can right yourselves in the Law Courts." He did not want, however, to rake up that controversy; that matter was settled, he thought lamentably, on a former occasion; but he did say that if the same line of conduct was to be pursued in future, and they had had some indication of it during the present Session—if hon. Members were to be allowed to make charges of the gravest and most heinous character against other hon. Members of that House, before any heat or disorder was produced on an occasion of the kind, it would be necessary for the whole House to have regard to the question as to whether provocation had been offered or not. He had thought it necessary to say these few words on a question which seemed to him of late years to have become very grave, and he hoped that in future charges of this nature would not be made unless hon. Members were ready to go on to the proof not elsewhere, but in that House.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, it was impossible to his mind to approach the consideration of that question without taking into view the effect which might possibly come about with regard to the relations of the Chair and Members in different parts of the House. He was strongly of opinion that the power to punish any Member of the House ought to be retained absolutely within the immediate control of the House itself, and that the liberty, credit, and position of a Member of the House ought not to be placed at the mercy of any man, no matter whether of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees. He did not intend to go into the matter which had been alluded to by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), but he (Mr. Dillon) said that it was a matter of the utmost delicacy for the Chair, and one which the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees would eagerly wish to be relieved from, to decide in a time of great excitement in that House, when retorts and charges were hurled from one side to another, upon whom the blame rested. He remembered an hon. Member who never rose in that House without making the most provocative and deliberate charges against other hon. Members. That hon. Member had made charges of that character against himself which on one occasion had caused him to appeal to the Chair for the protection which he received. He had read the other day the boast made by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Sanderson), who said at Brighton that when he rose in the House he always succeeded in provoking Irish Members to rise and reply to him.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I rise to Order. I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I did not say on all occasions. I said on some occasions.

MR. DILLON said, the observation of the hon. and gallant Member went to strengthen the argument of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford. The hon. and gallant Member made a boast of an achievement in that direction, and had announced that so long as he had a seat in the House he would pursue the some course. He (Mr. Dillon) said that as long as that course was persisted in, it would certainly aggravate the difficulty of maintaining order in that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had stated on introducing this Rule that it was not aimed against any Party of the House. He trusted that that might be said of all those Rules. The Government stated that this Rule was equally necessary to control their adherents below the Gangway as to control Members in other parts of the House. He trusted hon. Gentleman opposite would follow out a totally different line of conduct in the future, and he might be allowed to say that if they did, there would be no need to apply the Rule to hon. Members on his side. If there had ever been disorder in the House he claimed the right to say that it had not had its origin among hon. Members on these Benches; if it had taken the shape of violence or disorder coming from the representatives of Irish constituencies, it had been the result of a set that had been made upon a certain section of the House. An attempt had been made to treat them differently from the way in which any other section of the House had been treated. Coming to the more general question of the operation of the Rule the fear he had—looking at the matter simply from a point of view of a Member of the House—was, that it would inevitably tend to make the Speaker a partizan. Let the House consider what occurred in the American House of Representatives; they saw there a fierce Party struggle being carried on and the Speaker expected to carry out the wishes of his supporters and that he was a slave of his Party in the sense of carrying out their views. Again, in one of the great Dependencies of this country—in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, where very stringent powers were in the hands of the Speaker, they had seen every single Member of the Front Opposition Bench successively carried out of the House by the orders of the Speaker, the Secretary of State for the Home Department denounced, and the Speaker called a dirty tool of the Government. He did not say they would ever reach that point; but he did say that such an example ought to carry with it a warning to Members of that House before they went many steps in that direction. He regarded it as a most unfortunate thing that in carrying out a penal law, which always left more or less bad feeling in the mind of an hon. Member to whom it was applied, the Speaker should not have the protection of a Vote of the House, but should be compelled to execute the sentence himself. Take a case of which he had been a witness in that House, where the Speaker or Chairman of Committees named a Member to the House in mistake, being under the impression that he was the originator of the disorder. He would, under this Rule, leave the hon. Member so situated under a stronger feeling of having suffered unjustly. He considered this an unnecessary Rule, and as such he protested against it. So far from its having a good effect, he believed its effect would be exactly contrary. If Irish Members in that House were treated with ordinary decency and civility, there would, so far as they were concerned, be no need for any Business Rules whatever, and they would then be able to carry on the work of the House on those old lines which had obtained for centuries; whereas the power now sought to be placed in the Chair would, in his opinion, not only detract from the precedings of the House, but also very much detract from the authority of the Speaker.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he was sorry to hear the line of argument pursued by the two hon. Gentlemen who had preceded him. All the objections which had been raised as to the injustice of this Rule applied with far greater point to the original rule, by which the Speaker, with the consent of the House, was empowered to suspend a Member from his duty. The Rule, as now proposed, was a distinct mitigation of the very heavy penalties which followed on a Member being named by the Chair. The House, as a rule, would never refuse to support the Chair, and thus this Rule was a mitigation of the severity of the former one. With regard to the person to whom the Rule was to apply, it must often happen in an Assembly of 670 Members that some individual—overcome with intense excitement or emotion—should be guilty of some breach of Order. All this Rule did was to give power to the Chair to order him to withdraw, and thus give him time to come to a more reasonable frame of mind. With respect to the words of the Rule, he would ask the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. It appeared to him that lines 5 to 10 of the proposed Rule were unnecessary. Three alternatives were given. The Speaker might order a Member to withdraw, he might name a Member, or he might call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member. What the latter alternative meant he did not know. It certainly required explanation. In his opinion it would be quite sufficient for the Speaker or the Chairman to have the power of relieving the House from the presence of an hon. Member who was labouring under temporary excitement without repeating in the Rule the words which, under the existing Rule, gave the Speaker or the Chairman power to name any hon. Member. He also objected to the saving Proviso. He considered the last words of the Rule—

> "Subject, however, in the case of such suspended Members to the proviso in that Standing Order regarding their service on Private Bill Committees"

totally unnecessary. For these reasons he would suggest the omission of lines 5 to 10, and a portion of lines 13 to 15.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University) said, he was glad that his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) had taken exception to the language of the Resolution, as his doing so would enable him (Mr. Raikes) to explain the matter to the House. The proposed Rule had been drawn with the object of placing before hon. Members at a glance the three classes of offences which the Rule was intended to deal with. In the first place, there was to be placed in the hands of the Speaker or the Chairman the power which, he believed, existed in the case of the Chairman of almost every public meeting—that of requiring a person to withdraw who, by offensive and improper conduct, was bringing scandal on the proceedings and interrupting the course of Public Business. That power did not at present exist, but it was a mitigating Resolution, because it would enable the Speaker to exercise that power of summary jurisdiction by requiring a disorderly Member at once to withdraw, in which case the withdrawal would only cover the whole of that Sitting, without being under the necessity of submitting his conduct to the House, and thereby calling down upon him a punishment of at least one week's exclusion. In the second place, that was to say, a graver breach of order in Debate, the Speaker would exercise the power given to him by the Standing Order with regard to order in Debate, and by naming a Member would submit his conduct to the House, which, if it thought fit, might then proceed to pass upon him a sentence of one week's exclusion, or for repeated offences a longer exclusion. But in each of these cases the decision might be summary. While there might be minor offences which might be thus summarily punished, there remained a graver class of offences which could not be decided in that summary manner. In the third place, it further recited the power of the Speaker or the Chairman in the event of an hon. Member being guilty of a still more grave offence to call upon the House to adjudge upon his conduct, when a more severe form of punishment might be inflicted upon him. In such a case a debate might probably arise. It had not been deemed expedient, however, to relieve hon. Members who were so ordered to withdraw, or who were so suspended, from service on Private Bill Committees. It would certainly be more consonant with the dignity of the House that a Member who had committed so gross a violation of order in Debate should bring upon himself exclusion not only from the House itself, but also from its precincts. This Resolution had been drawn with special care. The intention was not to make a change in the practice of the House, except in the one respect of giving the Speaker power to inflict minor and summary punishment in the case of minor offenders. He deprecated all suggestions that the decline in Parliamentary manners in recent years had been brought about by hon. Members sitting in any particular quarter of the House, and especially regretted the somewhat inflammatory suggestions of the hon. Member for Bedford, which seemed calculated to lead to mutual recrimination.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he concurred in the remark that it was desirable to discuss this Rule in an impartial temper, but he did not think that the observations of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) were in the slightest degree of an inflammatory character. It was a matter of common knowledge that there had been instances of grossly disorderly conduct, which were undoubtedly due to regrettable provocation, and it was right to ask the House to bear in mind the possibility of such deplorable contingencies. If this Rule had proposed to extend the powers of the Chair with reference merely to offences which were aimed at by Standing Order No. 12, he should have had great difficulty in assenting to it, because, although it was true they had confidence in the impartiality of the Chair, nevertheless the safeguard of the assent of the House, which had been dwelt upon by some, had never seemed to him to be an adequate one. It meant, after all, the consent of the majority, and the majority might be depended upon to assent to the punishment of a Member of the minority. [*Cries of* "Oh, Oh!"] He did not say that that would be a special defect of a Conservative majority. The Rule, as he understood from the explanation, was to be applied not merely to offences mentioned in Standing Order No. 12, but also to a new offence; it was aimed at the new offence of grossly disorderly conduct. It was an offence which no section of the House could approve of or sympathize with, and the punishment that the Rule alloted to it seemed to him to be a punishment not unworthy of the nature of the offence; it was not excessive, and it marked the sense of the House that offences of this sort should be promptly dealt with. But the last two lines of the Rule he did not see any necessity for. He should have thought the Rule would have been much simpler and equally efficient if the last two lines were left out. Upon the point of exclusion from the precincts of the House he had no particular feeling; but he knew there was a feeling against Members who had been subjected to censure appearing in the precincts of the House as if no decision against them had been pronounced. While he should be as jealous as any Member could be of interfering with fair liberty of discussion, he could not see why any occupant of the Chair should be deprived of that power of peremptorily repressing grossly disorderly conduct which was possessed by the chairman of every public meeting.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he should have thought that this Rule would have been resented by every Member of the House as an insult to his self-respect. He wished he could induce hon. Members opposite to agree that a Member of that House should be regarded in the light of something more than his personal capacity. Every man in that House was the freely chosen Representative of tens of thousands of persons outside its walls, and it was from that fact that the dignity of a Member of the House was derived. The provisions of this Rule were an insult to the House of Commons, and were a great deal more like the powers of a schoolmaster dealing with his pupils than those which ought, in his opinion, to be vested in one who presided over the deliberations of Members of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) had put the case with great lucidity and with his usual courtesy, and he might perhaps be allowed to say that if all speeches were made in the same manner there would be no need at all for the Rule under consideration; but while they had Members going about the country boasting of their powers of vicarious vituperation, then he said the time had come when some such Rule might be required. Would anyone say that it conduced to the dignity of that House to enact that when a Member had been excluded from that Assembly by the presiding officer, a police constable outside should be at liberty to seize him and drive him out of the precincts of the House? He had seen the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) seized by the police and attendants, and a more disgusting and scandalous spectacle he had never witnessed. He was not at the time on the same amicable terms as now with that hon. Member, but he maintained that by that spectacle every Member of the House was personally degraded. It was now proposed to perpetuate that which was an accidental and he hoped a unique occurrence in the annals of the House. With reference to Members serving on Committees during suspension, he put this case:—A Member of the House was allowed to take part in all private and public Committees to which he was appointed; suppose that before a Committee upstairs there was a question of great commercial magnitude, such as the Manchester Ship Canal; a Member, in spite of having been excluded for grossly disorderly conduct, is allowed to form part of the tribunal that has to decide upon that momentous question and yet he was not fit to write his letters in the Library. That he thought was a *reductio ad absurdum.* He had never been guilty of grossly disorderly conduct, nor had he any wish to be, but he spoke of the dignity of hon. Members who were the Representatives of the people outside, and looking at that fact, he said the Government would do well to mitigate the effect of the Rule by excluding from it this most odious infringment of the liberty of the House.

Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said, he desired to ask if the powers of the Rule would extend to the Deputy Chairman who might be appointed. If the Rule was to bear that interpretation, then he thought that its provisions would be beyond the desires of some hon. Members on those Benches. The Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means were both officers elected after deliberate discussion, and in that respect stood in a position different from that of those who were occasionally appointed to fill the Chair.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, the House would do well to observe that the proposed Rule did not apply to ordinary debate; it was a new Rule to apply to certain disorderly conduct which the Chairman of every assembly in the world had power to put down. But it would seem that the Speaker or the Chairman has such large powers in the first part of the Order that the latter part was altogether unnecessary. In the first place, the disorderly Member had to withdraw immediately from the service of the House; then the Serjeant-at-Arms acted on such orders as he might receive from the Chair in pursuance of the Resolution; which might be that the Member should withdraw from the House or from the precincts of the House. That was a large power. But then came a much larger one—namely, that Rule 12 was brought into operation. The Speaker or Chairman might name a Member, who would then come under all the consequences of that Rule. But if he did come under them, there was no necessity for the last words of the concluding paragraph of the Rule that the Speaker "may call on the House to adjudge the conduct of such Member or Members." He considered the latter part of the Rule very offensive. Why should they order a Member to be sent out of the precincts of the House if they considered him fit to sit in Committee on an important private Bill. They gave the Speaker power to correct any disorder, and they allowed him to bring the Member under the Rule of ordinary debate, which contained strong penal powers. As he considered the portion of the Rule to which he had referred unnecessary, he should, in order to raise the question, move its omission.

Amendment proposed, in line 8 to leave out from the words "Order in Debate" to the end of the Question.—(*Sir Lyon Playfair.*)

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, he thought on consideration the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment would see that it did not entirely effect the purpose he had in view. Standing Order No. 12 was incorporated in this Rule only to the extent of naming a Member, and the further powers contained in that Rule, which were expressed in words at the end, would be distinctly excluded by the fact that they were in the new Rule. The expression of a certain portion of the Rule directly, would clearly be held to be an exclusion of the remaining portion, which was not so important. If these words had any value whatever, of which he had considerable doubt, he was disposed to agree with the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) that they should leave out all the words after Resolution in line 4 so that the Rule would read—

> "That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do order Members whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's debate, and that the Sergeant-at-Arms do act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair in pursuance of this Resolution."

If the words were retained at all the addition of the words "according to ancient usage" could be introduced at the end of the paragraph to make clear what had been explained to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes). The right hon. Gentleman had said there were three alternatives, and that the third alternative consisted of a paragraph by which power was retained by the House to deal with Members offending according to ancient usage. These words then should be inserted at the end of the paragraph, if the concluding portion of it was retained. If he were allowed he would move to leave out all the words after Resolution in line 4 to the end of the paragraph.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out that as there is an Amendment before the House it would not be competent to the hon. Baronet to move now the omission of these words.

SIR RICHARD PAGET said, he would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Lyon Playfair) should withdraw his Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that the point turned upon the construction of the Rule. If the Rule stopped at the word "Resolution" no doubt the existing Rule 12 would remain entire; but Rule 12 did not touch grossly disorderly conduct generally, it only applied to special forms of it. The desire was to extend the summary form of procedure under Order 12 to grossly disorderly conduct other than that which was included in Rule 12.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that over and over again Members had been suspended by the Speaker under Rule 12, not for wilfully disregarding the Rules of the House or of the Chair, but for wilfully disorderly conduct. He still held to the view that the words to which he objected would tend to weaken rather than to strengthen the Rule.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that he should not have proposed the Rule if it had not been held by the Government and all who had been responsible for the conduct of Business in the House that some further powers ought to be given to the Authorities in the event of a Member being guilty of grossly disorderly conduct. If the words to which his noble Friend objected were not inserted he was advised by high authority that the power reserved under Standing Order 12 would not exist in connection with this Rule.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he felt bound to protest against the wording of the last paragraph, which not only inflicted a new and severe punishment upon a Member guilty of a new offence, but likewise inflicted a new and very much more severe punishment upon a Member guilty of an old offence which was quite sufficiently punished already. The Rule proposed to exclude from the precincts of the House, not only Members who had been ordered to withdraw for grossly disorderly conduct, but Members suspended by a Vote of the House for a week, a fortnight, or a month. This was a very severe punishment, and very grave reasons should be given for it. He thought they ought to be extremely unwilling to interfere with the dignity and comfort of hon. Members, and that they should only do it under the teaching of experience. Now, experience showed that no inconvenience whatever had come from allowing hon. Members who had been suspended for a single evening for misconduct, for which they would often in their cooler moments be exceedingly sorry, to be present within the precincts of the House. He (Sir George Trevelyan) remembered an occasion on which a number of Members who were suspended for their conduct in the House were seen in the Gallery, and no impropriety occurred in consequence. He thought that no such large punishment as that now proposed should be instituted without a public reason being given for doing so.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, he thought that the right hon. Baronet who had last spoken (Sir George Trevelyan) was, perhaps, sufficiently answered by the fact that the right hon. Gentleman who sat next him had expressed his intention to vote for that proposal. He had himself, unfortunately, been absent from the House for a great part of last Session, but he had watched as well as he could the course of events during that period, and he ventured to say that many things which occurred during that time were a scandal and a disgrace to the House; that their existing Rules on the subject of disorder were proved to be utterly inadequate to deal with them, and that such scandals and disgraces, whether arising from the conduct of hon. Members on the one side of the House or the other, ought to be repressed with due severity; and that they would not be so repressed unless their Rules were amended in the way now proposed and the penalty was made a real one by exclusion from the precincts of the House as well as from the House itself.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, he would like to explain that he had not said that he should necessarily vote for exclusion from the precincts of the House, but that he had personally no strong opinion on the matter, and that in the case of extraordinary misconduct he saw no objection to exclusion from the precincts. What his right hon. Friend objected to was to that being added to the penalties imposed under Rule 12. In regard to what the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had described truly enough as the scandals of last year, he (Mr. John Morley) said that those scandals were not entirely confined to one part of the House. The right hon. Baronet had failed to show that those scandals had arisen in any degree from the presence of Members in the precincts of the House, and that was the point which had to be made out.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he had a few remarks only to make on this subject of the exclusion of Members from the precincts of the House, particularly those Members who were required to attend to their duties upon Select Committees. There was nothing more painful or irritating than to be compelled by some duty to come down to that building and yet to be excluded from the precincts of the House, except so far as their duty was compulsory on them. He could speak of that with the experience of three years and he trusted he might appeal to the House not to place upon others the indignities which he had himself felt very severely.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he rose for the purpose of referring to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) with regard to the naming of Members; and also to the point upon which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had just spoken. The words which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to leave out were absolutely unneccessary to be retained. The matter stood thus; the right hon. Gentleman admitted that they should retain the words of the Rule, which provided that the Speaker or the Chairman may name the Member. Then came in Standing Order 12, which provided in certain cases that a further punishment should apply. Those words being in the Rule, was there anything excluded from the operation of Rule 12? If not, then they were adding words which were unnecessary and which could not assist in any further suppression of the offence which he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) they all desired to put a stop to. With regard to the second part of the Rule—namely, that which related to the exclusion of Members from the precincts of the House, he entirely agreed with the words which had fallen from the hon. Member for Northampton. There were Committees Upstairs when the House was sitting as well as when it was not sitting; a Member, although he might be excluded from the House, would, as a Member of one of those Committees be bound to attend to the Committee work, and if the Proviso at the end of the Rule were carried, that hon. Member might be dodged up and down by some Officer of the House to see that he did not remain within the precincts when his Committee was not sitting. It would be much better to allow access to the precincts of the House and to make it clear that it was only intended that the offending Member should not come within the walls of the House itself.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, he had listened to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who said that, although he was not in the House last year, he had read the accounts of what had taken place. Of course, hon. Members knew well what newspaper reports were worth; but as far as his experience went he could say that the House was not more disorderly now than it was 12 years ago. He was at that time one of a small minority, and he remembered that he used not to receive a very great amount of consideration at the hands of the majority. But things had changed since then, and he was now listened to with patience, and received a fair amount of consideration. He was himself very much opposed to these penal Rules; because, as hon. Members would be aware, the statutory power of Mr. Speaker was very much greater than the statutory power of former Speakers. Candidly, he believed that the power of the former Speaker was greater than that of the present Speaker, because a hint from him used to be sufficient to quell disorder in the House, whereas now it became a squabble as to whether a certain Rule should be brought into operation. For his own part he thought they should sweep away all these penal Rules and allow the moral influence of Mr. Speaker, which was formerly sufficient, to make itself felt. That, he believed, would be sufficient to quell any disorder that might arise.

SIR JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) said, it seemed to him a most unfortunate thing that they should place in the hands of Mr. Speaker undue responsibility for the suppression of disorder in that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had spoken of the hardship to a Member undergoing this terrible punishment; but he (Sir John Simon) felt much more for the Speaker himself and for the dignity of that House. Until a few years ago, Mr. Speaker was the servant of the House, but he was now becoming its master. That could not conduce to the dignity of the House, that the Chairman or the Speaker should, as it had been described, pounce down upon hon. Members and treat them like so many school boys, ordering them out and punishing them according to his will. He thought that was not consistent with the dignity of the House, nor did he think the power was one which it would be agreeable to the Speaker or Chairman to possess. It appeared to him that the Speaker had already power enough under a Rule which authorized him to name a Member for contravening the Rules of the House. He had voted with the Government on the last Rule relating to the number of Members necessary for putting the Closure Rule in operation. This was not a Party Question at all, and in that Division he had voted against his own honoured Leader. But the Question now before the House concerned every Member of it individually. It concerned the dignity of the House, and the power now sought to be given was one that ought not to be conferred, in his opinion, either upon the

Speaker or on the Chairman of Committees.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbeach) said, he was unable to agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite that there was no inconvenience suffered from a Member ordered to withdraw, remaining within the precincts of the House. He thought that those who witnessed what occurred last Session would agree with him; he referred to the fact that a Member who had been ordered to withdraw came into the Gallery of the House and kept his hat on in order to show to the rest of the world that he was a Member of the House in disgrace. He thought that scene should induce hon. Members of the House to vote that the words excluding Members under certain circumstances from the precincts of the House should be retained in the Rule.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said, he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) to compromise this portion of the Rule to some extent, because, as it stood at present, it was grossly unjust. At present a Member was compelled to attend on Committees even when ordered to withdraw from the service of the House. If the intention was to prevent the Member coming within the precincts he (Dr. Clark) said that Member ought to be discharged from attendance on Committee. It was not fair to require him to serve on Committees, and yet exclude him from the precincts of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) has informed me that he wishes to move the insertion of certain words after the word "shall," in line 12; and therefore, although, as originally proposed, the Amendment was to leave out all the words after "Debate," in line 8, the Question I shall put is to omit all the words after the word "debate," in line 7 to the word "shall," in line 12.

Question put,

"That the words 'or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members, provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the Service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate) shall' stand part of the Question."

Sir John Simon

The House *divided*:—Ayes 135; Noes 85: Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 18.)

MR. WHITBREAD said, that in order to mitigate the severity of the Rule as it now stood, he proposed to insert after the word "shall," in line 12, the words "if Mr. Speaker or the Chairman so direct." The Question had been pretty fully debated, and he did not desire to take up the time of the House by re-stating any of the arguments. He would simply point out what he thought had escaped the attention of the Government—namely, that the Rule would add tremendously to the severity of a Rule which was applicable to other offences. When anybody was suspended from the service of the House for a week or a month, he was to be further punished by exclusion from the precincts of the House. They might, under this Rule, exclude a Member from the precincts of the House for a month for an offence aimed at by the old Rule, and so exclude him while he was attending to Private Bill Legislation. That was a monstrous state of things, and one he did not think the Government ever contemplated when they drew up the Rule. It was possible, however, under peculiar circumstances, that in order to prevent disorder, it might be necessary to order a Member to withdraw from the precincts of the House. The Speaker or the Chairman, as the case might be, would be the best judge of the necessity of such an order. He put it to the First Lord of the Treasury whether any inconvenience had been found in practice to arise from Members under suspension being allowed to enter the precincts of the House. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman could point to a single instance of inconvenience, and therefore he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to accept the present Amendment, which was intended to mitigate the severity of the Rule as it stood.

Amendment proposed, in line 12, after the word "shall," to insert the words "if Mr. Speaker or the Chairman so direct."—(*Mr. Whitbread.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was a little surprised the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) should propose to add these words, because the hon. Gentleman was strongly opposed on a former occasion to the proposal that the Speaker should have any voice whatever in the question of the closure—he objected to the additional and invidious responsibility thrown on the Chair. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) had no wish to make this Rule unnecessarily harsh against hon. Gentlemen who might come under its operation. It did not appear to him that the question as to whether hon. Members of the House had suffered inconvenience from the fact that hon. Members who had been suspended from the service of the House had been allowed to enter its precincts during their suspension was at all relevant to the point at issue. The question really was, whether the penalty inflicted upon hon. Members for grossly disorderly conduct, for disobeying the Speaker or the Chairman, for delaying the Business of the House, for exposing the House to contumely and reproach, was sufficient at present. It appeared to him that the only ground on which hon. Members could desire to have access to the precincts of the House was that of enabling them to discharge their duties as Members of the House. The privileges which the Library afforded, and the other privileges which they possessed, were privileges which were afforded to them solely as Members of the House; and, therefore, when they were suspended from the discharge of their duties, it was not unreasonable that they should also be suspended from the privileges. The only object the Government had in view in proposing this Rule was to prevent a repetition of the scenes which admittedly had disgraced the House of Commons. He hoped that the penalty which was now sought to be imposed upon Members guilty of disorderly conduct would be sufficient to prevent a repetition of scenes which all must deplore. He was reluctant to add to the invidious duty which undoubtedly the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would throw upon the Chair; but if was the opinion of the majority of the House that such duty should be imposed upon the Chair, he would raise no objection to the proposed alteration. Personally, however, he thought it would be better to leave the Rule in the form in which it now stood.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale) said, he hoped the Government would be disposed to adopt the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Whitbread), because it appeared to him to be almost the only way of escaping from a very great difficulty which had been pointed out in the course of the discussion. It was undoubtedly a very great hardship that Members suspended from the service of the House should be compelled to continue their services on Private Bill Committees, and yet, while they were sitting on Private Bill Committees, be excluded from the precincts of the House. It seemed to him that if the Rule was to be maintained in its present form, it would be almost absolutely necessary to reconsider whether Members suspended from the service of the House should not also, by the same act, be necessarily suspended from attendance upon Private Bill Committees. However, the suggestion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Whitbread) would sufficiently tide over the difficulty. Although he agreed with a great deal which had fallen from the First Lord of the Treasury, and although he could not say that the personal punishment which it was intended to inflict on Members under the new Rule was so serious that it ought to be considered as a very great aggravation of the penalty which the old Rule forced upon Members —although he entirely approved of the general scope and bearing of the Rule, it appeared to him the acceptance of the words moved by his hon. Friend would relieve the House from a considerable difficulty in which it found itself.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he could not agree with the opinion which the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had expressed, because the responsibility cast by the Amendment upon the Speaker, and still more upon the Chairman, would be of such an invidious character that it would materially add to the difficulty of putting the Rule in force. As the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had said, if it was the will of the House that such an invidious duty as that proposed should be imposed upon the Chair, let it be so; but what might happen? A Member, possibly on the Ministerial side of the House, might commit some offence which might bring him under the operation of this Rule; he might be suspended from the service of the House and yet not excluded from the precincts of the House. Another Member, possibly on the Opposition side of the House, might also commit an offence bringing him under the operation of the Rule; he might be suspended from the service of the House, and also excluded from the precincts of the House. What accusations would then be made against the occupant of the Chair for partiality in the application of the Rule?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, it was just as unreasonable to expect a Member to serve on a Committee, and yet be debarred from access to materials of information to be found in the Library, as it was to expect a Member to join in the debates in the House under an equal disadvantage. Suppose a Member of the Front Bench were suspended for disorderly conduct, was he to be debarred from access to his room at the back of the Speaker's Chair, where a great deal of the work of a Minister was carried on? If a Member on the other side of the House was suspended, it was conceivable that he would not be excluded from the precincts of the House by the Speaker; whereas it was conceivable that if a Member on the Opposition side of the House, was suspended, he would also be excluded from the privileges of the House. That was a very unfortunate illustration of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach); but it showed the danger there was lurking in this tinkering with the Rules of the House, which had a history going back through centuries. He did not believe much in any of these new Rules, but it did appear to be a piece of perfect absurdity to say that a Member should be suspended from the service of the House in the House itself and excluded from the precincts of the House—from the Library, for instance, where all records were kept—and yet expect him to serve on Committees upstairs. At the same time he did not at all like the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), because it was moving in the direction of danger which he thought boded ill for that Assembly. He quite recognized that if disorder arose in such a place as that, the inevitable result was to throw more and more power into the hands of the presiding official. That, in itself, was a mischief; but he did not see how it was to be avoided. It was one of the penalties attaching to disorder, and the House was under the necessity of protecting itself against disorder. But the mischief to which he had referred ought to be reduced to the very lowest possible point, and, therefore, he disapproved of the suggestion of the hon. Member for Bedford, that discretion should be placed in the hands of the Chair.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 89; Noes 117: Majority 28.—(Div. List, No. 19.)

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) said, he wished to make a suggestion with regard to what fell from the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington), to the effect that when Members were suspended from the service of the House and required to withdraw from its precincts, they were yet to be permitted to serve on Private Bill Committees. It had been pointed out already in the course of the debate that it would be a matter of great indignity to hon. Members if they were subject to interference on the part of the police in going to and from a Committee Room. He (Sir Henry Tyler) would, therefore, move an Amendment to omit all reference to Standing Committees from the Rule. If some words were not added to the end of the proposed Rule, it might be taken that the existing Standing Order No. 12 would still have force, and, therefore, he would move to add these words: "and shall *ipso facto* be exempted for the same period from service on the Committees." That, he thought, would get over the difficulty, because if that were adopted there would be no conflict between the new Rule and the Standing Order No. 12, "Order in Debate."

Amendment proposed,

In line 13, to leave out from the word "House" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "and shall, ipso facto, be exempted for the same period from service on Committees."—(*Sir Henry Tyler.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he thought it would be highly inconvenient to adopt the proposal, because it might happen that a Select Committee had been sitting 9 or 10 days when a Member serving on it was suspended from the service of the House. To take that Member off the Committee and put a new one in his place who knew nothing whatever about the matter before it would be grossly unjust to the parties. No doubt, they had to choose between two evils—that was to say, they must either relieve an hon. Member from service on Committees, or enable him while serving on a Committee to have access to the precincts of the House, although excluded from the House itself. If the Amendment were necessary to bring about good order in the House, he should be the first to support it; but he thought that under the new Rules, taken as a whole, they would not be at all likely to have scenes of disorder such as had been witnessed in the past. He thought that if the words proposed to be left out were omitted the place should be supplied, not by the Amendment moved, but by the words "during the remainder of the Sitting." What was wanted was to prevent any opportunity of fresh provocation on the part of a Member who had left the House in a bad temper, and the adoption of these words would give him 24 hours to cool, and if an hon. Member on the following morning was cool enough to attend on a Private Bill Committee he was surely cool enough to meet hon. Members in the precincts of the House.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N,) said, he agreed with the right hon. Member who had preceded him (Mr. Heneage), as to the inconvenience of appointing a jury of four or five Members to consider a Private Bill, and then to withdraw one of them during the hearing of the case. He pointed out that sometimes the parties in fighting a Private Bill spent as much as £24,000 on the case, and that it would be grossly unfair to them to withdraw a juror in the manner proposed. In some cases one Member would be sufficient to turn a case, and it was not impossible to conceive that a Member having a considerable interest in the progress of a Private Bill might exert his influence to get a certain Member suspended in the House, so that he might be turned out of a Committee. Members might vote on a Division for a Member's suspension, not to punish him for his conduct in the House, but to shut him out of a Committee on which he was known to be hostile to a particular Bill or scheme. If the Amendment proposed were adopted, the House would have to adopt altogether new arrangements for Committees. The hon. Member for Yarmouth (Sir Henry Tyler) had acted with a good-natured desire to get the House out of a difficulty; but if his Amendment were to hold good, they might just as well hand over Private Bill legislation to the House of Lords, or to a Committee of Judges.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he had put to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury the grave side of the matter, and he would now put to him the ridiculous side. Supposing that it were necessary for a Member of a Committee to go to the Library of the House in order to refer to certain authorities to guide him in his deliberations—was he to be allowed to go there, or was he to have the books brought out to him, a thing which might be physically impossible if the House were not sitting, as the Librarians would not be in attendance?

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire) said, he trusted that there would be no attempt to exclude Members from Committees on the ground of anything which had happened in the House. Members of Committees were selected by independent authorities, and at the time a Member was suspended he might have sat upon a Committee throughout the consideration of the Preamble of a Bill. Because that Member came into the House, and in a moment of excitement did something which placed him under the penalty of suspension, it would be very unjust to the parties interested in the Private Bill before the Committee if 25 per cent of the judicial force were withdrawn from the consideration of the measure. Such a proceeding might throw the parties into an expense of many thousands of pounds. He thought it only right to exclude a Member from the House itself if he were guilty of disorderly conduct, but he would not deprive him of his other privileges in the precincts of the House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he had listened to all the arguments which had been offered, and was bound to say that he thought the balance was in favour of retaining the Rule as it stood—that was to say, that Members serving on Private Bill Committees should not, in consequence of their suspension, be relieved of the duty of serving on those Committees. He hoped and believed that the Rule would be very rarely employed—so rarely that it would not operate at all on Members serving on Private Bill Committees. It was impossible to guard against every contingency that might arise in the case of hon. Members becoming amenable to the Rule. It was an exceedingly unfortunate thing at any time that an hon. Member should come under the censure of the House; but when he did so an Order of the House was more important than consideration for a Member's feelings; therefore it appeared to him (Mr. W. H. Smith) that they should adhere to the words on the Paper and reject the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Sir Henry Tyler). He had carefully weighed all the arguments which had been advanced with the strongest desire to meet the susceptibilities of hon. Members.

Sir HENRY TYLER said, that, under the circumstances, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 134 ; Noes 74 : Majority 60.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Atkinson, H. J.
Baring, T. C.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Currie, Sir D.
Davenport, H. T.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fellowes, A. E.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gedge, S.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hastings, G. W.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Holloway, G.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lees, E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Madden, D. H.
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Milvain, T.
Morley, right hon. J.
Morley, A.
Morrison, W.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muntz, P. A.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Rathbone, W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Sellar, A. C.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Whitbread, S.
Whitley, E.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Allison, R. A.
Asquith, H. H.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Broadhurst, H.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Craven, J.
Crilly, D.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Flower, C.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gill, T. P.
Haldane, R. B.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hooper, J.
James, hon. W. H
Kenny, C. S.
Kilbride, D.
Lalor, R.
Leahy, J.

Leake, R.
Macdonald, W. A.
M'Donald, P.
M'Ewan, W.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Montagu, S.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
OBrien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, H. F.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Power, P. J.
Reid, R. T.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Rowlands, J.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Stack, J.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Sutherland, A.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Wayman, T.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Wilson, H. J.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Bradlaugh, C.
Gourley, E. T.

Resolved, That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do order Members whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's sitting; and that the Serjeant-at-Arms do act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair, in pursuance of this Resolution. But if, on any occasion, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman deems that his powers under this Standing Order are inadequate, he may name such Member or Members in pursuance of the Standing Order (Order in Debate), or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members.

Provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate), shall forthwith withdraw from the precincts of the House subject, however, in the case of such suspended Members, to the proviso in that Standing Order regarding their service on Private Bill Committees.

IV.—IRRELEVANCE OR REPETITION.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move the next Rule, said, he thought the experience of last Session and of previous Sessions showed that the proposed Rule was necessary, for much obstruction had been caused by hon. Members repeating over and over again the precise words and arguments of "the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down." It was for the House itself to consider whether some check ought not, for its own credit and honour, to be put on this practice, which involved considerable delay to Public Business. The chairmen of all public meetings and the Presidents of every great Assembly had similar power to that contained in this Rule, and the House of Commons was the only great Assembly in the world whose Speaker or Chairman of Committees did not possess that power. He proposed the Rule in order that the House of Commons might no longer be an exception to the ordinary practice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition either of his own arguments, or of the arguments used by other Members in Debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he thought the House could scarcely view with composure and self-control the extraordinary introduction of the First Lord of the Treasury to these words. It was perfectly certain that all Members, even those sitting on the Front Benches, constantly repeated, and even tediously repeated, the arguments used by their Colleagues. He could not suppose that the right hon. Gentleman really meant to take away the power of repeating an argument. No doubt, it was right and proper to prohibit a Member from repeating himself over and over again; but it seemed that the Rule, as at present worded, opened the way to an abuse of the power of the majority and of the power of the Chair. It was necessary, for the purpose of debate, for a Member to have power to repeat arguments used by others, as well as his own, even to the point of tedium; therefore he hoped that the Government would not press for the insertion of these words. If they did, he should certainly vote against them.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, he hoped the House would not consider him guilty of great presumption if he asked them to consider the Amendment which stood in his name, and which was really an alternative to the Rule proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. He might be asked why he wished to substitute that Amendment for the Rule which stood on the Paper in the name of the right hon. Gentleman? He wished to do so for two reasons—first, because the Rule proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, with the exception of the addition at the end, was the same as the existing Rule, which was never really effective; and, in the second place, because his Amendment would relieve the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees of what must be considered, under any circumstances of the case, a very painful and disagreeable duty. He said the Rule had been ineffective in the past, and that was undoubtedly the case, because it must be in the memory of everyone that, except on two or three occasions, it had been inoperative altogether. This was one of the points in their Procedure which required more amendment than anything else, and with regard to which, whilst they were dealing with the Rules of Procedure, they should pass something which would be absolutely effective in the future. The House would agree with him that it would be greatly to be regretted if the relations between the Speaker and the Members of the House became relations of a penal character more than could be helped. It was to the Speaker, and to his counsel and advice, that every one of them, no matter in what quarter he might sit, always resorted when he felt himself in a difficulty of any sort; and he was certain Mr. Speaker was the last person in the world who would wish, by any duty imposed upon him, to see that courteous and kindly feeling which he had always shown towards hon. Members infringed or endangered by any Rule of the House. What was the evil hon. Members complained of? Everyone who sat in the House during the past two or three Sessions must know perfectly what it was. Over and over again, they had heard Members—he would not say in what particular part of the House—get up and, for one reason or other, spend hours and hours repeating the same thing, in almost the very same words, which had been used before by other Members, boring the House to such a degree that it became painful to sit on those Benches and witness the waste of time which went on. Everyone knew that state of things, and recognized it as an evil; and he was quite sure everyone was desirous to pass a Rule which would effectually deal with it in the future. He maintained that the Rule they had had in the past had failed to put a stop to this sort of thing, and it seemed to him that the Rule now proposed, even with the addition suggested, would be of no more use than the Rule already existing. He, therefore, asked the House, with the greatest deference and respect, to consider the Amendment which he would now venture to move. If his proposal were acceptable to the House, he should move an Amendment to it, to provide that the Speaker, before putting the Rule in motion to silence a Member, should caution him. They had seen, over and over again, in that House what little attention Members paid to cautions of this kind; but if in the future no attention was paid to a caution, Mr. Speaker would immediately proceed to inform the House that a Member had been guilty of this offence, and, the House having been informed of what had taken place, any Member could at once rise in his place and claim to move that the hon. Member addressing the House be no longer heard. That would simply be reviving a very old practice in the House which had been disused now for many years. The object of his Amendment was to give the House itself some real control over speeches which were of a tedious and irrelevant character, and which were made for the purpose of wasting the time of the House and arresting the progress of Public Business. He would point out that no abuse of the Rule would be possible under any circumstances, for the reason that it could only operate after the intervention of Mr. Speaker. Its effect would be, in his opinion, to compel immediate attention on all occasions to the cautions addressed to hon. Members from the Chair—cautions which, in the past, as he had said, had been disregarded in a manner which had caused them all to regret the change which had taken place in the House of Commons during the past few years. He certainly believed that if his proposal were thought worthy of the serious consideration of the House it would go a long way towards meeting the evil which was universally acknowledged. The House would observe that he had made it obligatory on the Speaker formally to inform the House of this misconduct on the part of a particular Member; but, so far as he himself was concerned, he should be perfectly satisfied if the Rule provided that, upon Mr. Speaker having been compelled to caution a Member for the second time, it should be competent for any hon. Member to move that he be no longer heard. He had no desire to press the Amendment on the House in the form in which it now stood, if it were objectionable to the House; but, inasmuch as the Rule at present in force had been of no use, he had framed this Amendment, which he thought would have the desired effect, and he now ventured to leave it in the hands of the House.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "if it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, that a Member is addressing the House with continued irrelevance, or tedious repetition, or that he is unduly and unnecessarily prolonging Debate and arresting the Progress of Public Business, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, may so inform the House or the Committee.

"Thereupon any Member, rising in his place, may claim to move, That the Member in possession of the House be no longer heard.

"Such Motion shall be put forthwith without Amendment or Debate, unless the Member in possession of the House elects to discontinue his speech, in which case he may so inform the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees, and the Question shall not be put.

"A Member who is put to silence under this Rule by order of the House or the Committee is thereby prevented, on the first occasion, from taking part in any Debate during the remainder of that sitting; on the second occasion during a week; and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, during a month from the time when such order of the House, or of the Committee, has been made."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduc of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition,' stand part of the Question."

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, he did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chaplin) that the existing Rule had not worked well On the contrary, he had never seen it disputed. No Speaker or Chairman would interfere, unless it were obvious that the irrelevancy or tedious repetition of a Member was indulged in for the pure purpose of obstruction. When Mr. Speaker had interfered the whole House agreed with him, and the ruling had been effective. The object of the Amendment was to stop the mouth of a Member for a week or a month, according to the irrelevancy he had shown. Where had the right hon. Member got precedent for such a proposal? The only one he knew was the practice of Kirk Sessions in Scotland, in ancient times. Such a record as—"Betty Macdonald's mouth was this day closit;" and a month afterwards—"Betty Macdonald's mouth was this day openit"—seemed to be the same process which the right hon. Gentleman wished to introduce into the Procedure of the House. The present Rule respecting irrelevancy was quite clear, and had been used effectively; whereas the addition proposed by the right hon. Member would be almost impossible of application.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he must point out that the Rule under discussion was entirely directed against a Member who persisted in irrelevance or tedious repetition. It had been wrongly assumed that Mr. Speaker would call to Order Members who were simply repeating arguments which had been advanced by previous speakers; but the fact was that the Rule was aimed at a totally different practice—namely, that of the constant repetition of the same arguments over and over again by Members sitting on the same side of the House, after the substance of the argument had been exhausted. That was a matter which was submitted to the discretion of Mr. Speaker, who would observe not only whether hon. Members were irrelevant or tedious, but whether, after his having called their attention to the point, they persisted in being irrelevant or tedious. He considered that his right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) proposed to go rather too far, and impose a penalty which was rather disproportionate to the offence.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) that it was impossible to avoid repetitions in the course of debate. He objected to its being made a crime to do such a thing. In some cases he could not conceive it possible for a Member to speak after a debate had been opened and replied to without repeating the arguments already used on one side or the other.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, it seemed to be overlooked that the Rule was to be enforced by the Speaker or the Chairman. There would be no interference with the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who would never repeat the arguments of his Colleagues, but what was aimed at was the prevention of such tedious debates as took place in 1881, when the House sat for 44 hours without intermission. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) were in his place he would agree—for he was Chairman of Committees at the time—that in 1881 Members rose one after another and repeated the same arguments hour after hour and night after night. It was against such a condition of things that this Rule was framed.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, there was one point which seemed to have escaped notice. It had been assumed that the Question would be put from the Chair without debate, and that it would be at once agreed to. But, supposing the House thought that the punishment was being inflicted for a comparatively slight offence, it was conceivable that the House would not agree to the Resolution that the Member be not heard. In that case the position of the Chair would not be at all satisfactory, for the Chair would not be supported by the House. Such an event would be most damaging to the position of the Speaker or the Chairman. The proposal of the Government was more easily manageable than that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire, and therefore was the preferable of the two.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) moved, as an Amendment, the omission of the word "either" in line 3 of the proposed Rule. If the House were with him in regard to this omission he should move to omit the words "or of the arguments used by other Members in debate." The Rule would then be perfectly effective, because it would read—

> "The conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition of his own arguments."

If a Member were tedious in the repetition of his own arguments he would bring himself within the scope of the Rule. If the Rule remained unaltered and an intricate argument had been addressed to the House by one Gentleman, the Gentleman who replied might very easily bring himself within the scope of the Rule. Such a contingency ought to be avoided if possible.

Amendment proposed, in line 3, to leave out the word "either."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'either' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was afraid he would be obliged to oppose the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. It appeared to him that it was practically certain that the discretion which was vested in the Chair would not be abused. No one would accuse the hon. Member of irrelevance, or of tedious repetition of his own arguments or of the arguments of others; but hon. Members who had attended the House constantly for some years past must be aware that there had been occasions when speech after speech had been made which consisted of nothing else but irrelevance, and of tedious repetitions of arguments which had been used previously. He understood quite well the objection of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), but it must be remembered that everything depended upon the judgment with which the Rule was exercised; and unless the Speaker or Chairman of Committees were capable of exercising the discretion vested in them wisely, they were scarcely fitted for the responsible offices they held in the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 170; Noes 94: Majority 76.—(Div. List, No. 21.)

Main Question put.

Resolved, That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition either of his own arguments, or of the arguments used by other Members in Debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech.

V.—MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT IN ABUSE OF THE RULES OF THE HOUSE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in moving the adoption of the Rule, said, he believed there was a general feeling in the House that the form of proceeding which was referred to in the Rule was one which was frequently made use of for the purpose of obstruction. It was on that account that the Government asked the House to charge the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees with powers the exercise of which would conduce to the good conduct of the proceedings of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair, or he may decline to propose the Question thereupon to the House." —(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that such Motions were a very fruitful source of obstruction and ought to be dealt with. But the last few words of the Rule formed a very novel suggestion, and he doubted whether there was any precedent for it. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether this was not stretching, in the desire to put down obstruction, the power of the Chair, and depriving the House of its own powers to an extent for which there could be no justification? He objected to the proposal upon wo grounds; first of all because it threw great responsibility on the Chair in declining to put a Question that a Member moved; and, in the second place, because it placed the Chair in a very awkward position with the House and with the Member who made the Motion. It was throwing responsibility on the Chair which was sure to involve the Chair in friction with some section of the House. He thought the object which the right hon. Gentleman sought would be amply secured by enabling the Speaker or the Chairman to forthwith put the Question, because then decisions would be the act of the House. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press the words "or he may decline to propose the Question thereupon to the House," and as a matter of form he moved their omission.

Amendment proposed, in line 6, to leave out from the word "Chair" to the end of the Question.—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, there was a Standing Order at the present moment which enabled the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to put such Motions contemplated by the Rule to the House or to the Committee, as the case might be, forthwith. It was hardly reasonable that the House should be called upon to endure the repeated Motions which the Rules at present admitted of, to report Progress or that the Chairman do leave the Chair, upon which Divisions must take place whether the Chairman was of opinion that such Motions were really an abuse of the Rules of the House or not. He urged the adoption of this Rule not on behalf of the Government, but on behalf of the House itself. He was convinced that neither the Speaker nor the Chairman could exercise the authority which was sought to be placed in his hands so as to abuse his authority. It seemed to him essential that this authority should rest with the Speaker or the Chairman when there was an attempt to move these repeated Motions evidently for the purpose of obstruction or of annoyance, or of delaying the progress of the Business of the House. In the opinion of the Government, it was one which might very well be entertained by the House.

MR. C. S. PARKER (Perth) said, he remembered quite well the way in which hon. Members had been marched through the Lobbies in consequence of these successive Motions, but he thought the right hon. Gentleman forgot that if they carried the Rule that stood a little further down on the Paper—namely, the Rule which enabled the Speaker or the Chairman to put a Question and to have it decided without sending Members through the Lobbies—much less time would be wasted. The Speaker or the Chairman could call upon Members who challenged his decision to rise in their places, and in the course of two minutes the question would be settled. With such protection it seemed unnecessary to give power to the Chair to decline to put any Question.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, it was quite evident that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had forgotten his own Rule, number 9, in pursuance of which Divisions need not necessarily take place upon the Motions contemplated by this Rule. Under Rule 9 the Speaker or the Chairman would be able to ascertain the sense of the House by calling upon

Members to rise in their places, and therefore it was asking too much that the power should be vested in the Chair of declining to put a Question at all.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, it must be borne in mind that under the new Rules of Procedure they were practically to finish Business at 12 o'clock. It seemed to him that unless there was some such Rule as this, a Motion for Adjournment might be made a few minutes before 12 o'clock night after night, simply for the purpose of preventing the Motion of the day being put from the Chair.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, that he should divide the House on the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, even if he had to go into the Lobby alone. It was true that the existing Rule had been very much abused; but, at the same time, the preservation of some of the very few liberties of the people of London was due to its use. It was now many years ago since he sat in the Strangers' Gallery, and listened to a debate in which a Tory Government introduced a Bill which aimed at shutting the people out from the right of meeting in Hyde Park. The measure was introduced, if he mistook not, by Mr. Gathorne Hardy; and it was only by the exercise of their powers in the House, by a very determined minority, that the Bill was defeated. Mr. John S. Mill and a handful of sturdy Radicals pledged themselves to use all the Forms of the House to defeat that very obnoxious measure. If they had not done so, the Bill would have passed, and the people of London would have been deprived of a right which they had enjoyed from time immemorial. The result would have been something like a revolution in London. He gave the proposal before the House his most unqualified opposition.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he could refer to another instance, of which the hon. Member who had just spoken would probably take a different view. He remembered the time, about 1870, when Mr. Hibbert, whose absence from the House both Parties regretted, brought in a Bill to enable those who had taken Orders and afterwards renounced them to become Members of the House. The Bill was opposed by a strong Opposition; 12 Divisions were taken on Motions for the adjournment of the debate and the adjournment of the House, and the Sitting was prolonged until 5 o'clock in the morning. The hon. Gentleman opposite wanted to see that system of opposition continued. He (Sir Robert Fowler), however, did not think it was a good system, and should cordially support the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, this was a question for the House itself. As he had already stated, the only desire of the Government was to prevent needless obstruction, for it was certain that during the last Session of Parliament, and many previous Sessions, there had been great waste of time through Motions for the adjournment of the debate, for reporting Progress, for the Chairman leaving the Chair, and for the adjournment of the House, being made one after the other, and all with the same result, and in defiance of the vote of the majority. Each of these Divisions occupied a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes, so that necessarily a great deal of time was wasted. Under the new Rule for closing all Opposed Business at 12 o'clock, if this obstruction were practised at half-past 11 at night, it might have the effect of preventing the House from arriving at decisions it was anxious to arrive at. Therefore, it seemed to him quite reasonable that Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees should have power—if he believed that a Motion for Adjournment was made purely for the purpose of delay, and if he had already had an opportunity of ascertaining the views of the House by a Division—to decline to put the Question. If Rule IX. were accepted by the House, it would lessen the evil to which he called attention, but would not entirely remove it. Members would have to rise in their places, and upon Mr. Speaker would be placed the responsibility of saying whether there should be a Division or not when Motions were repeated again and again, however distinctly the opinion of the House might have been ascertained. The House should not be compelled to reconsider the same question over and over again at the instance of any Member who might chose to submit a dilatory Motion.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, that considering what great—although, he must say, advantageous—innovations they had been introducing into their Procedure, it was extremely important that they should introduce as few new principles as possible. This would be entirely a new principle to give Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees power to decline to propose a Question to the House or Committee. Had sufficient reason been shown for the adoption of this new principle? He had listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had conducted these debates with so much care, and to the interpolations of the right hon. Gentleman who sat on the left of the Leader of the House, whose views were always of a practical character (Mr. Ritchie), and he had come to the conclusion that no sufficient reason had been shown. For what was the argument? It appeared to be that these vexatious Motions for Adjournment would be frequently repeated. But that was what they could not be now that the House had adopted the closure Rule. The Speaker would also be able to call on hon. Members who supported a vexatious or frivolous Motion to rise in their places, and could thus obviate the loss of time caused by a Division. While they were right to adopt new principles where they were desirable, he thought this was a Rule too much, and one which did not find favour with the House as a means for carrying out that at which they were all aiming—namely, the shortening of the debates and the making of them more practical.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (Exeter) said, it appeared to him that there might be certain circumstances under which it might not be desirable that the closure should be moved, and the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury offered a desirable *via media*. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would persist in the Motion.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, in the remarks he had made, had defended the retention of the words, on the ground that Mr. Speaker would only decline to put the Question when Motions for Adjournment had been frequently made. But there was nothing in the Rule, as it stood, to show that Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees was to have that consideration in his mind; and the House, he thought, ought to be very slow indeed to adopt such a novel proposal as that one, which, so far as he knew, was absolutely without precedent. If a proposal were made in accordance with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House a few moments ago, he thought the House would be disposed to look more favourably on the Rule.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he must remind the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) that there was a precedent for the proposal in the Rules laid upon the Table by a former Speaker when Urgency was voted on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The third Rule, agreed to on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, was to the effect that Mr. Speaker might either decline to put a Motion for Adjournment, if, in his judgment, it was made with obstructive intent, or might put it from the Chair forthwith.

MR. PARNELL (Cork) said, he thought that some of these Rules, especially this one, had been framed without regard to Rules they had already passed—in particular the Rule making the grave and radical change in their Procedure that the discussion of Opposed Business should terminate at 12 o'clock. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had been based on the allegation that repeated Motions for reporting Progress and for the adjournment of the House and of the debate had been made last Session, and in recent Sessions, under circumstances which called for the application of such a Rule as this. Well, they had now stopped all Opposed Business at 12 o'clock, consequently the inducement to make such Motions had ceased; and he affirmed, as a fact which he believed would not be contradicted, that only after half-past 12 o'clock had such Motions been made in recent Sessions. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman could mention a single example of a Motion for the adjournment of the debate or to report Progress having been made last Session, or in recent Sessions, after half-past 12 o'clock. The whole case of the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, fell to the ground, since the argument he had used to recommend his Rule to the House was evidently a nonexistent one. Why did the right hon. Gentleman seek to provide in this Rule a remedy for an abuse which another Rule had caused to cease to exist? He (Mr. Parnell) must say the proposed Rule was not worth the candle which was consumed in discussing it, for it would not save the Government, or any section of the House, any time when it had been adopted. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had hinted or suggested that some new practice might grow up in the House as regarded such Motions as these at half-past 11 o'clock, or at some period when the consideration of Opposed Business was about to cease; but surely the time to provide a remedy would be when such a practice did rise up. Why should not the right hon. Gentleman wait to see if these Motions were approximated by the hour he supposed they would be, before rushing in with a brand new Rule to check a practice which had never existed? He (Mr. Parnell) considered it a very grave thing to interfere with the right of Members of the House to address questions, perfectly in Order in other respects, to the consideration of the House or Committee.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he attached a great deal of importance to these matters of Procedure. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) seemed to think that the proposed Rule was unnecessary, as the House would probably accept Rule IX.; but, as a matter of fact, the two Rules were distinct, Rule IX. being framed for the purpose not of enabling Mr. Speaker or the Chairman to arrest debate, but of saving Members the trouble of going into the Lobby after debate. There was an immense difference between the two. The Rule under consideration was to facilitate the progress of a Bill through the Committee or Report stage. It dealt with frivolous Motions, whereas Rule IX. related to vexatious Divisions. He thought it would be of the greatest possible advantage for Mr. Speaker or the Chairman to have the power of saying whether or not a Motion for Adjournment was one which should be put. It was true they now had the closure; but that was a tremendous apparatus to bring into use for the closing of a debate which, according to the general sense of the House, should be closed summarily. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) trusted the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan), who hitherto had shown so much common sense in these matters, would see the difference between these two Rules, and would admit that a Motion for the application of the closure was not a sufficient remedy for the evil, to meet which the proposal under discussion was brought forward.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN said, that the only part of the Rule he objected to was that which allowed Mr. Speaker and the Chairman to decline to put the Question. It might be amended in that respect, if desired.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 214; Noes 112: Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 22.)

Main Question put.

Resolved, That, if Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair, or he may decline to propose the Question thereupon to the House.

VI.—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he now had to move Rule VI., the object of which was to enable the Government on Government nights to arrange the Business as they thought fit. He thought the House would agree that it was only reasonable that the Government should have power to arrange the Business on Government nights as they thought fit, so as to give facilities for any Motion being brought on which they might deem fit.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, on days on which Government business has priority, the Government may arrange such Government business, whether Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions, in such order as they may think fit."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that the Rule would not enable the Government to give precedence to a Motion moved by a private Member.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that if the Government desired to give a private Member an opportunity of bringing forward a Bill or a Motion on a Government night, the House should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the arrangement.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he wanted to point out that if the Government gave up a night to a private Member for a Bill, that Bill would become Government Business.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that under Standing Order 36 the Government could put down a private Member's Bill first on the list on a Monday or Thursday, and treat it as Government Business.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That, on days on which Government business has priority, the Government may arrange such Government business, whether Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions, in such order as they may think fit.

VII.—COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move the adoption of the next Rule, said, its object was to prevent a repetition of the discussion of the principle of a Bill on the Order that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair. It had been found that the Motion that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair was greatly abused, and there was a general agreement that a second reading debate should not occur twice over.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That whenever an Order of the Day is read for the House to resolve itself into Committee (not being a Committee to consider a Message from the Crown, or the Committee of Supply, or of Ways and Means), Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, and the House shall thereupon resolve itself into such Committee, unless Notice of an Instruction thereto has been given, when such Instruction shall be first disposed of."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked if the Rule was to apply in the case of a Bill which had gone through Committee *pro formâ* and had been greatly changed by the Member in charge of it?

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) also asked whether the Rule would apply to a Bill sent down from a Select Committee? He apprehended that many changes might be effected in a Bill by a Select Committee, and he thought there should be some opportunity of discussing them, because the Bill might be sensibly different from what it had been when read a second time.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought that whatever changes were made in the Bill by a Select Committee, they would be consistent with the principle of the Bill. If any opportunity of discussion in such a case were desired, the third reading would afford it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That whenever an Order of the Day is read for the House to resolve itself into Committee (not being a Committee to consider a Message from the Crown, or the Committee of Supply, or of Ways and Means), Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, and the House shall thereupon resolve itself into such Committee, unless Notice of an Instruction thereto has been given, when such Instruction shall be first disposed of.

VIII.—AMENDMENTS ON REPORT.

Resolved, That upon the Report stage of any Bill no Amendment may be proposed, which could not have been proposed in Committee without an Instruction from the House.—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

IX.—DIVISIONS.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, the object of the Rule he would now move was to obviate the necessity for Divisions in certain cases. It would be recollected that in previous Sessions numerous Divisions had been taken in which there were comparatively very few Members on one side and an almost overwhelming number on the other. A serious loss of valuable time was involved in that practice, hence the proposed Rule. It was obvious that the Rule would not be put in force, unless the numbers challenging a Division were so small as to render it unnecessary to appoint Tellers.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee, by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either declare the determination of the House or Committee, or name Tellers for a Division."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he proposed to move an Amendment in this Rule which would practically carry out one of the recommendations of the Committee on Procedure presided over by the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) which sat two years ago. That recommendation, while reserving the right of the Speaker or the Chairman at his discretion to call upon the Members who supported a Motion to rise in their places, put a limitation on that power by declaring that if the minority exceeded a certain figure then a Division should take place. Under the existing Rule, on a Motion to report Progress or to adjourn, the Speaker or the Chairman might call on the Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and if less than 20 stood up then a Division was not necessary. His Amendment was to the effect that if the minority who stood up were more than 40 then a Division should be taken. If the Rule as proposed by the Leader of the House had been confined simply to dilatory Motions, or to Motions of Adjournment, he did not know that he should have pressed his Amendment; but as it would apply to any Motion whatever before the House, he thought they should have regard to the interests of their constituents, who had a right to know how their Members voted. In past times many great and important questions had been introduced into the House which at first had very small minorities in their favour; and it therefore ought not to be put out of the power of constituencies to know how their Representatives voted on matters in which they were deeply interested. He thought that where the minority was more than 40 there ought to be a Division taken, and he now moved his Amendment accordingly.

Amendment proposed,

In line 4, after the word "and," to omit the words "he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either," and insert the words "if the minority be less than 40 he shall at his discretion."—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he thought that the extremely practical mind of his right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) would not be disposed, on further consideration of the matter, to insist upon the Amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: I see that the hon. Member for South Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill) has an Amendment upon the Paper which will come in before that of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he had put his Amendment upon the Paper, because he desired to have a statement from the Government as to whether it was intended by this Rule that the Speaker should count one by one the Members rising in their places, and register the number of Members voting for or against the Question, or whether what would take place would simply be that a mass of Members would rise on one side and a mass of Members would rise on the other side, and then the Speaker would declare which side had won the day? In his (Mr. Gill's) opinion, the latter mode of ascertaining the sense of the House would be most unsatisfactory, and would lead to a great deal of dissatisfaction. On the other hand, if the Speaker or the Chairman was required to count one by one the Members who rose in their places, it would go a long way to relieve the ambiguous and somewhat dangerous tendency of the Rule. If the counting of the Members was not implied in the Rule, he should certainly move his Amendment, at any rate as far as the first clause of it went.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it be in the discretion of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman to take the Vote of the House in the following manner:—He shall, on his decision being challenged, forthwith order the doors to be closed, whereupon he shall call upon the Members who support or who challenge his decision successively to rise in their places, and he shall proceed to count them one by one in an audible voice. At the conclusion of such count he shall declare the determination of the House or Committee. Provided always, that on any Member declaring himself doubtful of the accuracy of such count, and calling for a Division, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman shall name Tellers for a Division."—(*Mr. T. P. Gill.*)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and,' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the hon. Gentleman would see that the effect of the Amendment would be to give any hon. Member declaring himself doubtful of the accuracy of the counting the power of calling for a Division.

MR. T. P. GILL said, he would not press the last clause of his Amendment if the first part met with the approval of the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that in that case the value of the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman consisted in this—that the Speaker or the Chairman was to count in an audible voice. He could not doubt but that the Speaker or the Chairman would, in all cases, only declare the results of a difference of opinion when he felt himself satisfied as to those results. The hon. Member would see that if the Speaker or the Chairman was to have this responsibility placed upon him, it was not necessary to prescribe precisely the method by which he should arrive at his decision.

MR. T. P. GILL said, he would ask the permission of the House to point out that what was not provided by the Rule was that the number of the voters should be declared by the Speaker or Chairman. That was what he wished to procure. The Chair might declare that "the Ayes have it," or "the Noes have it." There might be a strong division of opinion, and it would be an invidious thing on the part of the Speaker to say that "the Ayes have it," or "the Noes have it," when a great section of the House might desire to know what the exact result was. He believed there was no Legislature in the world which had such a Rule as this. He hoped the Rule would not be accepted hastily, and that the House would make some provision for registering the numbers, if a considerable section of hon. Members desired it.

MR. PARNELL (Cork) said, he thought that the Amendment was a very reasonable one, and he could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) should resist it. It appeared to be clearly within the contemplation of the right hon. Gentleman that the Speaker should make a count of the numbers on one side or the other, in order to ascertain what the opinion of the House was. In what other way could the opinion of the House be arrived at, except by counting the numbers for or against a particular question? He presumed that the new method proposed by the right hon. Gentleman was proposed from a mechanical point of view for the purpose of rendering the mechanism of counting the vote more simple than at present. But was it to be tolerated that the House or the country was not to know how many Members were in favour of or against any particular proposition? By the Rule as it stood, they were told that Members were not to declare themselves individually in favour or against a proposition, and for the first time in the history of Parliament the country was not to know what the voice of its Representatives was with respect to any particular proposition. He thought the right hon. Gentleman on reflection, would admit that, having obtained eight Rules up to the present time with the most unexampled facility on his part, the time had now arrived to yield a little to the Opposition on this matter. Neither the efficiency of Parliament as a whole, nor the power of the majority, would be injured by some slight concession on this exceedingly drastic Rule. He looked upon it as being the most offensive Rule yet proposed in Parliament, because it placed the minority in the position of standing up in their places in order to be jeered and laughed at by the majority. The Government deprived the minority of the right of registering their names and opinions on the questions debated, and they also deprived the minority of the right of letting the country know how many Members voted one way or the other. What Rule could go further than that? He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would see that some concession to the Opposition would be seemly on his part at this juncture, and that he should not, relying upon the facility with which he had obtained these Rules, stand fast to the *ipsissima verba* of the original, but concede what was reasonably asked. He was precluded from going into the other question as to whether there should be any right to take a Division at all where the minority amounted to the substantial number of 40; but when the Amendment bearing upon that point was proposed he would have something to say. At present, they had this Rule before them in all its nakedness. There was no provision even that the bells should be rung, and that the Members who were interested in the question should be summoned to take part in the Division, or to stand up in their places. There was no provision such as that which was made in the Rule of 1885, directed to a much less important matter—Divisions on dilatory Motions. He thought that as they were going beyond mere dilatory Motions, they ought to consent to insert some safeguard in this stringent and drastic Rule, so as to secure if the time should ever come, which Heaven forbid, when they might not have the proceedings of the House governed and directed by the same impartiality which now distinguished them, they should have some safeguard to secure that this Rule might not be opposed even by the authority of the House, a thing which the experience of other Legislative Assemblies in regard to the very matter they were now discussing had shown to be quite possible.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: said, it seemed to him that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had not carefully studied the Amendment he supported. The hon. Gentleman believed that the Amendment only compelled the Speaker to count the minority; but, if he read the Amendment, he would find it compelled the Speaker to count both the minority and the majority. The Divisions to be guarded against were Divisions in which there was a large number, an overwhelming number, of the House on one side, and a very small number on the other side. There must be for the Rule to operate an enormous majority on one side and a very small minority on the other. The hon. Member (Mr. T. P. Gill), by his Amendment, called upon the Speaker to count not only the minority, which might be from 10 to 40, but to count the majority, which might be from 200 to 500. The Amendment in its present form was not one which could be put in force. The Speaker could not count a majority of 500, or even of 250, for he did not think the Benches on this side or on that would hold 250 Members. He had a suggestion to make to the House and to the Government on this subject, but before making it he wished to say he thought the Rule was a most valuable one, the most valuable one which appeared upon the Paper if they were really aiming at expedition in their Business. Divisions took up so much time, and were so wearisome, that, undoubtedly, private Members had it in their power to inflict an amount of labour, trouble, pain, and annoyance upon the House. He did not think private Members ought to have such power. He quite admitted that under the Rule the House was at the discretion of the Chair; but did anyone suppose for a moment that the Speaker or the Chairman would ever put the Rule in operation, except when there was a marked and overwhelming disparity of Members on one side or the other, and, more than that, except when the opposition partook of an obstructive character? Now, he came to a point raised by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and raised to a certain extent by his right hon. Friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler)—namely, that there ought to be some means of recording the numbers of the minority. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton would have the names of the minority published whenever the minority numbered 40. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) did not like that, for he did not think it rested upon any solid foundation. He did not see why a minority of 30 should not have their names published as well as a minority of 40. The suggestion he made to the Government and the House was that, whenever the Rule was put in operation, the Speaker should count the minority, and declare it to the House, so that the public should always know the size of the minority. [An hon. MEMBER: Declare the names?] He would not suggest that; he thought that was going too far. He proposed that this course should be adopted in order that the public might know that the Rule was not being put in force unjustly. The hon. Member (Mr. T. P. Gill) who moved the Amendment said there was no Legislative Assembly in the world where such a Rule as this was in operation. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) had seen the French Assembly and the German Assembly at work. Only the other day he saw the German Assembly in Committee of Supply, and he saw six Divisions—three of them upon important matters—taken by the Members rising in their places; taken in a most expeditious and practical manner. The Chairman called upon the Members to rise in their places; there was a small number on one side, and the proceedings passed off with the greatest possible expedition. He had also seen the same system at work in the French Assembly. He saw it in operation when President Grévy disappointed the Chamber by not tendering his resignation. He heard a Motion made, it was supported by a vast majority of the House and opposed by a few, and, again the decision was taken by the Members rising in their places. Consequently, the hon. Gentleman was not correct in saying the system now proposed by the Government was unknown in other Assemblies. [Mr. T. P. GILL: Were the numbers counted?] The numbers were not counted. The Chairman simply called on the Members to rise, and he decided which way it was. It was obvious which way the decision lay, because there was a vast mass on one side, and a small number on the other. He earnestly pressed the House to adopt this Rule; it was a most important one in regard to the conduct of their Business. The Chair would never think of not allowing a really respectable minority to be brought to the notice of the public. The Rule was entirely aimed at obstructive and frivolous Divisions, which it really ought not to be in the power of Members to put the House to the annoyance of taking. He trusted the Government would consider the suggestion he had made in regard to allowing the Speaker to count the minority and to declare the numbers to the House. Perhaps it would be well to adjourn the consideration of the subject until to-morrow, when, if the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury thought the suggestion a good one, he might bring down words to add to the Rule which might satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, the suggestion of the noble Lord would be acceptable to both sides of the House, if in addition to the numbers there could be some means of recording the names of the minority. All great causes had had very small beginnings. It was well known that when Wilberforce commenced the battle against slavery he had but a small following. The Repeal of the Corn Laws and the adoption of the Ballot were not in the first instance supported by more than 30 or 40 Members. It was most important that the names of the men who first advocated great reforms should be recorded. His hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Courtney) was to be congratulated that he was one of a minority of 18 who voted against the Transvaal War. That Division was on record, and those who formed the minority had every reason to be proud. He was as anxious as any Member of the House to expedite Business, but he thought a minority ought to have the right of walking through the Division Lobby and of recording their names.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries) said, he thought that the names of the majority ought to be recorded as well as those of the minority; because the constituents had a right to know how their Members voted. He did not suppose the Rule was likely to operate unjustly, but still it might happen that on some occasions a majority of Members would avail themselves of the Rule for the purpose of destroying a Bill or proposal which they would not do if their names appeared in the Division List. He hoped that if the right hon. Gentleman accepted the suggestion of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) he would reconsider before to-morrow whether it was possible to enable some machinery to be adopted by which the names of the majority as well of the minority could be recorded.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that that matter was of great importance, and therefore he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

—o—

SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Atkinson, Bill to limit the duration of Speeches in Parliament, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Atkinson, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Maclure, and Mr. Howard Vincent.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 149.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (SEAMEN'S VOTES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Atkinson, Bill to enable Master Mariners, Marine Engineers serving afloat, Seamen, and Fishermen to Vote at Parliamentary Elections by papers in a similar manner to that in which members of Universities Vote at present, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Atkinson, Sir George Baden-Powell, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Brookfield, Marquess of Carmarthen, Sir James Corry, Sir Donald Currie, Colonel Duncan, Mr. Donkin, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Grotrian, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Heneage, Mr. King, Sir Charles Palmer, Sir John Puleston, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Thomas Sutherland, Mr. Whitley, Sir Samuel Wilson, and Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 150.]

INTESTATES ESTATES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ambrose, Bill to amend the Law relating to the distribution of the Estates of such Intestates as shall die leaving a widow, but no issue, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Ambrose.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 151.]

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock, Midnight.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 29*th February*, 1888.

MINUTES.] — Select Committee — Town Holdings, *nominated*.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Fishing in Rivers* [152]; Nonconformist Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) * [153]; Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment * [154].

Second Reading—Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) * [32].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE).—IX. DIVISIONS.

RESOLUTION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th February],

"That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either declare the determination of the House or Committee, or name Tellers for a Division."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it be in the discretion of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman to take the Vote of the House in the following manner:—He shall, on his decision being challenged, forthwith order the doors to be closed, whereupon he shall call upon the Members who support and who challenge his decision successively to rise in their places, and he shall proceed to count them one by one in an audible voice. At the conclusion of such count he shall declare the determination of the House or Committee."—(*Mr. T. P. Gill.*)

Question again proposed,

"That the words 'Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and,' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed*.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that this Rule differed entirely in gravity from any of the Rules which preceded it. All the other Rules, good or bad, were within the competence of the House, as only affecting the order of Business; but this Rule affected the right of constituents to know how their Members acted upon any matter which came before the House. This was not simply a question of the right of the minority to register their votes; it was not a question of the numbers on either side, but a question of the right of constituents to know whether their Members were or were not present upon any particular occasion, and how they voted.

Up to the present moment there had only been a very brief reference, and that was in the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid), to this right of constituents; and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) asked the House gravely to consider before they changed entirely the relations of Members to their constituents. The Amendment of the hon. Member for South Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill) he should vote for, though it did not touch the point he was now raising, because if it were carried it would only secure that the numbers should be known. The proposal of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) who, as he should show presently, was quite mistaken as to the practice of the French and the German Parliaments—he (Mr. Bradlaugh) thought so last night, particularly as regarded the French Parliament, because he had often been present at the Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies, but he was afraid his want of knowledge of the French language might have misled him as to what happened——

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I only described what I saw with my own eyes.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that he also thought last night he remembered what he had seen with his own eyes. He had now, however, got the *Règlement* of the Chamber of Deputies, which would explain the mistake, not an unnatural mistake, made by a foreigner when he did not quite understand the proceedings that were passing. The proposal of the noble Lord, which it appeared by the Amendment Paper had been adopted by the Government, was also deficient, because it only provided that the number of the minority challenging a Division should be recorded; it did not provide that anything should be done to show how individual Members voted or who were the absentees. He objected even to the proposal of the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren), although he should support it if it went to a Division, because if that be accepted the minority only would be able to record their names. He respectfully suggested that the majority who prevented the adoption of some proposition submitted to the House ought to have their names recorded, so that their constituents might know how they voted. He now came to the question of fact as submitted by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington. As to the German Parliament, he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had no knowledge; but he had managed to fortify himself with authority on the point at issue. The articles of the *Règlement* which applied to voting in the French Chamber of Deputies were Articles 78, 79, 80, 81, and 82. As his French was very bad, perhaps the House would permit him to translate Article 82 into English, so that he might not mislead the House, as doubtless the noble Lord was misled by listening to something in a language not his own.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the statement he made was in reference to the assertion of the hon. Member for South Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill) that the practice of taking Divisions by Members rising in their places was unknown in any Assembly in the world. He said that, on the contrary, it was a common practice in the French and German Parliaments.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, it was a pity the noble Lord did not impart to the House the whole of his knowledge on the subject, because, no doubt, he would then have told the House that although there were three ways of voting—by rising and sitting, by public voting, and by secret voting—in every case public voting was a matter of right. He had said "in every case." There were some slight exceptions made in Article 81, but with those exceptions with the details of which he need not trouble the House. Article 82 provided that a public vote might always be had on a demand in writing signed by 20 Members of the Chamber, so that while it was perfectly true that many votes in the French Chamber were taken by the Members of one opinion rising in their places, and those of the opposite opinion remaining seated, it was also true that any minority of 20 might insist on the voting being taken publicly. In the German Parliament, it appears to be not quite the same, but sufficiently nearly the same. He did not happen to possess the *Règlement* of the German Parliament, but he had on this the able summary of the Rules and Proceedings of Foreign Parliaments which was compiled by a respected and very able official of their own House. On page

295, in dealing with what the noble Lord witnessed, the compiler said—

> "At the end of the debate and before a Division is taken, any Member may move that the names of the Members voting be taken down. This Motion must be supported by 50 Members. The President declares a Division closed after all the Members of Parliament have been called over by name, and after a recapitulation of their names, any Members whose votes have not been entered have a second opportunity of voting."

He (Mr. Bradlaugh) therefore submitted that the suggestion of the Government in the Rule which was now under discussion was absolutely contrary to the practice of the French and German Parliaments. A minority of 20 in the French Parliament and a minority of 50 in the German Parliament had, after the vote had been taken by Members rising or before it, the right to demand that the vote should be public. He was persuaded that the constituents of this country would regard this as an attempt to shield Members from what should be their proper responsibility. He had been informed by Members far better versed in the old traditions of the House than himself, though he had taken some pleasure during the enforced leisure he had had in the House, of making himself acquainted with those traditions, that in the Parliamentary Reports which preceded *Hansard*, the names of the Members voting in the minority were recorded, while those of the Members voting in the majority were not recorded. But it was not only a question of protecting the minority. Constituents had a clear and distinct right not only to know how each individual Member had voted upon any given question, but they had a right to see, by comparing the Division Lists, what Members chose to be absent. The House had no right, under cover of regulating its own Procedure, to do what it never had done yet; if it was done in this case, they might as well vote secretly—vote by ballot—and thus entirely deprive their constituents of any control over them. He did not mean to apply these remarks to Motions which were rightly or wrongly called obstructive, or to Motions made for the mere purpose of delay. He had had it suggested to him that even Divisions on clauses of a Bill in Committee might be exempted from the claim he was now making; but he did not feel quite so sure about that, because clauses often involved important principles. He submitted that by adopting this Rule they would be striking a blow at Parliamentary influence in this country, and giving tongue to those who said that the Members of the House of Commons were careful only for themselves, and careless of the men who returned them.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, he would respectfully urge the Government to take into consideration the arguments of the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). He (Mr. Johnston) was entirely in accord with the views propounded by the hon. Member. It would be a dangerous thing if, by any course of proceeding in the House, Members were enabled to give secret votes; in fact, it would probably endanger the seats of some hon. Members, because it might become a disputed question how the majority on a given subject was made up. He hoped the Government would consider how they might modify this Rule, so that every hon. Member of the House might have his name recorded in a Division.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he did not apologize for taking part in the discussion, because, with one exception, he was the senior Member of the House present. He could, therefore, speak with some little experience, and also as one who had very carefully studied the Parliamentary history of former days. He could confirm what the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had said, as to finding in the all-authoritative records of the proceedings of Parliament for more than a century the names of the minorities in all important divisions given. It frequently happened that when great questions were first mooted they were supported by very few Members. Public opinion grew, numbers increased and multiplied, and it was important, historically, that the names of original minorities should be recorded. It was important that constituents should not be deprived of the means of knowing who those Members were who had voted for any particular reform. The recording of the names of large majorities did not appear to him to be a matter of very great importance. There was nothing so irksome as the taking of Divisions in which there were vast majorities. The House would remember that the larger the majority the more time a Division took, and therefore in that respect he went entirely with the object of the Rule. Let him state how the matter stood. A Standing Order, adopted in 1882, stated—

> "When, after the House has been cleared for a Division, upon a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, the decision of Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman of a Committee, that the Ayes or Noes having it, is challenged, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman may, after the lapse of Two Minutes, as indicated by the sand-glass, call upon the Members challenging it to rise in their places, and, if they be less than Twenty in a House of Forty Members or upwards, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House or of the Committee."

If less than 20 Members rose in the minority it should not be necessary to go through all the forms of a Division. What he suggested was that this Standing Order should be made to apply to all Motions and that the proposal of the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren) should be adopted, so that minorities should have the opportunity of recording their names.

MR. SALT (Stafford) said, that the point raised by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) was a very interesting and important one, and one which ought to have some weight with the House. At the same time, he (Mr. Salt) doubted whether the constituencies have an inherent right to know the particulars of a Division. The publication of the Division List was a comparatively modern institution. Division Lists were intended more for the information of Members themselves than for the information of their constituents. What he said about the House of Commons practice was further confirmed by one or two matters of Procedure. For instance, till comparatively recent times Strangers were absolutely excluded from the House during Divisions. That was the state of affairs before 1853, and now there was a partial exclusion of Strangers, though no doubt the principle had been given up. The right of publishing Divisions was one which the House had always reserved to itself. He agreed that the restrictions which had been referred to were not in accordance with the modern habits and ideas, but the Standing Order just quoted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) showed that the intention of that Order was merely to exclude the publication of names in matters so unimportant and in Divisions so small that it would be a waste of time to record every name. He hoped, however, the First Lord of the Treasury would be able to devise some means of meeting the objections raised. He might further note that as the Resolution stood, it was not quite clear what the Speaker or the Chairman would do in the event of Members standing up and challenging a Division, as the power proposed to be given appeared to be somewhat too absolute.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, that no one for a moment could doubt the power of the House to keep its Divisions secret; but he was convinced that any proceeding of that character would be regarded by the country as a retrograde and re-actionary step. As far as his experience went, the constituencies took quite as much interest, very frequently more interest, in the votes, than they did in the speeches of their Members. It would be just as reasonable to forbid the printing of any speeches as to forbid the recording of the votes. An idea seemed to prevail amongst some hon. and right hon. Gentlemen that the question at issue was simply the right of the minority to register their names. It was nothing of the sort, and if he had his choice he doubted whether he would not prefer that the majority should register their names. He maintained that of the two rights of a minority, the more important was not that of registering their own names, but of compelling the majority to register their names. That being so, he thought the arguments used in favour of this proposal were utterly inadequate. As to saving time, it must be borne in mind that they had already adopted such stringent Rules that it was impossible to delay the proceedings of the House if the Rules were properly handled. But, young Member as he was, he had seen questions which at their outside were supported by only 10 or 15 Members rapidly come to be great and burning questions. What was the most important function of the House of Commons? It was to keep the Executive Government of the country in touch with the people, and the Divisions to which he attached more importance than any others were Divisions in which the Executive had great majorities at its back, and in which it was not in accord with the popular feeling of the country. Reference had been made to the practice of foreign Assemblies. It was idle to say that the French and the German Assemblies pursued this course, and were they to be told that the English House of Commons was to follow the example of Legislative Assemblies that had no control over the Executive of their country? Even the American Chamber did not control the Executive Government, and therefore there were many reasons which ought to influence the conduct of their proceedings which did not influence the American Chamber. No such Rule as that now proposed by the Government prevailed in the American Chamber, but it was in the power of an extremely small minority to compel the majority to register their names in the most public way. In his opinion, this Rule was one which the country would not approve of, and if it was insisted upon by the Government they would hear a great deal about their action.

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) said, the objection raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), and repeated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers), that it was desirable that high-minded and far-seeing minorities should always be able to place their names on record, was one which carried great weight with many hon. Members. This, however, was merely a matter of personal interest to Members of that House. Another objection taken to the proposed new Rule was of greater public importance. There was no doubt that in these days constituencies did take great interest in the proceedings of the House. The people were exceedingly jealous and exacting as to the proceedings of their Members, and were particularly anxious to know how their Representatives voted upon certain questions submitted to the House. That being so, it was most desirable that not only the names of minorities but the names of majorities should be published. He, for one, would certainly not vote for this Rule if he thought it would in any case be applied to Divisions upon any questions of importance—upon any Motion put down for discussion, or upon any Amendment that appeared upon the Notice Paper of the House. But in his opinion, the Rule would be applied simply for the purpose of preventing waste of time. It was said they were giving the Speaker too much power; but they had already given him power to decline to put a Question at all to the House. It would always be open to the ingenuity of Members to devise Amendments, and spring them on the House, which would practically be dilatory Amendments, and he took it that the object of this Rule was to enable the Speaker, in such cases, to save time by merely counting heads as it were. The whole controversy turned on the words "the Speaker may at his discretion." He was content to accept these words, because he did not think that any Speaker or Chairman would be ever open to the temptation of applying this Rule for the purpose of keeping secret the names of Members voting on a question on which the constituencies had a right to be informed.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he was entirely with the First Lord of the Treasury in his desire to save the time of the House, but he could not support the Rule as it now stood. They all desired to prevent frivolous repetitions of Divisions upon the same question, and his right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) had suggested the extension of the Rule which provided that minorities of 20 Members should be required to rise in their places. He (Mr. Broadhurst) did not think that numbers were any criterion whatever of the importance of the subject to be divided upon. He remembered that, on one occasion, he was one of a minority of 7; the question had reference to the exclusion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). The minority of 7 found several hundreds arrayed against them; but to-day they saw how wise they were, and how the majority had come to admire the minority for their wisdom and pertinacity. Now, the House would support the First Lord of the Treasury in an endeavour to economize the time of the House; but constituencies were extremely anxious to know how their Members voted on particular questions, and the Division Lists were scanned by electors more and more eagerly as years went on. He was entirely in favour of a registration of the names of the majority, quite as much as of a registration of the names of the minority. They had already considerably contracted the rights of constituencies by making Rule VI., and he did not think it would be wise for the House to further trespass on the right of the people, who, after all, were the supreme authority with regard to Members of the House.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that undoubtedly the question was one of very considerable importance, and he agreed very much with the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) that they ought not to look to the practice of foreign Parliaments in this matter. But if they were to have references made to the practice of foreign Parliaments at all it was well they should understand exactly what the rules of foreign Assemblies were. The practice of taking rules by rising and sitting was very common both in France and in Germany, and it was also resorted to in the American Assembly. Perhaps the House would allow him to tell them his dream of what might be the form of voting when they built another House. There was a cry raised at every General Election for increased accommodation in the House, and some day they would have such a large number of new Members crowding in, that the cry for places would be general, and the Government would have to listen to it. When every Member had a recognized place, the taking of Divisions would be accomplished with the greatest facility. The moment the Speaker or Chairman put the Question, Members would turn on a switch which would denote which way they voted, and the whole thing would be recorded in a moment. There would be no delay whatever: that was his dream of the voting of the future. Now, the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had pressed very strongly the claim of the electors to know how their Members voted, and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) demanded that the names of both the majority and the minority should be recorded. He should have thought it would have been sufficient for the hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) that the minority should have the right of recording their names, and that, so far as the electors were concerned, they would imagine that those who were not with them were against them; that those who did not vote with them were lukewarm if not hostile. As this mode of taking votes was to be in the discretion of the Chair, and as he had the honour to occupy the Chair in Committee, it was to him a matter of considerable importance. He did not desire any increase of responsibility in that way. He should be well content if the House did not adopt this Motion, but having regard to the despatch of Business he thought the Rule might be accepted, particularly if the Government agreed to the safeguard suggested by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. McLaren)—namely, that the names of the minority should be taken if the minority wished that this should be done.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, it was not clearly shown by the Rule when the decision was to be taken. Hon. Members would agree that the majority in the House at any given moment was entirely different from the majority which would exist if all Members within the precincts of the House were summoned by the Division bell. If the Rule left it to the discretion of the Speaker or Chairman to decide at once upon taking the votes of those present in the Chamber at the moment, the Rule could not stand as at present drawn. He hoped they would have a clear explanation from the Government as to the meaning of the Rule. Again, it appeared to him that there ought to be some direction or some instruction to the Speaker or Chairman as to the circumstances under which he was to act according to the Rule. Under the other Rules which they had passed, the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees took a certain course in order to avoid an abuse of the Rules of the House, but in this Rule no guidance whatever was given to the Chair. Some such instruction was necessary in order that a uniform practice might be established in conformity with the wish of the House and with a view to the orderly and satisfactory conduct of their proceedings. Reference had been made to foreign Assemblies. He thought it was the rule that foreign Assemblies followed this Assembly instead of this Assembly being guided by them. But there appeared to be a fundamental difference between their proceedings and the proceedings of foreign Assemblies. In other Assemblies voting was taken by Members rising, and no record was taken of the votes of individual Members except upon a challenge made, whereas in the House of Commons the ordinary course was for every vote to be recorded. He approved of full, entire and complete publicity being given to their proceedings. There might be a case in future days in which there was a doubt as to the decision of the Speaker. Having regard to the future of the House of Commons and putting entirely out of the question the reverence they had for the present Speaker and the respect they had for the present Chairman of Committees, they ought to guard against any possible abuse of the change of Procedure which was now suggested.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, he did not think that what was done in other Assemblies ought to affect their action. Allusions had been made to what was the practice in previous Parliaments, but when they remembered what revolutionary changes had taken place in the Rules of Procedure during the last two or three Sessions, those allusions ought to have no weight. They were endeavouring to adapt the House of Commons to the present condition of things. There had been great changes during the last four years with respect to the Franchise, and it would be a most unwise thing for the House to attempt to detract from the interest which was now taken by constituencies in the debates in the House. A candidate was required to give the most exact pledges when he was contesting a constituency; indeed, he (Mr. Joicey) looked upon a Member of Parliament as simply a trustee. If they did not register their votes, how were their constituents to judge of the way they exercised their trust? It was of the utmost importance that they should not have any secret voting whatever on any important question. He regarded secret voting with alarm, because it was a bad system. Although it might seem strange, he objected to it because it might, under particular circumstances, lead to corruption. There was no greater safeguard against corruption than publicity. That Rule was proposed by the Government with the view of saving the time of the House.

He questioned very much whether ultimately the Rule would have that effect. At present there were in the House many Members who never spoke; those who were in the habit of speaking numbered about one-third of the whole. How were the two-thirds to communicate their action to their constituents if their votes were not registered? As a matter of fact, they would feel it their bounden duty to speak. He could not help thinking it would be most unwise to take away the registration of votes.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) said, that the application of the Rule depended upon the discretion of the Speaker. It must not, however, be supposed that the reference was personal; it was to the Office entirely. The Gentlemen who occupied the Chair from Parliament to Parliament were usually selected because they were supposed to embody the general sense of the House upon a variety of matters, but especially on the desirability of keeping order. He did not think they could trust to the general sense of the House, as embodied in a Speaker, to say whether the names of Members voting in a particular Division should be published or not. The very fact that only a small minority took a particular view showed that the opinion they held was not in consonance with the average opinion of the House. It anticipated, possibly, a state of things that would afterwards arise, or it exhibited the feeling of a very small but very earnest minority in the country. He did not think they ought to allow the question whether the names were to be published or not to be decided by the average sense of the House; and if not by the average sense of the House, they could not trust to the discretion of the President of the Assembly, who was selected because generally he embodied the average sense of the House. He did not think that the constituencies would be content to leave this matter to the discretion of anyone, however high his authority in the House might be; and he earnestly trusted that, inasmuch as it was manifest that there was a considerable apprehension on the subject on both sides of the House, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would see his way either to withdraw the Rule altogether, which would be the better course to adopt, or to make such modifications as would ensure that at least the names of the minority should be recorded.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT (Roxburgh) said, he would join his voice to the voices of those Members on both sides of the House who had requested the First Lord of the Treasury to make considerable alterations in this Rule before pressing it to a Division. He was of opinion that in the regular course of Business the names voting on both sides should be recorded. [Mr. W. H. SMITH: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman cheered that statement; all that seemed to be required was that the evident desire of the First Lord of the Treasury should be clearly and distinctly expressed in the Rule. At the present moment it did not seem to be so. A considerable difference would be effected between the position of a Member now and his position in future, so far as his relations with his constituents were concerned, if this Rule passed. There was no doubt that the British Parliament was the Mother Parliament, but they would be extremely foolish if they refused to look to the experience of newer Assemblies as regarded the working of Rules. The references to the French and German Assemblies had been very interesting, and they could not do better than learn from what took place in other Assemblies, though no doubt they were only copies of this. All that was required was that the general wish of the House should be given effect to, and that being so, he did not think they would be going too far if they distinctly provided that this means of taking Divisions should be confined to what were called interlocutory or dilatory Motions—Motions which were practically an abuse of the forms of the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that perhaps it would be convenient he should rise now, after the very full and interesting discussion, to endeavour to bring the House to a conclusion on a question in which the House was very much more interested than the Government. He quite admitted the interest constituencies took in this question. He was fully aware that constituents did look to the course of Business in the House with far greater interest than formerly. If there was one circumstance which was brought home more fully to his mind than another during the last year of Parliament, it was that the constituencies had come to regard the conduct of Business in the House of Commons as something which was altogether different from that which any other business assemblies adopted. One complaint which the constituencies formulated was against the apparent inability of the House of Commons to conduct its Business in a business-like way. Well, now, what was the gist of the opposition to this Rule? The opposition rested upon the assumption that the Speaker or the Chairman would not exercise his discretion with due regard to the public interest, and to the conduct of Business in the House of Commons as a deliberating Assembly, as an Assembly in which the minority had rights equal to those of the majority, as an Assembly which had been charged with the great interests of that great Empire. He could not conceive it possible that the Speaker or the Chairman would, at any time, exercise this power placed in his hands so as to prevent a record of the opinion of the minority on the second reading of a Bill, or upon a substantive Motion, or upon matters of any importance. He considered that the use of this power would be made only when obstructive or dilatory Motions were made, when the same question was raised over and over again in the many different forms in which it was possible under the Rules of the House to raise a question. It must be within the knowledge of hon. Members when this had been the case frequently. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House had complained of that being done, and it was for the House to say whether it was desirable that this course of proceeding which had prevailed during past Sessions should be repeated. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had spoken of the necessity of protecting minorities. During the greater part of his (Mr. W. H. Smith's) Parliamentary life he had been in a minority; but he did not believe that minorities ought to resist Public Business as they had done in recent years. He did not think any public interest was served by it. On the contrary, he believed that if a minority had sufficient opportunity of recording its protest on questions of vital importance, and if the names were recorded as the present practice of the House permitted—if the majority were bound, as they would be bound, to record their votes, he believed all the interests which were bound up in this great question would be studied. Hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House appeared to have ignored the fact that there was a Press watching them from the Gallery, and that it was careful and anxious to record everything that occurred in the House. It would be difficult for a minority to take any course which would not be recorded adequately by the Press, even if it was recorded by the Division Clerk. The aim the Government had in view was to prevent frivolous, vexatious, factious Divisions—to prevent the waste of time which had occurred in recent Sessions. They had no desire to prevent the recording of votes, and he did not think the Speaker or the Chairman would exercise his power to prevent the recording of votes on any question which was of moment or importance to the country, however small the minority might be. With the view of giving that security which the House thought desirable, he was prepared to move "that this Rule should not apply to the stages of a Bill, or to a substantive Motion in the House." In this way a Division would always be taken upon the second reading of a Bill, and also upon a substantive Motion. It was, however, for the House itself to decide whether it would take such steps as were necessary for the efficient prosecution of Business. Looking to the waste of time which had occurred in the past, he thought the House would do well to adopt the proposal the Government had made.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.), said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury stated that he could not believe that this Rule would be used except for the purpose of preventing frivolous and vexatious and factious Divisions; the right hon. Gentleman conceived its object would be to check obstructive and dilatory Motions. If that were so, why did not the Government embody in the Rule the very words the right hon. Gentleman had just used? If they did, all the objections of hon. Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House would disappear. That was what they wanted to secure; but, instead of that, the right hon. Gentleman said that the Rule should only apply to Divisions other than those taken on the stages of Bills or on substantive Motions. That seemed to make the state of matters worse, for if they expressed certain circumstances, they naturally excluded all others that were not mentioned. There might often be Divisions on subjects which were not on the stages of Bills or on substantive Motions in which hon. Members of the House might well desire to have their names recorded. The proposed modifications of the right hon. Gentleman would, he thought, increase the objection of hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, because they would practically negative the view the right hon. Gentleman had just expressed.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, they could not on the Opposition side of the House accept the alteration of the Rule as rendering it in any sense satisfactory. The whole Rule which was before them for discussion just now—for he took it that the individual Amendment had not been brought forward much in the discussion—was one which would affect the constituencies rather than the internal arrangements of the House. No doubt there had been and were Motions made in the House more or less frivolous in their character; but when they came to decide what were frivolous or not they found it a very difficult question. There was no statement in the Rule as on the Paper, or as proposed to be amended, indicating that Motions of a frivolous nature were to be excluded. He had been in the House when a Motion for Adjournment was the only opportunity when an opinion could be expressed on the merits of a measure, and he had been present when an important Amendment had been voted upon which, if the wishes of the vast majority of the House had been consulted, and Mr. Speaker had had any discretion in the matter, would never have been put to the vote. He (Mr. Stuart) had listened for some positive apology for this Resolution. None of the Amendments made the Resolution any more acceptable to him, and when the time came he should vote against it, notwithstanding that he desired as much as any Member of the House to expedite the Business of the House. He believed, however, that in passing the Resolution they were taking a dangerous step, and one which entirely infringed on what were if not legally, at any rate admittedly, the rights of constituencies.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.) said, he agreed with what had been said as to the responsibility of Members to their constituencies. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House told them he wished the Rule to be passed for the purpose of expediting the Business of the House, and he (Sir Archibald Campbell) must say that he thought that if the Rule passed as it stood it would not expedite the Business of the House. It was perfectly certain that there would be heart-burnings on the part of the minority that would culminate in other Motions and other measures, and cause a greater amount of obstruction in the House than had ever before been experienced. Then, what was to be the minority? How was it to be limited? A minority might be large in number, though appearing small when compared with the number of hon. Members in the House at the time. Was there to be a limit of numbers beyond which the majority might challenge a Division? He thought the concensus of opinion on that (the Ministerial) side of the House was against the Rule, and he should be obliged to vote against it as it stood.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, he desired to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had conceded very little to the concensus of opinion to which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had alluded. The speakers generally from that (the Ministerial) side of the House had declared their objection to the Rule and the concession made by the right hon. Gentleman was scarcely that which met that expression of opinion. Many questions might come before the House which would be neither the stages of a Bill nor substantive Motions, but which would be of great importance and in connection with which the names of those voting should be recorded on the Journals of the House. It was said that the matter should be left in the discretion of the Speaker. On the few occasions he (Mr. J. O'Connor) had addressed the House he had received great kindness from Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees; but notwithstanding that extension of courtesy and kindness to him, he was inclined to believe that it was a dangerous thing to increase the power of officials. Members from Ireland had had bitter experience of that fact. They all knew that in the passage of laws of a coercive character through the House from time to time, right hon. Gentlemen had assured them that those powers would be safe in the hands of those who occupied official positions in Ireland. He remembered a Chief Secretary once, appealing to the House for powers of a drastic character, declaring that if they were granted to him he would use them in a lenient manner. Well, the right hon. Gentleman got the powers he asked for; and the opinion of the Irish Members was not only that that same right hon. Gentleman had acted up to the fullest powers conceded to him, but that he had exceeded them in a great degree. With all respect to Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, he (Mr. J. O'Connor) thought it was a dangerous thing to extend the power of the Chair. He did not agree with the criticism which had been passed on the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill) by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), and he would contradict the noble Lord's statement as to what the hon. Gentleman had said in the course of his speech. The hon. Gentleman had not said that such a Rule as this was unknown on the Continent; but what he had asserted was that such a Rule as that proposed after the manner of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was unknown on the Continent, or in other foreign Assemblies; and that had been fully proved by the ample quotations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). If the Rule now before the House was made so elastic by foreign Assemblies, who had been obliged to frame their Rules so as to guide an excitable people, surely it was essential that it should be elastic to guide the deliberations of an Assembly composed of slow and methodical Saxons. The world owed its gratitude to minorities; and in proof of that many instances had been advanced by those who had preceded him in the discussion. He would point out one minority at least which had earned the gratitude of the Irish people. During the discussion of the Coercion Act of 1881, there was a small minority of English Members who voted with the Members from Ireland; and the Irish people had preserved a grateful recollection of their conduct on that occasion—so much so, that on a historic occasion they recognized their obligation to those Gentlemen by exempting them from opposition at the General Election. During the winter he had visited many localities where there were large numbers of miners and people engaged largely in manufacturing industries, and he had spoken to these people pretty extensively. Last year the Coal Mines Regulation Bill was passed by the House, and this measure he had discussed with miners interested in it. These miners, who were also electors, had not asked him who had made speeches in the passing of that Bill. They did not care who had spoken on the sections or clauses, but what they were most anxious to know was how those who represented them in Parliament had voted. The vote was the thing with the colliers and other working people of the country; but now the House was about to destroy the check which the vast majority of the electorate wished to exercise on the people who represented them. He had no hesitation in saying that if this Rule were passed in its entirety, or with the modifications proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, the electors of the country would regard it as a dishonest Rule and as an attempt to cheat them out of their rights. He would urge the Government, for their own sakes, not to allow such an argument as that to be used against them. Virtue, it was said, was always in the minority. If that were so, let them give virtue its just reward in that House—the reward of publicity.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he desired to point out that the Select Committee of 1886 had come to the conclusion and had recommended that when the minority numbered more than 40 they should have a right to a Division. Of this recommendation he certainly approved. It was useful for their guidance; and inasmuch as what they desired was to save time, he would point out that if they took a record of those voting in all cases, the delay might be greater than that caused by Divisions. The right of a substantial minority to a Division appeared to be generally recognized in foreign Assemblies. In our municipal assemblies, if only one member desired a division, the privilege was conceded; and that system appeared to work fairly well. He thought it might well be ordered that if 40 Members challenged a Division, the House should divide. Of course, he did not ascribe any magic to the number 40; but he selected that as the number named by the Select Committee.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he agreed that there was a general desire on the part of the House to save time; and he feared that if the Government should refuse to modify their plan, a good deal of time would be wasted in discussing the question. The Rule could not be accepted with anything like satisfaction by the House if serious alterations were not made in it. Probably he should not go as far as some hon. Members; but he would mention the alterations which appeared to him to be essential. In the first place, it ought to be laid down—as was proposed by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill)—that the Speaker should distinctly name the number of the minority. To that change he understood the Government were ready to agree. In the second place, the Division bell ought always to be rung, and this was an important provision. If the bell was not rung when a Question put from the Chair was challenged, a minority might defeat a majority in consequence of the temporary absence from the House of some Members of the latter. If, on the other hand, the Speaker should take upon himself to direct that the bell be rung, he would, in such circumstances, lay himself open to the charge of favouring the party which had the probable majority in the House—in other words, the Government. It ought, therefore, to be the invariable rule that the bell must be rung. Then the power which it was proposed to confer on the Speaker and Chairman ought to be limited by some such words as the following:—"If he shall be of opinion that the Division is challenged for vexatious and obstructive purposes." It was all very well to say that the Speaker and Chairman could be trusted. He agreed readily that the statement applied to the present high officers of the House; but they must not overlook the fact that there had been Speakers and Chairmen—and that within no very long distance of time—who could not be so absolutely trusted. He remembered how, some years ago, when an extremely important question was brought before the House, an hon. Member went to the then Speaker and asked to be called upon as Seconder of the Motion, and how the Speaker replied acrimoniously, saying that any hon. Gentleman who supported such a Motion ought to be ashamed of himself. He (Sir George Trevelyan) would not say when that happened, but it was a circumstance within his knowledge. Although that was the attitude of the Speaker on that occasion the Motion was supported by 90 Members, and he ventured to say that at this day was approved by nine-tenths of the community. The fourth condition upon which they ought to insist was that no Member should be deprived of his undoubted right to have his vote recorded on every question which was not a question of adjournment. The country did not care how Members voted on questions of adjournment, but cared very much to know how they voted on all other questions. If the Government would accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren), the objections now felt to the Rule by a great many hon. Members would be removed. Every one of the hon. Member's objections was cardinal and vital; and, if they were not met, the Rule would not be passed rapidly, and when passed would not work well.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he would withdraw his Amendment with the leave of the House. The discussion had called forth such a pronounced opinion against the whole Rule that he thought it would be better to take the Division on the Main Question.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that, in order to remove one debateable point from the discussion of the Rule, he would move, in line 1, after the word "may," to add "after the lapse of two minutes as indicated by the sand-glass."

MR. W. H. SMITH: Agreed.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, after the word "may," to insert the words "after the lapse of two minutes as indicated by the sand-glass."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he would now move an Amendment to omit the words "at his discretion," for the purpose of inserting the words "if he shall be of opinion that a Division is called for dilatory or obstructive purposes." His object was to define the discretion of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees—to restrict its exercise to Divisions called for purely dilatory, obstructive, and vexatious purposes.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to omit the words "at his discretion," in order to insert the words "if he shall be of opinion that a Division is called for dilatory or obstructive purposes."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Rule."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the best method of accomplishing the right hon. Gentleman's view would be by substituting for "at his discretion" the words "if in his opinion a Division is frivolously or vexatiously claimed."

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would accept those words.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. DILLON said, that before the Amendment was put, he should like to ask whether by carrying it the House would be committing itself to any part of the Rule, or depriving itself of the right of voting on the whole Rule?

MR. SPEAKER: When the Amendments have been disposed of, the whole Question will be put as amended.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the words "at his discretion," in order to insert "if in his opinion the Division is frivolously or vexatiously claimed."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'at his discretion' stand part of the Question."

MR. DILLON said, that no doubt these words, to a small extent, modified the objectionable character of the Rule; but he should still object to the proposal for the reason, if for no other, that if the new Rules were carried out to their fullest extent, the words would be absolotely unnecessary, the Speaker and Chairman having been given power by a previous Rule to refuse to put the Question at all if it was frivolous or vexatious.

MR. W. H. SMITH: That is only so far as Motions for Adjournment are concerned.

MR. DILLON said, that before Mr. Speaker could refuse to put the Question the Motion should be of an unmistakeably frivolous and vexatious character; but he (Mr. Dillon) imagined that there might be questions put in the House which the majority might consider of a frivolous and vexatious character, but as to which it might afterwards turn out that the minority had been in the right. What security had the minority that Mr. Speaker would not take the view of a large majority, and refuse to allow them to proceed? He took it that the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was a fair specimen of the average mind of Members of the House, even when elevated to the Chair, and they knew how often the right hon. Gentleman had exercised his powers to the full for the purpose of stopping debate. It was on the details of Bills and in Committee of Supply that minorities had to struggle for the acceptance of their views, and the real power of the minority consisted in the forcing of Divisions which compelled the majority to vote. How would the minority be able to force upon the attention of the House matters which they knew to be important, and which in the end proved to be important, against the wish of the majority? No doubt it was always an annoyance to the majority to be checked in its operations; but they must not refuse to recognize the useful function of a minority in checking the majority, and in drawing the attention of the country to the course it was pursuing. That illustration, which showed that it was not always upon second readings and substantive Motions that struggles took place in the House, was furnished by what occurred in the case of what was known as the Healy Clause, introduced as an Amendment to the Land Act of 1881. That clause had been the battle cry in Ireland ever since it was passed; but it was resisted by the majority, and how could Mr. Speaker have a knowledge of Ireland which would enable him to say that such an Amendment was frivolous or not? If this Rule had been in existence, Mr. Speaker might have prevented the hon. Member from carrying that Amendment. And, in the same way, Members might be prevented from putting Resolutions relating to millions of money. In his knowledge, many Motions had been carried which, when they were first brought forward, were shouted down by majorities. Take the case of flogging in the Army, which was a still stronger illustration of what he meant. In that case a small lot of Members had stood out against the majority, and in a fortnight not only did the majority come round to their view, but the whole country. Although he said that the Rule would be a great deal improved by the Amendments which had been made, he should prefer the issue to be taken upon the proposal as it originally stood. He believed that the whole course of increasing the powers of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees not absolutely necessary was a wrong and evil course. The less power the Chair had to interfere with their proceedings the better. The Chair might be impartial, but times had been in the House when the occupant of the Chair had not been impartial; indeed, the struggle at the commencement of a Parliament was always to secure the Chair by nominating the Speaker. His belief was that human nature was so constituted that if they made the Chair too powerful they would inevitably create a strong Party struggle for the possession of the Chair, and in the course of time the occupant of the Chair would come to be considered the servant of a Party. The Government ought to be called upon to show some strong ground for this Rule before the House adopted it; they should, at any rate, try how they could get on without it. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House said at the outset—and said very fairly—that this was not a Government question, but one for the House itself, and if that was so there would be no mortification to the Government in being defeated upon the proposal. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would not name the Government Tellers in the Division on the Main Question, but would allow Members to vote according to their own views.

Mr. T. P. GILL said, that as a point of Order he should like to know whether the effect of carrying this Amendment would exclude the possibility of an Amendment being moved later on, giving to one or more Members in the House the right of challenging a Division?

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince) said, that we must recollect that the object was to save time. He thought that if the Ayes were asked to stand up, and the Speaker then determined to dispense with the regular Division, he might be empowered to direct that the votes of the minority should be told in the regular manner. He hoped that this idea would receive some consideration, as it would get over the difficulty and prevent the Chairman of Committees or Mr. Speaker being placed in the invidious position of having to determine whether or not a Motion was frivolous and vexatious. He thought the danger would be that the occupant of the Chair would be apt to take a very lenient view of that subject.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he agreed with a great deal that had been said by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and believed that, although the Amendment might be some improvement upon the Rule as it stood, the better course would be for the Government to abandon the Rule altogether. Substantially, under Standing Order 11, almost everything the Leader of the House wanted was secured, but, if not, he thought some words introduced into that Standing Order would have the desired effect. If they desired to increase the number of Members entitled to demand a Division, it could be increased in that Standing Order. Under the proposed clause, however, very much wider powers would be given to Mr. Speaker and the Chairman. He (Mr. Buchanan) did not think that it would be wise for the House to surrender the powers its Members at present possessed to challenge Divisions in Committee of Supply, and to have their votes recorded on Amendments to Bills. So far as he was concerned, he should vote against the Amendment and against the Rule. It would hardly be worth the while of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to contend about what would be left of the Rule when passed in its altered form; and if the right hon. Gentleman wanted anything more in the direction of the Amendments now before the House, he would get it more easily by some slight amendment of Standing Order 11, which he proposed to repeal when this Rule passed, than by insisting upon the present proposal.

Mr. A. SMITH (Herts, E.) said, they should allow the votes of the minority to be recorded, and ought not to shirk their responsibilities. The words proposed by the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren) would meet all the difficulties.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) made an appeal to him as to whether it was worth while going on with the Rule, as it was to be amended, evidently thinking that it would be different to what the Government had intended it to be. But he did not know that the Rule as amended, would profess anything different from what the Government had originally intended. They had no desire to restrict the right of taking Divisions except in cases where those Divisions were obviously frivolous and vexatious. They were satisfied to leave the matter in the discretion of Mr. Speaker and the Chairman; but as the House desired to introduce the Amendments which had been agreed to, he had not thought fit to oppose them. If it was thought desirable to insert words making the intention clearer, he should have no objection to that being done. As to the proposal of the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren), he (Mr. W. H. Smith) had to say that he was in substantial agreement with it. It appeared to him desirable, on public grounds, that if the minority time after time got up to obstruct Business, it was of very great value, on public grounds, that their names should be recorded. He, therefore, accepted with gratitude the suggestion of the hon. Member, not only in the interests of the House itself, but in the interests of those who had charge of the Business of the House. If the names of a small minority who desired to bring about frivolous and vexatious Divisions were recorded, the practice would also have an important effect on the country. The words he would suggest in lieu of those of the hon. Member were, to add at the end—

> "The Speaker or Chairman shall declare to the House, or the Committee, the number of the minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall thereupon be taken down in the House and printed in the list of Divisions."

All the Government desired in the conduct of Business was to give perfect publicity consistent with reasonable progress.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, the right hon. Gentleman had satisfied the desire of that (the Opposition) side of the House—in fact, he might say the desire of both sides of the House—in agreeing that a minority should possess the right to have its votes recorded. He (Mr. Mundella) had nothing to object to in the right hon. Gentleman's statement but the words in which he implied that a small minority must necessarily be obstructive.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he must disclaim any such intention. The Speaker or Chairman of Committees would express the opinion that Motions were frivolous and vexatious by calling upon hon. Members to rise in their places.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that although the Speaker or the Chairman might decide that a Motion was frivolous and vexatious, it did not follow that he was correct in that decision. With the greatest possible respect he reminded the House of the action of the present Chairman of Committees in regard to the South Africa Bill. The opposition of the right hon. Gentleman to that measure had been thought by many to be frivolous and vexatious; but events had shown that he was right, and that the then Chairman of Committees was wrong. This showed that no one was infallible.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that the discussion seemed to him to be turning upon words of a subsequent Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the Question before the House was that the words "at his discretion" be omitted.

Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, he did not think that the Rule as it was proposed to be amended would be at all satisfactory. To his mind, they would be better without any such Rule. He objected from the point of view of the rights of constituents to any privilege being invented by the House for the protection of Members who conducted themselves frivolously or vexatiously, and the distinction which was drawn between substantive and merely dilatory Motions did not seem to him to effect any improvement in the nature of the Rule. A Member's constituents had a perfect right to know completely and perfectly the conduct of their Representative. If hon. Members became guilty of frivolous and obstructive practices there was the strongest reason why the full light of publicity should be thrown upon their proceedings. He admitted the desirability of securing the utmost despatch and economy of time in conducting the Business of the House, and he did not deny that delays occurred which might be avoided. But in regard to that it appeared to him that the cure was going to be a great deal worse than the disease.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *inserted.*

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he would now move to add his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

> At the end of the Main Question, to add the words "And, in case there is no Division, the Speaker or Chairman shall declare to the House, or the Committee, the number of the Minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall be thereupon taken down in the House, and printed with the lists of Divisions."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. M'LAREN thanked the right hon. Gentleman for having accepted the principle of his Amendment to enable minorities to have their names recorded. He was only anxious that this should be done in some way, and was glad now that it was to be done on all occasions. At the same time, he was not sure that the method now proposed would work very satisfactorily, because some of the minority might be in the Division Lobby, expecting a Division, and thus would miss having their names recorded;

and also, if the minority were large, there would be considerable time spent in the Clerk taking down their names. However, the important point was gained that the minority should always be known; and, therefore, he would not need to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, but would gladly accept that of the Government.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said, he wished to draw attention to another inconvenience which seemed to him to be imported into the Rule. Great inconvenience would arise from the double record of all the transactions which took place. In the first place, there was the statement from the Chair of the numbers taken in the minority and the statement by the Clerk. When there was any discrepancy between those two records—and they could not avoid mistakes arising—it would lead to discussions in the House, to great waste of time, and more inconvenience than if they adhered to the regular manner of Division. That objection applied still more strongly to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Wallace). A half-dozen Members might say that though they were present their names had been overlooked. It seemed to him that the House did not need any such Rule, which would lead only to difficulty and danger and tend to weaken the authority of the Chair.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, that the objections which had been made by the hon. Member were easily met. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had accepted the Amendment providing that the bell should be rung to enable Members to come into the House, whether they were to be counted in the House or the Lobby, and any discrepancy would be avoided by the Speaker merely declaring the minority and leaving it to the Clerk to discover the Members of whom the minority was composed.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, the proposal of the Leader of the House was, in his opinion, the only practical way in which the Rule could be carried out. If the proposal of the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren) were adopted, Members who had stood up might not choose to go out into the Lobby, or some might do so who had not stood up at all. It was said that it would be difficult to take down the names of 50 or 60 Members. So it would; but in the case of 50 or 60 Members standing up the Speaker or Chairman would direct that a Division should be taken. What they wished to deal with was a case where the minority would consist of 20 or 30 Members, and the course suggested was the only practical way of working the Rule.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

MR. DILLON said, that notwithstanding the debate which had taken place on this Rule, he was distinctly opposed to it as it now stood. He thought that it was altogether unnecessary, and that all that remained of it was mischievous. Although the Rule was surrounded with considerable safeguards, it would still leave to the Chair to say whether the call for a Division was frivolous and vexatious. Now, "frivolous and vexatious" were exceedingly uncertain terms, even provided that it were admitted by the Chair that the demand for a Division was an abuse of the Rules of the House. He held that such a responsibility should not be thrown upon the Chair unless a strong case of urgency could be made out for it. He was quite convinced that if these Rules were left to the unbiassed opinion of the House, without any exercise of influence on the part of the Government, the general opinion would be that it was altogether unnecessary. That being so, he felt bound to oppose the Rule even to the length of going to a Division upon it. He was much strengthened in that course by the observations which had been made in regard to the debate. He could not shut his eyes to the fact that cases might arise as they had arisen in the past. When the Speaker or Chairman, although desiring to be impartial, were guided to a great extent by the temper of the House, the importance of the questions involved, or by his own weariness, and would be induced to give a judgment that would be unfair. He would point out also that while the last Amendment met the objections which had been made from the Irish Benches as to registering the names of the minority, the Rule made no provision for registering the names of the majority. He maintained that that was as necessary as recording the names of the minority. When hon. Members stood up on both sides of the House a register of the names of those who voted in the majority, as well as in the minority, should be taken. He therefore felt bound to oppose the Rule by going to a Division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 236; Noes 93: Majority 143.

AYES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Addison, J. E. W.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allison, R. A.
Ambrose, W.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, T. C.
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Buxton, S. C.
Caldwell, J.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavan, Earl of
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, A. C.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Crawford, D.
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elton, C. I.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Fielden, T.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flower, C.
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, rt. hn. H. H.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Goldsworthy, Major General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Greenall, Sir G.
Grey, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marquess of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Howorth, H. H.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Mac Innes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Lagan, P.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
More, R. J.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morrison, W.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pease, H. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rathbone, W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Salt, T.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Trotter, H. J.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waring, Colonel T.
Wayman, T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitbread, S.
Whitley, E.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.

Woodall, W.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Barbour, W. B.
Biggar, J. G.
Blane, A.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Broadhurst, H.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Channing, F. A.
Cobb, H. P.
Coghill, D. H.
Condon, T. J.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Deasy, J.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dodds, J.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Gill, T. P.
Harrington, E.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Howard, J.
Hoyle, I.
Hozier, J. H. C.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Lalor, R.
Leahy, J.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Arthur, W. A.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Donald, P.
M‘Ewan, W.
M‘Laren, W. S. B.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, O V.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, J.
O'Kelly, J.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reed, H. B.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Simon, Sir J.
Slagg, J.
Stack, J.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Warmington, C. M.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Dillon, J.
Fenwick, C.

Resolved, That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, after the lapse of two minutes as indicated by the sand-glass, if in his opinion the Division is frivolously or vexatiously claimed, take the Vote of the House or Committee, by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either declare the determination of the House or Committee, or name Tellers for a Division. And, in case there is no Division, the Speaker or Chairman shall declare to the House, or the Committee, the number of the Minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall be thereupon taken down in the House, and printed with the lists of Divisions.

X.—Address in Answer to the Queen's Speech.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move the adoption of the next Rule, said, the House would remember that one of the recommendations of the Committee which had considered the question of Procedure in 1886 was to confine the proceedings on the Address to one stage only. The Rule now proposed to allow Amendments to be moved on the Address, but would prevent their being considered on different stages as had become the practice in recent years. By the Rule only one opportunity of moving Amendments would be given—namely, upon the first stage of the Address, and when that stage was gone through, the Address would be settled once for all.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the stages of Committee and Report on the Address to Her Majesty to convey the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, at the opening of the Session, be discontinued."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby), in moving an Amendment to the Motion, said, he was very glad to support the Rule as it now stood; but in his opinion it was not nearly sufficient to meet the requirements of the case, because the House was left practically in the same position as before, except with regard to the one stage of the Report. His Amendment would have the effect of placing the Address in the same position as that which it had always occupied in olden days. When an Address was moved in reply to the Speech of Her Majesty's Government a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government might be proposed, and under the Rule as it stood it would be possible for any number of Amendments to be moved by any number of Members who wished to move them. If this Amendment were adopted it would impose a material restriction upon the time occupied in the consideration of the Address. If there were any points on which a large number of Members wished to support a particular principle, it was very easy to put pressure on the Government to give a day in the same way as it had been given to his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) for the consideration of the Trafalgar

Square question. The advantage to be gained by the Amendment was in not requiring a large number of Members to give up the days they had acquired by the ballot in order that a few Members might bring forward their hobbies on the Address in reply to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech. Hon. Members had now to run the chances of the ballot before they could obtain a day, which those Members who ventilated grievances on the Address had not. He knew that the Amendment would not be approved by the two Front Benches; but he would point out that the Ministry of the day would not lose a single Government night however long the Address went on. The occupants of the Front Benches got the lion's share of the speaking as it went on; whereas the result to private Members was that they lost every single day, as well as other days afterwards. The House had sat last Session for 15 days discussing the Address, and private Members had lost nine of them, and the Government took six more private Members' nights for the Procedure Rules. In regard to the present Session, private Members had already lost six nights and the Government four; but the Government had taken four nights for the Procedure Rules. It would, therefore, be seen that it was entirely a question for private Members. Were they willing to give up the days they had obtained by ballot for discussing such subjects as were interesting to those engaged in trade, agriculture, or the fisheries. Were hon. Members who had already obtained days to give them up so that other hon. Members might move Amendments on the Address which were of no interest except to those who brought them forward? When once a day obtained by a private Member was taken away that Member was prevented from obtaining a first place again, or had to wait until such a late period of the Session that it was useless to bring forward the subject he desired to ventilate, however important it might be. His reason in proposing the Amendment was to protect private Members in this respect. Members came down now very early in order to secure a place in the ballot. Something like 200 Motions for the introduction of Bills were balloted for on the first day of the Session. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and he (Mr. Heneage) were most fortunate in the ballot, and the hon. Member for the City of Cork might have taken an early day in February, and he (Mr. Heneage) an early day in March. What, however, was the effect of prolonging the debate on the Address? The hon. Member for the City of Cork selected the 21st March, and he (Mr. Heneage) had to wait until April. This fact, he thought, showed that a large amount of time which belonged to private Members was wasted by the prolongation of the debate on the Address. He had no desire to limit any debate on an important question of foreign policy, and if the Opposition or any other Member had a sufficient following, they would be able to bring forward a Vote of Want of Confidence, or force the Government to give them a day. The hon. and gallant Member opposite (Captain Cotton) proposed to amend the Amendment, and to limit the debate still further, and suggested as an Amendment that the Motion should be put on the same day on which it was proposed, instead of not later than the third day of the debate. Outside the House there was a very strong feeling among the constituencies that a large amount of time was wasted upon the Address. He begged to move the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Address to her Majesty be restricted to a Motion conveying the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and promising the careful attention of the House to the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to their consideration, and such Motion shall be put without Amendment not later than the third day of the Debate thereon, unless the House shall otherwise order."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral), who had an Amendment on the Paper to the Amendment under discussion to leave out the words "not later than the third day of the Debate thereon," in order to insert "on the same day on which it is proposed," said, that he did not intend to move that Amendment. He would support the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) and withdraw his own.

He should, however, be glad to hear exactly what the right hon. Gentleman meant by providing that the debate on the Address should terminate not later than the third day. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean the third day according to the day of the week, or the third day of the debate? The House generally met, at the opening of the Session, on a Thursday and was continued on a Friday, and he wished to know whether it was intended that the debate should be continued and closed on the Monday, or whether it should be stopped by the intervention of Saturday when the House did not sit? An article in *The Spectator* of Saturday last called attention to the intellectual suffocation which the debate on the Address involved in stifling very important questions. The right hon. Gentleman and himself were desirous of conferring benefit upon suffering humanity by limiting the debate on the Address and returning to the old practice of that House· There could be no doubt that the lengthened debates on the Address which they had had of late years were parasites of modern growth, and disease which were unknown formerly. He desired, as far as it was possible, to return to the old practice and limit the debates to one issue—whether confidence was to be continued in the Government or not. The constituencies at the present moment were so disgusted at the length to which the debates on the Address were carried, that they were frequently reminding their Representatives that they were sent to the House of Commons not to be consumers of time, but to be producers of legislation. He hoped the House would see that, in order to economize time, the Rules must be made applicable to the new circumstances under which they lived. It was, therefore, necessary to curtail the debate on the Address as much as possible. The only ground that would justify a lengthened debate on the Address was that it should turn to some definitely useful purpose—such as turning out the Government of the day. In 1859, the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) brought forward a direct Vote of Want of Confidence against Lord Derby's Government after the Queen's Speech, and it was carried after three days' debate. He contended that that was the only legitimate form in which Amendments on the Address should be allowed to be moved. There was another instance, which occurred two years ago, when the Government of the day was thrown out on an Amendment to the Address moved by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings); although the hon. Member got small thanks for what he did. But neither in 1859 nor in 1886 did the Government of the day come into Office with a majority of the House of Commons, and they resigned in consequence. On the other hand, he might quote the case of Sir Robert Peel, who was defeated, in 1835, by a majority of 7 in a full House of 611 Members, but who declined to resign on that Vote. With these examples before them, and knowing how very much the debates on the Address had extended of late years, he hoped the House would strengthen the hands of the Government by passing the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby, and do all it could to check this mischievous innovation which consumed so much time of the House in the first nights of the Session.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, the doctrine that it was desirable, if they could, to get back to the old practice in respect of the debate on the Address, as it was termed, was one which he heartily commended, and on every occasion he had done all that was in his power to promote the adoption of that course by following the Mover and Seconder of the Address in the debate when he had been Leader of the Opposition. In his opinion, the best chance of bringing the Address, under ordinary circumstances, back to the old wholesome condition was to relieve the minds of hon. Members—independent Members—of the apprehension which the experience of last year and this year had greatly tended to create and confirm—that their private days were about to be taken away from them. That was a state of things in which the rights of private Members to their days should be scrupulously respected, unless the House of Commons, for some very great purpose, got rid at once of the Address, and proceeded to the transaction of Business. At the same time, he thought it was quite impossible to support the Amendment of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage), or the still more stringent Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wirral Division of Cheshire (Captain Cotton), on the Ministerial side of the House.

CAPTAIN COTTON said, he had withdrawn his Amendment.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, he would say, then, that it was impossible to agree with the speech by which the hon. and gallant Gentleman supported the Amendment. The hon. and gallant Gentleman, if he (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) heard him rightly, appeared to be of opinion that a Vote of Want of Confidence might properly be moved on the occasion of the debate on the Address; but if he was of that opinion, the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Heneage), which he was going to support, directly excluded those Votes of Want of Confidence. There were two questions of the greatest importance raised. One of them was the limitation of the debate to three days; and there was the question whether, when they had a debate on the Address, it would not be sufficient for every reasonable purpose to pursue that debate, subject to the protection already provided by the Closure Rule against its undue prolongation; and the other question was still more serious—namely, the question of the exclusion of a Vote of Want of Confidence on the Address. According to his recollection, the instances of moving Votes of Want of Confidence on the Address were more numerous than the hon. Gentleman supposed. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had quoted the case of Sir Robert Peel in 1835. Undoubtedly, an Amendment was carried against Sir Robert Peel by a majority of 7, and Sir Robert Peel did not resign. He would not say that Sir Robert Peel was wrong in not resigning; but unquestionably his course was a very peculiar one, and had always been the subject of much argument and much doubt. Sir Robert Peel founded his action on the special ground that he claimed from the House of Commons the right to produce his measures. But Sir Robert Peel had given the House another example himself. In 1841, when he considered that the country had returned a majority adverse to the Government of Lord Melbourne, a Vote of Want of Confidence was moved and carried on his part and with his support, and the Melbourne Government resigned at once. He (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was bound to say that there could be no more unfortunate measure than to shut the door against Votes of Want of Confidence.

MR. HENEAGE: I do not propose to do so.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, that perhaps his right hon. Friend would allow him to state the reason why he took a strong view on the subject, and why he desired that Her Majesty's Government should adhere to the Rule as it stood. A Dissolution frequently arose upon the question whether the Administration of the day possessed the confidence of the country, and the voice of the people was made plain by an Election. What could be more proper than that if the Government of the day had not been able to recognize the verdict of the country without meeting Parliament, as was the case in 1874, 1868, and 1880—what could be more proper than that the House of Commons should take the very first opportunity—namely, the opportunity of the Address, of settling the question whether the Government possessed the confidence of the country or not? It appeared to him that his right hon. Friend had stumbled in this question of Votes of Want of Confidence, and he thought it was quite impracticable to hold an opposite doctrine to that which declared that an opportunity should be afforded in the Address for raising the question of confidence. He was not sure that he could not quote other instances than those which he had named, but he would not trouble the House with them, because those mentioned were sufficient. Apart from that, he would submit that the protection afforded by the closure, if sufficient for other debates, was quite sufficient to guard those on the Address. He quite granted that the proceedings on the Address had in some Sessions been unduly prolonged, though he did not think there had been any serious ground of complaint this year. He was sure it was unlikely that, under ordinary circumstances, abuses would arise; but, seeing that they might arise, there should be a Rule in existence which might be readily applied to them.

MR. HENEAGE said, he had not thought it necessary to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman; but he had distinctly stated that he wished Votes of Want of Confidence to be omitted from his Amendment. If the Amendment did not carry out that object, he was ready to accept any words that might be inserted which would have that effect. If the Leader of the House declined to accept the Amendment he would not press it.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was not prepared to go as far as the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby proposed, because he thought that in so doing they would be tying their hands most unnecessarily in the event of circumstances arising which might require that a considerable discussion should take place on the Address. He preferred that liberty should be given to the House to consider the Address to the extent to which, in the particular circumstances of the day, it might be deemed necessary to consider it. He regretted, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman regretted also, that there had been an undue prolongation of the debates on the Address; but it was a responsibility which rested upon the House of Commons and not upon the Government. He trusted that in future hon. Members would evince a greater sense of their responsibility towards the country, and that they would impose some restraint upon this question, in addition to those which the Government thought it necessary to pass for the conduct of the Business of the House. Many circumstances might arise which would render it exceedingly unwise to shorten the discussion on the Address. The right hon. Gentleman said that he would except from this Motion Votes of Want of Confidence; but if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the matter, he would find that every Amendment to the Address was substantially, as a matter of fact, an expression of Want of Confidence by the person who moved the Amendment on the Government of the day. If an Amendment of that kind were carried, the usual consequence was that the Government resigned their position, and gave place to the Opposition. It might happen that the conduct of foreign affairs, or of affairs at home, might require full discussion; and therefore, looking at the matter from any point of view, he thought it would be unadvisable to put an absolute term as to the discussion of the Address. He, however, relied with confidence on hon. Members on both sides of the House exercising a greater sense of their responsibilities with a view of shortening the debates. He quite agreed with the remarks which had been made that at the present moment private Members suffered much more largely than the Government from the continuation of these debates. Of course, it was impossible to enter upon general Business until the debate on the Address was concluded, and private Members who introduced measures early in the Session found the days they had obtained taken away from them.

MR. SPEAKER asked if the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby withdrew the Amendment?

MR. HENEAGE: Yes.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put.

Resolved, That the stages of Committee and Report on the Address to Her Majesty to convey the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, at the opening of the Session, be discontinued.

XI.—PUBLIC BILLS.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to propose the following Rule on the Paper, said, it was a proposal which had very frequently been before the House in one shape or another, and its object was to give to hon. Members who had been fortunate enough to bring forward measures and to obtain the approval of the House for the principle of their Bills an opportunity of proceeding with them. It was, however, a question rather for the House than for the Government to decide. The Government had felt themselves called upon to submit this proposal to the House with a view of assisting private Members.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That after Whitsuntide, Public Bills other than Government Bills be arranged on the Order Book so as to give priority to the Bills most advanced, and that Lords Amendments to Public Bills appointed to be considered, be placed first, to be followed by Third Readings, Considerations of Report, Bills in Progress in Committee, Bills appointed for Committee, and Second Readings."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.), in rising to move an Amendment, said, that he had put it upon the Paper in compliance with an intimation conveyed to him by the right hon. Gentlemen the First Lord of the Treasury and the Postmaster General, when he brought the question of private Members' Bills before the House on Friday last. Since then the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had given assurances that the Government were alive to the inconvenience private Members now suffered, and would suffer under the new Rules, and were willing to give them better facilities than they now possessed. It could not be denied that at the present moment the opportunities which private Members had of forwarding legislation were extremely scant. Under the system of balloting the chance of a private Member of getting a Bill, however important, before the House for the second reading was very slight indeed. That had not been always so. Twenty years ago, before the half-past 12 o'clock Rule came in force many measures were passed by private Members, and hon. Members would be surprised to find how many valuable measures for the improvement of the law, and in promotion of social and philanthropic reforms, had been carried by private Members. That had now become impossible, and the House were driven to consider in what way they could restore to private Members the opportunities they formerly had. This year there had been brought in something like 200 Bills; but there were probably not more than 30 or 40 in which any considerable number of Members would take an interest. The greater proportion of these measures related to trivial matters, and would have very small support in their favour. Why, then, should the time of the House be taken up in discussing them? On the other hand, there were useful and much-needed Bills which many Members cared for, and yet which, because they were unlucky in the balloting at the beginning of the Session, never came on for second reading at all. For instance, a Bill for the Amendment of the Commons and Inclosure Acts had been brought into the House in six Sessions between 1880 to 1887, and having always failed to secure a good place in the ballot, had never come on for second reading, nor even been discussed. He was confident that if that Bill once came before the House and was read a second time, and sent to a Select Committee, the Committee would be able to go through it fairly, making such improvements as were needed, and the Bill would be passed, to the great benefit of the agricultural population and of all who valued common lands and opportunities of healthful recreation. That was only one of the instances he might mention to the House of the evils they now suffered, and of the evils suffered by the community at large, from the practical stoppage of private Members' legislation. Then what was the remedy they ought to apply? He believed it would be found in getting rid of the system of balloting, and by proceeding only with those Bills in which the largest number of Members were interested. In the first place, it would be necessary for the House to exercise its will and choice by taking to itself the disposal of its own time and saying what Bill should be discussed and what not, instead of leaving the matter to the blind chance of the ballot-box. He would explain the way in which the Amendment proposed to deal with the matter. The Amendment itself was not inconsistent with the Rule of the Government. On the contrary, it was intended to supplement and carry out the principle by which the Treasury Bench was animated in proposing their Rule. Last Friday he had pointed out three methods by which the House might make better provision for useful application of the time allotted to private Members, and he had since found that there was a strong preponderance of opinion in favour of the particular method indicated in the Amendment—namely, that at the beginning of every Session an opportunity should be given to Members of indicating their preference for certain Bills. He proposed that after the meeting of the House three days should be allowed to hon. Members for bringing in their Bills. That was really the present practice. At present most of the private Members' Bills were brought in on the second day of the Session, and almost all of them within the first three days. He then proposed that the Bills thus brought in should be exhibited, and that every Member should have an opportunity of appending his name to the three Bills he was most interested in. At the end of the three days, the Clerk would take possession of these lists, and ascertain, by going through them, which Bills had received the largest amount of support, and in that way their precedence would be determined. If it were found that an equal number of names were appended to two or more Bills, in that case the precedence might be determined by ballot, but the clerks should go through them, arrange the Bills in their order, and put them down for second reading, placing first those Bills to which the largest number of signatures were attached. That list would be made up once for all down to Whitsuntide, and after Whitsuntide the provisions of the new Rule proposed by the Government would come into operation. If a Bill were not taken on the Wednesday for which it was set down it would be placed at the top of the list for the next Wednesday, and there would be no longer any motive for trying to talk out a Bill on a Wednesday, or endeavouring to talk on one Bill, in order to prevent another from coming on. That inconvenience would be obviated; because if a Bill were not reached one day, it would retain its place on the Order Book. Bills brought in after the first three days of the Session could be put down for second reading on a Tuesday, or any other evening, just as they were now. They would be no worse off than at present, because by the present practice all the available Wednesdays were taken up now on the first day of the Session. Next came the question—What number of Bills should hon. Members be allowed to subscribe their names to? It had been pointed out that if Members were allowed to subscribe to all Bills it would be in the power of the majority to get all their own Bills put down, while the minority would have no chance. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of minorities, it would be necessary to limit the number of Bills to which each Member could subscribe. It was for the House to consider whether a Member should only subscribe to one Bill or two or three; but some limitation of that kind was necessary, because it was desirable that all Bills should get a fair chance in that House in proportion to the number of Members who supported them. It would always be in the power of any group of Members representing a particular part of the country, or coming from Ireland or Scotland, to secure consideration for a certain number of measures, and they would be able with perfect certainty to rely upon a certain number of their Bills being taken. The process would be exactly the same as if some impartial authority were appointed to go through the Order Book in order to consider the character of the different measures standing for a second reading, and put them down for discussion according to their importance. He foresaw an objection which would be taken to this plan, and he would endeavour to meet that objection. It was said that it would lead to lobbying and soliciting Members to subscribe their names to particular Bills; but even if that should be so he could see no harm in it. It was a perfectly legitimate thing to ask a Member to aid in bringing on a particular measure, and every Member who did it would be acting under a sense of responsibility. Every Member who had recourse to that method would exercise his right in a perfectly open way, and would indicate that he was promoting a Bill in which he was much interested, and which he thought the House ought to have a fair chance of debating. The objection to lobbying was that it was private, and done for personal and possibly unworthy motives. Here a Member's action would be open, and his grounds of action public grounds, just like his vote in the House, for which he would be held responsible. It did not follow that if a Member subscribed his name to a Bill, he would be prepared to vote for it. His signature would only indicate that he thought it was a question that ought to come before the House for discussion. The plan also would have this incidental advantage—it would be a means of conveying to the Government in a distinct way the amount of interest which the Bills introduced respectively excited among Members, and therefore among their constituents. If they saw appended to a Bill some 40 or 50 signatures, they would know that it was a Bill which had general support, and that a considerable number of Members took a serious interest in a particular question. A Bill signed by that number would be sure of coming up for its second reading, being debated and divided on before Whitsuntide. They would, by that means, get rid of the difficulty which now arose, of having measures brought on for second reading which nobody cared anything about, and precious time wasted which ought to be applied to really important Bills in which the interests of the people were involved. The time of the House was its capital: this capital was now (so far as private Members' Bills went) practically squandered, since it was allotted with little or no regard to the relative importance of the topics debated.

Amendment proposed,

> In line 1, after the word "That," to insert the words "all Public Bills (other than Government Bills) introduced on or before the first Monday of the Session shall be set down in the Order Book for Second Reading in a list to be called 'The Second Reading List for Wednesdays up to Whitsuntide,' in an order to be determined by the number of signatures which shall have been subscribed to each such Bill at the close of the Sitting on the following Tuesday, each Member being entitled to subscribe his own name to three such Bills and no more; those Bills which have received most signatures being placed first, and the priority in the case of Bills which have received an equal number of signatures, being determined by lot, in a manner to be prescribed by Mr. Speaker; and that."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said, there was a tacit understanding in the House that only one paper should be put into the ballot box as a balloting paper for any particular Motion; but it had long been the case, owing to concert, of those interested in particular measures that a large number of those papers found their way into the box, and consequently those who had not a large number of friends to act with them in concert found themselves in a very unsatisfactory position. They wanted, if possible, to manage the system so that Bills of a frivolous character which were not likely to receive support, but to waste the time of the House, should be put aside in favour of Bills which were likely to reach a fruitful termination in legislation. The only objection which he saw to the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bryce) was that hon. Members might possibly be urged very inconveniently to support what other hon. Members had in charge; and that it might bring into that House methods which were found in other Legislative Assemblies to be very unpopular. But, under the proposed arrangement, they would have the advantage of their Business being arranged in such a way that Bills in which a large number of hon. Members were interested would have some chance of passing into law, and he said that the enormous advantage of that would counter-balance the inconvenience he had referred to. He would like to see an arrangement made which would limit the power of blocking Bills, which had led largely to the curtailment of the rights of private Members. The reason for the Rule had now disappeared since Opposed Business could not be taken after 12 o'clock, and facilities might well be given to private Members to push their measures between that hour and the adjournment of the House. For these reasons he had the greatest pleasure in supporting the Amendment before the House.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork) said, he had listened attentively to a considerable portion of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced this proposal (Mr. Bryce), and he thought that, notwithstanding the clearness with which the case had been placed before the House, the hon. and learned Member had failed to show that his proposal had any attraction whatever for minorities. The only result of the Amendment would be to give the majority greater powers than they already possessed for advancing their measures. Undoubtedly, measures in favour with many of those composing the majority were brought forward by the Government, and put forward in Government time; but if the Amendment were agreed to, the very small facilities which private Members now possessed would be handed over to the majority. He had always understood that the allocation of certain days in the week was for the purpose of enabling the minority to bring forward their questions and have them discussed, and that facility which the minority had would, if the proposal of the hon. Member were adopted, be entirely lost. He was, therefore, entirely opposed to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he hoped the Government would not allow themselves to be over-persuaded to accept it. If all the suggestions and additions that might come from private Members with regard to these Rules were to be considered, he feared it would be long after Easter that they would be passed. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had met them very fairly with regard to modifications of Rule 9; and that they ought not, as private Members, to press upon him their own particular "fads" and ideas. For the reason just given, he trusted that the Government would not give in to these large suggestions, but confine themselves to those which were on the Paper, so as to bring the discussion of the Rules to an early close.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell)—who was distinguished for his knowledge of the forms of Business and the clearness of his reasoning—appeared to him to be permeated by a fallacy. He was quite unable to understand how the hon. Member reconciled the beginning with the end of his speech. The object of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) was to secure to every section of the House the rights to which its numbers entitled it. He dissented, however, from one small item in his hon. and learned Friend's proposal, which was that one Member should have the right to subscribe his name to three Bills; and he thought it would be better to limit the number to one. There would, no doubt, be a good deal of application to hon. Members to support this or that measure; and it would be a considerable defence for a Member to be able to say that he could only subscribe to one. By adopting the Amendment the House would get rid of chance in the arrangement of Business for Wednesdays, and would secure the power of putting forward Bills which the majority desired to see progress. If such an arrangement were not adopted now, he ventured to think that the time would come when something of the kind would be found to be absolutely necessary. The effect of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House would be that all Wednesdays after Whitsuntide would be appropriated to the Bills which had already secured places, and it was only the Wednesdays before Whitsuntide that would be really open to private Members. It was surely not desirable that such a Bill as, say, the Pure Beer Bill, should secure precedence, and that such Bills as affected the relations of landlord and tenant, the Poor Law Guardians, and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, which interested a large section in and outside the House, should have no chance whatever. He felt that the mere mention of those Bills, and the fact that they would under his hon. Friend's proposal have some chance, would provoke some hon. Members against a measure which would bring them, perhaps, to a successful issue. He was not sanguine that his hon. and learned Friend's proposal would be adopted now; but he believed the more closely it was examined the less terrible would its effects be seen to be to the hon. Member for Cork. By this proposal all measures connected with social order, and others, would get their proper share of the attention of the House. The plan would give an advantage to any section of the House which numbered as many as 40 Members, and sections smaller than that might at least be reminded that they had little chance now of securing a good place for a Bill in which they were interested. If this principle were adopted, he should suggest that something should be done to secure to a small section in its turn a complete interest in this machinery, so that it should have its full share in private legislation. As he had said, he could not think the Amendment would be adopted now, nor could he flatter himself that he had been able to make it perfectly intelligible to the House; but when the subject had been fully thought out, as it required to be, he felt that the advantages of the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend would be recognized.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, the hon. Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney) had commenced his remarks by saying that the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was permeated by a fallacy, and that he could not understand that hon. Member's meaning. He (Lord Randolph Churchill) traversed that statement entirely, and said that the argument of the hon. Member for Cork was as keen as it always as. But he would point out that the speech of the hon. Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall was pervaded by the fundamental fallacy of applying mathematics and logic to the proceedings of the House of Commons. He wondered that the hon. Gentleman, with all his experience, did not perceive that the defect of the scheme of the Amendment was that it must be worked by Whips. The beauty of the ballot was that it was absolutely protected from anything like Party machinery. He thought the hon. Gentleman had made a great error in saying that the ballot could at the present time be influenced by chance according to the numerical strength of Parties. But that was not so; for a Bill promoted by one Member had just as great a chance of getting a day as if it were supported by 100. It was against the etiquette of the House for more than one Member to ballot for the same Bill. He could not say what tricks were resorted to by the Party opposite; but he did know with regard to the Conservative Party, and to some extent the Party of Ireland in 1885, that there was a considerable amount of scruple in transgressing what would be an honourable interpretation of the spirit of the Rules of the House. But undoubtedly the ballot was impregnable as against Party organization, and under it every Member had a real chance; whereas under the Amendment the 315 Members of the Conservative Party would easily determine the precedence of the Bills in the order of their own preferences. [Mr. Courtney dissented.] The hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees shook his head; but the House of Commons consisted of human beings, and was not a mathematical machine. If this Amendment were adopted Members would substitute for the English practice of lobbying the practice in America, which was called logging. For these reasons he greatly preferred the Rule of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. It would be dangerous, without thorough examination, to adopt the plausible and, what appeared to him, to be the illogical suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, which would undoubtedly operate unjustly against the chance of minorities in that House.

Mr. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, this was really a question whether the House was prepared to sacrifice its Wednesdays, leaving them to chance, or whether they should be devoted to Private Bills, which were considered to be most worthy of occupying the attention of the House. He would remind the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington that the Amendment was an addition to, and not a substitution for, the Rule, and he would like the noble Lord to show how the Amendment could be used so as to prevent the hon. Member for Cork securing every Wednesday. He hardly expected the Amendment to be accepted; but still he thought it aimed at an object worthy of consideration—namely, the use of Wednesdays more profitably for the country, and more satisfactorily for Members of the House.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University) said, he was glad that the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) had accepted the challenge that was made to him the other evening to propound a scheme for carrying out the suggestion he made in his speech. The scheme was ingenious; but he hardly thought, with such discussion as could be given to it at this time, it was likely to be accepted at present. He (Mr. Raikes) did not ask the House to decide upon the principle of this Amendment, but its details were such as he did not think the House should agree to. The means whereby the hon. and learned Member proposed to carry out his object appeared to be defective, and required a great deal more consideration. The proposal of the hon. and learned Member was that each Member should have three votes on this matter. Suppose that the Conservative Party of 300 Members divided itself into three bodies of 100 Members each, and that each Member voted for three Bills, there would then be nine Bills with 100 Members supporting each of their claims to precedence. Those nine Bills, at any rate, would secure precedence over any Bill which obtained even the unanimous support of the Party led by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), consisting of only 85 Members. If the official Opposition of 200 Members similarly divided itself into two bodies of 100 Members each, they would secure six Bills with 100 votes each in favour of their precedence. Thus there would be 15 Bills with priority over any Bills supported by the whole Irish Party opposite. The Scotch Members opposite would fare still worse, for they only numbered 45. The effect, therefore, of the proposed Rule would be to give the Government of the day and the regular Opposition the absolute control of all the Wednesdays of the Session, and enable them to decide what Bills should be taken on Wednesdays. The Rule would prove destructive to the rights of minorities. It would prevent new questions being brought forward, for the assistance of the Whips would be confined to old stock measures which had secured the support of each Party. The hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees had suggested an alteration of the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen's proposed Rule by limiting each Member to one vote. But this would not remove the objections to the vote. It would lead to practices very similar to the scandalous proceedings at a charity election, where the supporters of one candidate came down and obtained votes in return for promises of their own votes at subsequent or other elections. It would lead to the system of purchase and exchange of votes, and a Member when asked to put his name down in support of a Bill would ask for the promise of a vote in return for some other Bill in which he himself was interested. There were certain political clubs, the election to which was conducted in the following manner. There were, say, 36 members of the committee, and a candidate to succeed must obtain 24 votes. All the members of the committee could vote whether present or not, and those who were present gave their proxies to the managers of the party. The consequence was that frequently, if all the members present were to vote for a candidate, he would not get in unless he received the support of the managers of the Party. Similarly, if this Rule were to be adopted, a private Member's Bill would probably not get the requisite number of votes to secure a Wednesday unless it obtained the support of the Government Whip or of the Opposition Whip, and independent Members would be at a very great disadvantage. The hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen had raised a very important point, and he hoped he would be satisfied with the platonic support that his proposal had met with from the Chairman of Ways and Means. The subject was one that deserved further consideration, and it could well wait till next Session. Neither the proposal of the hon. and learned Member in its original form nor as altered by the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means could be accepted by the Government, and he hoped the hon. and learned Member for South Aberdeen would withdraw it.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had described the arrangement proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) as unnatural and accidental; but he (Mr. Childers) should say that if there was anything unnatural and accidental in the matter it was the present system of the ballot, on the chance of which measures of the utmost importance now depended. The proposal of his hon. and learned Friend was an attempt to see whether the present waste of public time could not in some way be avoided. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had referred to the practice of foreign Assemblies, more especially to those of France and Germany. He (Mr. Childers) had sat in the Assemblies in Paris and elsewhere abroad for days together watching the debates, and on one occasion a very distinguished friend had asked him how it was that the custom existed in the English Parliament of leaving the consideration of matters of the greatest importance to chance. The question was a difficult one to answer; and he was obliged to reply that we were very Conservative in our forms of procedure, and that there were practical difficulties in the way. There could, he thought, be no doubt that as between our way of legislation and that of foreign countries the practical advantage lay entirely with the latter. There were, no doubt, difficulties in the way of the acceptance of his hon. and learned Friend's proposal, and he should himself prefer that Members should only subscribe to one Bill in the way suggested by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), because he thought that would be fairer to minorities in the House. That this question should remain untouched, and that several Wednesdays should be practically wasted, was what he was convinced the House would not long tolerate. Therefore, while he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would be satisfied with the discussion that had been raised, he trusted, on the other hand, that the Government would give their attention to this question during the course of the Session.

MR. BRYCE said, he was encouraged by the discussion which had taken place, and that not only on account of the support his Amendment had received from high authorities in the House, but because of the suggestions made in the course of the discussion which were germane to the question. The objections to his proposals seemed to be founded almost entirely on a misconception of its nature and probable operation, and he thought it probable that if the proposal were fully considered by the House, either in its present or in an altered form, it would be hereafter accepted. He did not wish to put the House to the trouble of dividing, but he pressed on the Government the necessity of taking the matter into consideration, and, if possible, of making some proposal regarding it before the close of the present Session.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put.

Resolved, That after Whitsuntide, Public Bills other than Government Bills be arranged on the Order Book so as to give priority to the Bills most advanced, and that Lords Amendments to Public Bills appointed to be considered, be placed first, to be followed by Third Readings, Considerations of Report, Bills in Progress in Committee, Bills appointed for Committee, and Second Readings.

XII.—BILLS RELATING TO RELIGION AND TRADE.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, the Rule he now rose to move was in a certain sense a small matter, the change, however, being intended to simplify the proceedings of the House. The existing arrangement required that Bills relating to Religion and Trade should be originated by a preliminary Resolution passed in Committee of the Whole House. The arrangement had been found to be inconvenient, and he, therefore, now proposed its repeal.

Resolved, That the Standing Order of the 9th and 30th of April 1772 concerning Bills relating to Religion and Trade be repealed.—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

XIII.—STANDING COMMITTEES.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in rising to move the succeeding Rule, said, that in 1882, when they were considering the Procedure of the House, it was decided to set up Standing Committees, by which Bills might be more satisfactorily examined than by a Committee of the Whole House. The Government were of opinion that the consideration of many measures might be effected more completely by Standing Committees of from 40 to 60 Members than in Committee of the Whole House; and while that arrangement would not preclude the House itself from considering a Bill in Committee if it should so order after it had been before a Standing Committee, yet it appeared to the Government, and to those who took a great interest in the Procedure of the House, that there would be great advantages in many cases in referring Bills to a Standing Committee. By the Standing Order of the 1st of December, 1882, the Standing Committees to which by order of the House in each case Bills were to be referred were to consist of not less than 60 nor more than 80 Members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, who were to have regard to the class of Bills committed to such Committees, to the composition of the House, and to the qualification of the Members selected, and were to have power to add not more than 15 Members to a Standing Committee, in respect of any Bill referred to it, to serve on the Committee during the consideration of such Bill. He wished to move, if it met with the approval of the House, a proviso at the end of the Rule, that the Standing Committees in future should consist of not less than 40 nor more than 60 Members, with the addition, if the Committee of Selection deemed it necessary, of not more than 15 Members, chosen in the manner and circumstances indicated in the Resolution of December 1, 1882. He proposed that reduction in the number of Members of Standing Committees because it was felt that a comparatively small Committee would be a more efficient instrument for the careful examination of measures.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Resolutions of the House of the 1st December 1882 relating to the Constitution and Proceedings of Standing Committees for the Consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, and to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures be revived.

"Provided always, That the Committees shall consist of not more than Sixty nor less than Forty Members, subject to the power of addition to the said Committees by the Committee of Selection, as provided by the said Resolutions."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Amendment proposed, after the word "Shipping," to insert the word "Agriculture."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Agriculture' be there inserted."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he had not the slightest objection to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage). There were to be two Committees, one of not more than 60, and the other of not more than 55 Members. If the Bills relating to agriculture were referred to the Committee on Trade he could see no practical difficulty.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, he trusted that under any circumstances it would be understood that a sufficient consideration of Agricultural Bills would be secured in the Committee by adequate representation of agricultural interests. He said this because, if agricultural interests were dealt with by a Committee composed of experts in trade and shipping, he felt that they might come off second best.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, his attention had been drawn to the working of the Resolution. He pointed out that it would be in order for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) to move that Bills relating to agriculture be referred to the Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures. With regard to the observation of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Down (Colonel Waring), he (Mr. W. H. Smith) pointed out that the Committee of Selection would be empowered to add Members to the number probably of 15 for the consideration of any Agricultural Bill which it might be considered advisable to send to the Committee.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he was not quite clear as to the meaning of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. He apprehended that there would be a Committee on Agriculture as well as a Committee on Trade, and that was a proposal which he thought should receive the support of a large number of Members, especially of those who represented counties. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury seemed to be that they were to have a *bonâ fide* Trade and Shipping Committee, composed of, say, 55 Members, with power to add to them 15 Agricultural Members; that was to say that there was to be a Committee the majority of which would be composed of Members who had rather less interest in agriculture than other Members of the House. That proposal seemed to him unsatisfactory, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would think over the matter and see if he could not establish a Committee for Agricultural matters as well as for Trade and Shipping.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) said, he entirely agreed with the observations of the hon. and gallant Member who had just spoken. He (Mr. Brookfield) could imagine the case of an agricultural question being referred to a Committee on Trade, by which not only would due consideration of that question be shelved, but as to which there might be a large majority distinctly hostile to the agricultural interest. He certainly thought that the time had come when that most important interest should have its measures considered by a Grand Committee established for that purpose.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed.

MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, he very much regretted that the Government proposed to limit the number of Committee Members. The idea of Grand Committees was that they were to be a miniature of the House, who would represent every portion, section, and interest, and that the examination of Bills by those Committees should not be a quiet examination around a table by a small number of Members, but that it should be a real examination of Bills with the object of getting them into such form as would render them acceptable to the House. The more they put a limit on the number of Members of the Grand Committee the less would it represent every interest and section in the House; and the less debate on and examination of a Bill they obtained in the Committee the less likely were they to have the results of the Committee accepted by the House. This, in his opinion, was a grave blot in the proposal of the Government. He admitted that the work might be easier for the Chairman, and thought the Committee might possibly get quickly through the work; but there would be an absence of that which many minds brought to the work—namely, the variety of information which distinguished this House in its debating power. He believed the more the old system was tried the more it would commend itself, and it was, in his opinion, the only one which offered the prospect of possibly overtaking the enormous amount of work to be done. Why, then, should the Government stop at this proposal; why should they not take the whole House into their confidence; and why, instead of picking out a Member here and there, did the Government not boldly accept the principle of dividing the whole House into Grand Committees to do the work which had to be got through?

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, he recognized the difficulty which the Government had to meet, and it consisted in this, that they had not the time of Members at their disposal. He had had the honour to be Chairman of the Panel of Chairmen selected to preside over the Grand Committees; in that capacity he had watched them while they were at work, and he wished to say a few words on this question. If the Government had told the House, or shown that there was to be a reform of Private Bill legislation that Session, it would have been possible to form these Grand Committees in a much better way than at present; but all they could expect that Session was that there should be a Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons to consider how Private Bill legislation could best be dealt with. He hoped the Government that was in power next Session would bring forward a large instead of this somewhat tentative measure, which would get rid of some of the difficulties that were found to exist when this experiment was made before. As he had said, the system worked well, but the great difficulty was to get 60 Members representing all the various interests in the House upon the Committees, and at the same time to allow the Committee of Selection to man the various Private Bill Committees. His opinion was that the question would not be satisfactorily settled until Private Bill legislation was separated from the other Business of the House. He thought they should act on the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread)—that was to make the Grand Committee a miniature of the House of Commons as far as possible. The debates in the Grand Committees had been good, and so representative of the opinions of the House itself that the measures sent down received its assent and easily passed into law. There was at the time he referred to a great amount of feeling displayed in the House, and on one occasion obstruction appeared in Committee, but he did not think that would be the case at the present time, and he was of opinion that the devolution of the work of the House to Grand Committees would greatly tend to the successful issue of the measures which might be submitted to them.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he had been a Member of the Committee which considered the Bankruptcy Bill and the Patents Bill. He had on one occasion moved an Amendment which a Member of the Government told him had his entire approval; but to his great surprise when the Vote was taken that Member of the Government voted against him, and his explanation was that it was understood that on Grand Committees the Members of the Government must vote together. If this was to be the rule, it would result in the Government having undue weight in questions that had to be decided in Grand Committee, unless the number of Members was considerable.

And it being half-an-hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon *Tuesday* next.

MOTIONS.

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FISHING IN RIVERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to amend and declare the law relating to Fishing in Rivers, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, and Mr. Coleridge.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 152.]

NONCONFORMIST MARRIAGES (ATTENDANCE OF REGISTRARS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Atkinson, Bill to render unnecessary the attendance of Registrars at Nonconformist Marriages, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Atkinson, Captain Colomb, Sir John Simon, Mr. Grotrian, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Thomas, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Ambrose, Mr. Aird, Mr. J. M. Maclean, Mr. Howard Vincent, and Mr. Sinclair.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 153.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir George Trevelyan, Bill to amend "The Factory and Workshops Act, 1878," *ordered* to be brought in by Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, and Mr. Baird.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 154.]

TOWN HOLDINGS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Town Holdings do consist of Twenty-five Members:—The Committee was accordingly nominated of,—Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Amherst, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Beadel, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Conybeare, Sir John Ellis, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Elton, Viscount Folkestone, Dr. Fox, Mr. Heath, Sir Henry James, Mr. Knowles, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Madden, Mr. Marriott, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Channing, Viscount Wolmer, and Colonel Nolan, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 1*st March*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Pluralities Acts Amendment Act, 1885, Amendment* (26).

Second Reading—Railway and Canal Traffic (12).

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

(NO. 12.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was substantially the same Bill as that introduced into their Lordships' House last year, and which, after a certain amount of discussion, was amended in some particulars and left their Lordships' House even a better and stronger measure than when introduced. Under these circumstances, it would not be necessary for him upon the present occasion to recapitulate the reasons which led the Government to introduce the Bill, nor to enter at length into its details. It had been his intention to suggest to his noble Friend at the head of the Government that the Bill should this year be introduced in the other House, where it would be submitted to the searching criticism of those who more directly represented the trading, commercial, and agricultural community. But it had been found to be more convenient, having regard to the general course of Public Business, that the Bill should again be introduced in this House. Probably the same reasons that induced their Lordships to pass the Bill last year would actuate their Lordships in the present Session, and he did not think that those of their Lordships who desired to see alterations in the Bill would gain much by again bringing forward their views and again having their Amendments negatived as they were last Session. Last year, however, he promised to give a full and free consideration to any Amendment inserted in the other House, where, no doubt, there were many persons better acquainted with this subject than any of their Lordships could pretend to be. Doubtless many suggestions of great value, which would throw light upon the future working of the provisions of the Bill, would be made in the other House by Members engaged in trade, or representing constituences interested in the matter, and these would be fully and carefully considered. He was not blind to the fact that in the trading, commercial, and agricultural community, there was last year considerable disappointment at the Bill not dealing directly with the question of rates. There seemed to have been a general though unfounded expectation, that there was to be by this measure a lowering of rates throughout the country. This Bill, however, did not do that. It proposed to strengthen the Court of the Railway Commissioners, it provided certain machinery for dealing with appeals, it gave a *locus standi* before the Commisssioners to certain public bodies which did not possess it at present, and it provided certain machinery by which, under the sanction of Parliament, the question of rates might be dealt with. He had received many representations from Chambers of Commerce, Chambers of Agriculture, and the like, as to the present extreme inequality of rates, and these certainly were to be found. But he hoped that those cases of inequality of rates would not be discussed upon the floor of that House. Such cases depended upon questions of fact which could not be investigated in that House, but which would rightly come before the Railway Commissioners, the machinery of whose Court it was proposed by this Bill to improve. He would not enter into the details of the Bill, but he desired to impress upon the House the great importance to all classes of the community of this question being speedily settled. It had now been agitated for a considerable number of years, and this was the eighth Bill on the subject which, in one form or another, had been brought before Parliament. No advantage was to be gained by the prolongation of the controversy, and, on the other hand, there were good reasons for desiring its close as soon as possible. In trade there was undoubtedly a revival; but, next to the feeling of general confidence, what seemed to be most essential for re-establishing trade upon a sound basis was that those engaged in it should know with certainty the conditions under which they were to work. He therefore earnestly hoped that, in the interests of the community generally, this question might be pressed forward without delay to a successful issue. He honestly believed that this Bill, though he did not say that every detail was perfect, was a just and fair compromise between opposing interests, and contained the germ of a settlement, and he hoped that upon its lines would be constructed a scheme which would work out the formation of a Court whereby the principles of railway traffic could be consolidated and justice meted out to all interests concerned. He must in some sense apologize for bringing forward the Bill now that he was no longer a Member of the Government; but both the Prime Minister and his Successor at the Board of Trade had desired that he should do so. He was still of opinion that the Bill as it left their Lordships' House last year and as now introduced was satisfactory; but he should be ready to listen to all suggestions for its improvement, with a strong desire to secure the general success of the measure.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

THE EARL OF JERSEY, in rising to move the following Amendment:—

> "That no general measure dealing with railway traffic can be considered satisfactory which does not prevent preferential rates in favour of foreign imports;"

said, the Amendment was not hostile to the general scope of the Bill, for it was generally acknowledged that some measure of this kind was much required; but he desired to call attention to the bearing of this Bill on the subject of preferential rates. This Bill would not only not prevent preferential rates, but would authorize them in some cases where they were now, in the opinion of certain persons, illegal. The Canal and Railway Traffic Act, 1854, enacted—

> "That no railway company shall make or give an undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to or in favour of any particular person or company, or any particular description of traffic, in any respect whatsoever;"

but the 25th clause of the present Bill was a double-minded one, and, as it stood, would work disadvantageously. It prohibited, first of all, undue preference, and then proceeded to allow, under certain conditions, that undue preference. He desired to elicit distinctly the opinion of their Lordships as to whether they were in favour of equal treatment being established as between home and foreign produce. For some time the irritation against the injustice of our railways being used as a means of developing foreign trade while crushing local trade had been increasing. He would cite some instances to show the extent of the evil. In his evidence given before the Commission on the Depression of Trade, Mr. Rowlandson, a farmer in the North, said that the rate from Newcastle to London for home cattle in small waggons was £5 19*s.* 3*d.*, while the rate for foreign cattle was only £4. The witness was asked—

> "Do you mean that when they are taking a cargo of cattle from Newcastle to London the railway companies say 'these are English and

they shall be charged at a higher rate, and those are foreign and they shall be charged at a lower rate?'"

He replied—"That is so." Mr. Rowlandson also showed that the rate from Newcastle to Leeds was for home cattle 65*s.*, and for foreign cattle 41*s.*; from Newcastle to Wakefield, for home cattle 66*s.*, and for foreign cattle 41*s.* The rate for fresh meat from Liverpool to London, about 200 miles, was 25*s.* per ton for foreign meat and 50*s.* for home meat. The rate of 25*s.* was also applicable to foreign cattle slaughtered in the *abattoirs* of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board. It was interesting to compare with the rates between Liverpool and London the charge of 30*s.* per ton for the carriage of meat between London and Oxford, a distance of only 63 miles. Taking another instance out of the many that presented themselves, he found that the rate for home produce between Tamworth and Derby, 26 miles, was 18*s.* 4*d.* The rate for wheat, barley, and oats between West Hartlepool and Leeds, 72 miles, was 10*s.* for home produce and 6*s.* 3*d.* for foreign. From Newcastle to Leeds the rate for iron castings was 20*s.* for the home produce and 12*s.* 6*d.* for the foreign. This list of typical anomalies might well be closed with the following:—The rate of carriage between Liverpool and London for home-made pianos was 70*s.*; the rate for foreign pianos was only 25*s.* Could it be a matter for surprise that people interested in trade felt very strongly upon the subject of rates? It should be noted that these charges were exacted, notwithstanding the Act of 1854. The Companies did not attempt to deny that they had two distinct rates, a low foreign and a high local rate; but it was possible that the representatives of the railways would raise the objection that Parliament had no right to interfere. The Companies, however, were constantly applying to Parliament for fresh powers and advantages, and Parliament was bound to take care that any privileges which it might grant were not used to the detriment of the State. The Government in their measure put forward the plea that they were safeguarding the interests of the public. But the real interests of the public would only be served by low rates. They wanted equal and not unequal rates. The measure would authorize the exaction of preferential rates, to the detriment of our native industries and in favour of the foreigner. He feared that the Bill would be a source of much litigation. And with reference to that point he might say that it would be a great boon if more powers were given to the Board of Trade to enforce the law when it was violated. Semi-lunatics would get their heads broken in Trafalgar Square in order to gain notoriety for their views and to affirm their principles, but a prudent man would hesitate before entering into a lawsuit with a wealthy Railway Company. Quite recently a Company had fought a case right up to their Lordships' House, although the sum involved was only £18. In these days of struggling trade it was important that it should be relieved of every unjust burden. Not even foreign goods were carried at a loss, and yet he found that sometimes 100 per cent more was charged upon British goods than was charged to carry foreign. This was not only unjust but impolitic, for the home producer's margin of profit, small enough in these days, might be swallowed up, with the result of driving him altogether from the field. It often struck him as strange that cheap facilities for the conveyance of local supplies were not granted. In many towns it was impossible to buy flowers and vegetables at reasonable prices, in consequence of the great cost of the carriage from the neighbouring places where they grew. All the while, however, flowers and vegetables could be sent here from the South of France. The existing state of things amounted to a system of bounty, which placed foreign goods in our markets under the most favoured conditions, and kept our own goods out. He would read an extract from an article which had appeared in *The Economist* upon this subject—

> "At present the Government are engaged in a crusade against bounties, even when these are paid by foreign tax payers and go into the pockets of British consumers. Important 'public interests' here are served by the sugar bounties. By means of these, millions of pounds have been taken out of the pockets of foreign tax payers and virtually put into the pockets of consumers of sugar in this country. Yet, because they hold the system of bounties to be economically unsound, our Government are using all their influence to induce foreign Governments to discontinue it. When it is a question of foreigners benefiting us by means of bounties, Ministers say that we do wrong to

accept the gift; whereas, when it is a question of benefiting foreigners at our expense, they tell us that in the 'interest of the public' the sacrifice should be permitted."

The other day the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners) said—

> "The Railway Rates Bill would be introduced by the Government in the sincerest hope and expectation that it would have a most practical effect in the way of putting an end to the bounties which now existed upon the introduction of foreign produce, and that the agriculturists of the country would be relieved, at any ate, from that unjust burden."

These words could have but one meaning, and it gave him great pleasure to read them; but how could they be made to square with the provisions of the Bill before their Lordships? If this measure returned from the other House of Parliament, he ventured to anticipate that the 25th clause would be changed. To apply a simile which had been used by a noble Lord opposite, he would say that the Railway Company had put a twitch on the nose of British trade, and it was high time that Parliament should take it off. Parliament never intended that preferential rates should be charged in the way they had been, notwithstanding the Act of 1854. He asked their Lordships to decide a very simple issue, which was whether they were in favour of the equal treatment of home and foreign produce. Both the associated Chambers of Commerce and the Chambers of Agriculture throughout the country had passed resolutions against preferential rates, as had also the Municipal Corporations of Lancashire and Cheshire. There was hardly any body of persons interested in trade and industry who had not moved against these rates. He asked their Lordships to declare that this system of unequal treatment should no longer be continued, and to say that they would not support any measure which authorized bounties upon foreign produce and placed a burden upon trade and agriculture. The noble Lord concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment *moved*,

To leave out all the words after ("that") for the purpose of inserting ("no general measure dealing with railway traffic can be considered satisfactory which does not prohibit preferential rates in favour of foreign imports.")—(*The Earl of Jersey.*)

The Earl of Jersey

LORD BRAMWELL said, he hoped their Lordships would not agree to this abstract Resolution. It was very likely that a Bill would not be considered satisfactory which did not deprive Railway Companies of the right they now possessed to make the charges that were objected to, and other rights as well; but he would warn their Lordships that if they interfered with one kind of property they would find they were making a precedent which would be used as an argument why they should interfere with others. It would be rather difficult to give a good reason why a man should not be deprived of his acres that would not apply to these railway rates. But he would not argue the matter in the interest of the Railway Companies, but in that of the consumer. If Railway Companies brought foreign cattle cheaper than home cattle from Newcastle to London, it was not because of the love that the Railway Companies had for the foreigner or because they disliked the Northumberland or Durham graziers, but it was because they had the right to make the heavier charge on the home cattle, and they could get it, but they could not get that heavier charge upon the foreign cattle. If they attempted to make that heavier charge on foreign cattle the trade would be diverted, and the cattle would be taken by water direct to London, at greater risk of injury and at greater expense. The lower rate paid the railways, because they had the lines, the engines, and the staff, and, having these, they could make a small profit out of the small charges they could make in competition with the steamboats. But it did not follow they could conduct all the traffic at the same rates. If he hired a cab to take him to Richmond for £1, and the driver then let a man ride on the box for 1*s.*, it would be ridiculous for him to say to the driver—"You can carry that man for 1*s.*; why do you charge me £1?"

THE EARL OF JERSEY said, the conditions of the two riders would be different, as one would be inside and the other outside.

LORD BRAMWELL: Yes; and some would think the outside place the better. But if the Railway Companies gave up the profitable business they would have to give up altogether. *The Economist* asserted that these differential rates put money into the pockets of the foreign producer; but they did nothing of the sort. If they taxed a foreign product it was the country into which it was imported that paid the tax, and not the country from which it came. The importer bought an article at its market price in a foreign country and bore the expenses of importation, and it was a mistake to suppose that a light railway charge put money into the pocket of the foreign producer. Both the reasons given in support of the Amendment were thoroughly bad ones. As to the action of the Government against foreign bounties, which practically gave £2,000,000 to the consumers of sugar, he was not sure that that action was due to dislike of bounties. There might be other considerations, such as the interests of our Colonies as sugar producers and those of the manufacturers and refiners in this country. The bounties on sugar were a good thing for us as consumers, but unwise for the people who paid the bounty. What the noble Lord proposed by the Amendment would positively be Protection, for it would be Protection to say that foreign cattle should be sent by an expensive rate as compared with a cheaper rate. It was as sheer a case of Protection as could be. If the present state of things could be described as being an objectionable system of bounties, which it was not, then the Motion which the noble Earl had proposed was open to the reproach that it would give Protection to the home grazier. It was to the interest of the consumer that he should get the articles he required at as low a rate as possible, and if it was declared that cattle should not come by railway from the port at a low rate the consequence would be, not that other rates on the line would be lowered—if that were done a gross injustice would be inflicted—but that the cattle would be carried to London by other means, and thus the price would be raised and the cattle injured. He hoped that in the interests of the consumers their Lordships would not agree to the noble Earl's Motion.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, that the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down had made use of a very extraordinary argument. He said that these preferential rates, or, in other words, practically giving a bounty to the foreigner, did not bring any practical advantage to the foreigner. The noble and learned Lord further said that it was admitted by all political economists that in a case where import duties were levied, the importing nation paid the tax. In his opinion this was not the case. In the United States the import duties, to a great extent, perhaps to the greatest extent, were paid by the exporter. If they asked an American, whether statesman or working man, how it was that there was a large surplus accumulated in the American Treasury, he would say—"Because the people of England are kind enough to pay us a large tax in order to get into our markets." That, however, was an academical matter, and did not bear on the case before their Lordships. What he wanted to point out, with all deference to the noble and learned Lord, was that it was almost absurd to argue that the giving of a large preference to the foreign producer was of no benefit to him. The noble and learned Lord imagined himself going down to dine at the "Star and Garter," Richmond — a very pleasant occupation — and suggested that he having himself paid £1 for the vehicle, it would be hard not to allow the coachman, if he chose, to take up somebody on the box for 1*s*. That had nothing at all to do with the case in point; but he would give a better metaphor. If he himself were anxious to go to Richmond, and the noble and learned Lord was also anxious to go, it would be rather hard upon him if he were charged 30*s*. and the noble and learned Lord only £1. He should consider that somewhat unjust; moreover, owing to agricultural depression and other reasons, it was exceedingly probable that the extra charge would prevent him from going at all. That was what had been done. The foreign producer had been able to send goods to our markets in consequence of the preferential rates in his favour, while the home producer, in consequence of high rates, had not been able to reach the markets. The noble Earl had made out a strong case. Even if the consumer benefited by these foreign goods coming into the markets, he could not think that the people would hold that it was advantageous to the whole community that such a state of things should exist. As a matter of fact, he did not believe that equalizing the charges would increase the general price of articles, and he sincerely hoped that the Resolution of the noble Earl would be agreed to by their Lordships.

Earl FORTESCUE said, that, in his opinion, preferential rates were both unjust and impolitic. The natural means of transport from a foreign country was by ship to the nearest port; but the Railway Companies had diverted a great deal of the traffic by underbidding the shipowners, and the amount of that underbidding was a distinct bounty given, at the expense of the home producer, to the owner of the foreign goods, which had been placed in our markets at a thus artificially lowered price. As an old Free-Trader he could not agree with the noble and learned Lord on the matter of bounties; they seemed to him to be unsound; but if bounties were to be given at all, it would be more reasonable to give them, as they were given by many of our own colonies as well as foreign nations, in favour of their own fellow-citizens against foreigners, than, as we gave them, to foreigners against our own countrymen.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury): My Lords, I shall not venture to interpose in this pitched battle between Free Traders and Protectionists. Previous declarations that I have made on this subject have not been received by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) in a spirit that is calculated to encourage further declarations. I do not rise to pronounce any sentiments or doctrines upon Free Trade or Protection, lest the noble Earl should tie a tin kettle to me and send me forth with the cry "Protectionist!" I want, however, to suggest the question whether or not we have selected precisely the most convenient time and season for this very important controversy. We are dealing with the second reading of a Bill, and my noble Friend (the Earl of Jersey) selects one single clause in that Bill and lays down an abstract proposition with respect to it. That abstract proposition states that, practically, preferential rates ought to be forbidden by the Bill. Now, we do believe that we are forbidding preferential rates by this Bill. I do not mean to say that we forbid all preferential rates, because there is a certain kind of preferential rate that must be admitted—such a rate, for example, as is given in favour of a man who imports a great deal as against the man who imports very little; a preference generally admitted in all trades. But we do forbid by this Bill undue preference, and we do our best to forbid it completely; and we have no doubt that, whether we forbid it completely or not, at all events when this Bill is passed the home producer will be in a very considerably better position than he is now. My noble Friend (the Earl of Jersey) says that our Bill does not achieve our object, that it does not forbid undue preferences, and he criticizes our wording very severely. He is very angry that in referring the matter to a tribunal they are directed to consider the facts of the case. He seems to think that the facts of the case are precisely the things that ought not to be considered by the tribunal which is to be the judge of the case. But criticisms of that kind are very much out of place in a discussion on the second reading. When we get into Committee, if our draughtsman has been unskilful and our thoughts have been confused, it will be open to my noble Friend to move words that will effect his object, and the House will then be called upon to decide between the two. We believe that undue preferences are completely excluded by this Bill. What would my noble Friend do supposing that he carried his Resolution? He would kill the Bill and we should have no further railway legislation this Session, and the result of his valiant endeavour on behalf of the British farmer would be that the passing of the Bill which we have brought in to promote the interests of the British trader will be rendered absolutely impossible, and we shall have to go on for another 12 months under the present unjust system. I cannot conceive that the House will adopt a proceeding so much at variance with their usual course of conduct, or that they will take the occasion of the second reading in order to lay down an abstract proposition with a view to effect an object which we believe is effected already by this Bill. By so doing the House would undoubtedly effect this further object, the prevention of legislation and the postponement of the removal of grievances altogether for another year.

Earl GRANVILLE said, he was glad to see that the noble Marquess was somewhat sensitive on the subject of his principles with regard to Free Trade and Protection. But the declarations made the other night were more agreeable to the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Dunraven) than to the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell). The noble Marquess, however, was, he thought, quite right in what he had just said with respect to the inconvenience of this time for dealing with the question raised by the present Resolution. It appeared to him quite premature at this stage of the Bill, before the House had got into Committee, to attempt the consideration of a clause that would have the effect desired by the noble Earl opposite.

The Earl of JERSEY said, that the reason why he brought forward the Resolution was that he wished to affirm its principle. If the noble Marquess would say that when the Bill got into Committee they would so word the clause bearing on that point as to secure that foreign preferential rates would be prohibited, there would be no occasion for him to press his Resolution. But the question at issue was a question of principle. Were they going to affirm the principle that foreign preferential rates should henceforth be sanctioned by Parliament, or that they thought that foreign goods should be treated in the same manner and under the same conditions by the railway companies as English produce?

Earl STANHOPE trusted that his noble Friend would press his Motion to a Division. Though, from what had fallen from the Prime Minister and the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition, he did not think that the Motion would be carried, still it was of great importance to make a protest as to the preference given to foreign produce in the 25th clause of the Bill. It was all very well to say that the clause could be amended in Committee, but such a course was attempted last Session, and proved an utter failure. As a protest in favour of an equal rate for foreign and home produce, he, for one, intended to follow his noble Friend into the Lobby.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, that for many years past undue preference on the part of the railways had been prohibited. No one could determine *à priori* whether it was an undue, that was to say an unjust, preference to carry foreign cattle under certain circumstances cheaper than English cattle. If the Company in a given case did not establish to the satisfaction of the Court that they were acting justly, the *onus probandi* resting upon them, the decision would go against them. But the noble Earl (the Earl of Jersey) wanted something more than that. He wanted to provide that under no circumstances whatever should it be allowed that foreign goods should be carried cheaper than English goods. If that was not Protection he did not know what was. It seemed to him that everybody was a Protectionist for what he had to sell and a Free Trader for what he wanted to buy.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, that what was objected to was not low rates but unequal rates. However, he appealed to the noble Earl opposite, after what had fallen from the noble Marquess and from the noble Earl on the Front Opposition Bench, not to take a Division on that occasion, as that was not a convenient opportunity of raising the question. At the present stage they ought not to risk the loss of the Bill.

Earl BEAUCHAMP said, he thought the argument as to the loss of the Bill if the Resolution were passed did not possess so much weight as seemed to be supposed. They were now at a period of the Session when there need be no great difficulty in getting an amended Bill introduced. No one would persuade him that it was in the interests of the consumers of this country that the agricultural produce and cattle trade should be placed at a great disadvantage by the present charges made by the Railway Companies. The interests of the consumers required that such unjust treatment should not be inflicted on the agricultural interest of this country. He hoped a Division would be taken.

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion?"

Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 72; Not-Contents 45: Majority 27.

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Resolved in the *affirmative.*

Lord HENNIKER said, that, with their Lordships' permission, he should be glad to say a few words on this question, as he took a great interest in it. He was, besides, the Chairman of an important representative Committee which was formed some time ago to deal with this subject. The question was thoroughly threshed out in that House last year, and he had had several opportunities of addressing their Lordships upon it. There was, however, one point which he thought it most important to bring before the House. It was a part of the question which traders and agriculturists felt to be of the greatest possible importance. He spoke of terminal charges. What traders wanted was that the practice of Parliament, the decisions of Courts of Law, and, in fact, the system on which terminals had always been hitherto charged, with very few exceptions, should be that of the future. He meant that maximum rates should include terminals, not extra work done, but terminals properly so called. Unfortunately the Bill of last year and the measure before the House were based on a decision of a Divisional Court of Law. He should be glad if he might be allowed to repeat to the House what that decision was, and to tell their Lordships what had passed since last Session. A decision was given by the Railway Commissioners in a well-known case—"Hall against the London and Brighton Railway"—in accordance with all previous decisions. The judgment of the Commissioners was appealed against, and reversed by the Divisional Court. Of course, traders were not contented that the practice of former years should be entirely reversed without an appeal to a higher tribunal. They were anxious to carry the case further. However, when they tried to do so, it could not be done; and for the following reasons:—The Judicature Act was passed in August, 1873, and was to come into force at once. The Railway Bill creating the Commissioners' Court was passed in July, 1873, but was not to come into force till the September of that year. The 45th clause of the Judicature Act gave an appeal to the higher Courts from any inferior Court then in existence. The Judicature Act was afterwards not brought into force at once, but its operation was postponed until November, 1875. This Act was passed at first to come into force before the Railway Act. It was, therefore, held that the Commissioners' Court was not a Court in existence. So there was an inferior Court set up and in full work long before the Judicature Act came into force, and yet it was decided that no appeal would lie from its decisions to a higher tribunal. In fact, it was the only inferior Court from which an appeal to the higher tribunals would not lie. All the decisions of years, all the practice of Parliament, were, therefore, upset by a Divisional Court. He must say that he thought this state of things most unsatisfactory. Of course it was claimed that this was a decision on the merits. He ventured to think, however, that it was nothing of the sort, but that it was a decision on a purely technical point. Surely it was most unsatisfactory that a most important clause in the Bill should be based as it was on this decision. But to carry the matter further, the traders determined to make another effort to test the point in a higher tribunal. The only way this could be done was to take a case to the County Court from which an appeal lay. Two cases were taken into Court with a view to break down the former decision, and the Railway Company in both cases paid the claim. Of course the Companies might say, "These are small cases; they are not worth fighting; we are content with the decision in our favour;" but he thought he was quite justified in putting another construction upon their action. He sent a letter to the newspapers challenging the Railway Companies on this point at the instance of the Committee over which he presided; but they treated the challenge on the part of the traders much in the same way as they did the test cases before the County Court. They never took it up or replied to it in any way. They probably had no answer to give. He maintained, therefore, that the success of the traders in these actions in the County Court was just as important as the decision of the Divisional Court; in fact, more important, as the Railway Companies gave way on the merits. It was all very well to say the cases were small; the principle involved was the same, and he thought he might fairly say that the action of the companies showed that they feared to go to a higher tribunal, not because of expense, for every one knew that the expense of legal proceedings was much less to a Railway Company than to a private suitor, or even to any body of traders. They had their own counsel, solicitors, and so on, regularly employed. He thought, therefore, that he might fairly appeal to the House and to the noble Lord who had charge of the Bill to reconsider the decision of last year—namely, that this clause should not be based on the decision of last year. If the decision of last year was not a fair and just basis to go upon, surely what had happened since greatly strengthened his contention. He was sure no clause framed as this clause was could be satisfactory to the traders, and he would point out that this part of the question was considered to be second to no other part of it in importance by the large traders of the country. There were other parts of the Bill which he would gladly see altered, but they had been discussed before and would no doubt be fully discussed in "another place." He warmly sympathized with the Motion made by his noble Friend. Another point of great importance to his mind was that the Court set up should not be so expensive as to prohibit traders from appealing freely to it. He could not help thinking, however, that it would not be as accessible as he would like to see it. However, his object in rising was to call attention to the question of terminals, and he earnestly hoped that his noble Friend would consider what the traders put forward, and, if not, then that the House would entertain an Amendment which he should venture to bring forward when the Bill was before the House in Committee.

Original Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the 9*th instant.*

VIVISECTION.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in moving for Correspondence between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Anti-Vivisection Society in reference to two recent cases in which the law relating to vivisection appeared to have been contravened, said, there were certain conditions annexed to the granting of certificates under the Vivisection Act to the effect that the experiments should not be performed in public. In consequence of that and other circumstances it was extremely difficult to obtain convictions under the Act. The administration of the Act was placed in the hands of the Home Office. One or two cases had recently occurred which appeared to him and to those for whom he spoke to call for prosecution. In both those cases the Home Office had refused to prosecute on one ground or another, and it was for the Correspondence which took place in reference to those two cases that he now moved. He thought their Lordships would agree that it was right and proper that some example should be made of those who openly contravened the Act of Parliament; but unless the Home Secretary would interfere and order a prosecution, it was very difficult to say how the law was to be enforced.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for correspondence between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Anti-Vivisection Society in reference to two recent cases in which the law relating to vivisection appears to have been contravened."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

EARL DE LA WARR said, he was deeply interested in this matter, and hoped the law would be enforced.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, that in the absence of his noble Friend (Earl Brownlow) he would answer the question on his behalf. But he should only answer by asking a question—To what cases did the noble Viscount refer? The names were not given, and it was impossible for the Home Office to say whether the Correspondence asked for could be produced until it was known to what cases the noble Viscount referred.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH mentioned the names of the two cases, which were inaudible.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, if the noble Lord repeated his question it would be answered.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS), in moving for a—

"Return from the Commissioners of Sewers from the Metropolitan Board of Works, and from such Urban Sanitary Authorities as have received official representations under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Acts, 1875-85, of the number of official representations made to them; of the numbers, size, and localities of the areas regarding which resolutions under section three have been passed or for which improvement schemes have been made; of the stage which each improvement scheme has reached; and of any moneys borrowed for the purposes of the Acts; showing the estimated and actual cost of each scheme; also giving the date of each official representation, and of each improvement scheme: copy of any official correspondence which has taken place between the confirming authority and any local authority since the date of the last Return in cases where resolutions have been passed but no improvement scheme has been proceeded with; similar Returns from Ireland and Scotland; and also showing the number of persons that may be housed on ground cleared since the passing of the Acts,"

said, it was satisfactory to know that 22 schemes had already been passed by the Metropolitan Board, under which 25,850 persons were housed, and there were other schemes under consideration which would house 6,800 more. If to these were added the schemes passed by the Corporation of the City of London a total of 33,600 persons was reached as the number now enjoying the benefits of these Acts. Many plots of ground had been taken by the Peabody trustees and built upon. He saw the Chairman of the trustees (the Earl of Derby) present. It would be interesting if the noble Earl would inform the House how much money had been expended in building under the trust, how many persons were accommodated, and what were the average wages of the persons who resided in these buildings. For there had been some idea prevalent that they were not being occupied by the class whom the trust was established to benefit. It had also been said that a notion prevailed that the inmates were subject to supervision, and that the fear of this supervision kept artizans away. It would be well if the noble Earl could give the House some information on this point also.

Moved for—

"Return from the Commissioners of Sewers, from the Metropolitan Board of Works, and from such Urban Sanitary Authorities as have received official representations under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Acts, 1875-85, of the number of official representations made to them; of the number, size, and locality of the areas regarding which resolutions under section three have been passed or for which improvement schemes have been made; of the stage which each improvement scheme has reached; and of any moneys borrowed for the purposes of the Acts; showing the estimated and the actual cost of each scheme; also giving the date of each official representation and of each improvement scheme:

Copy of any official correspondence which has taken place between the confirming authority and any local authority since the date of the last Return in cases where resolutions have been passed but no improvement scheme has been proceeded with:

Similar Return from Ireland and Scotland:

And also showing the number of persons that may be housed on ground cleared since the passing of the Acts."—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

The Earl of DERBY said, he was very glad to give such information as lay in his power respecting the working of the Peabody Trusts, but he had very little more to give than appeared in their report now being circulated. The trusts had existed nearly 25 years since their original inception. During that time the trustees had expended something more than £1,200,000, of which between £300,000 and £400,000 was borrowed money. The accommodation provided amounted to 11,151 rooms, and they were occupied by 20,279 persons, and the rooms included 5,014 separate dwellings — speaking roundly 11,000 rooms and 20,000 persons were accommodated in them. He was asked whether there had been any objection on the part of the classes for whom the buildings were intended, on the ground of undue supervision. He believed that when lodging houses were erected by public companies there was some suspicion of too much supervision, but he did not know that it was ever felt in regard to the Peabody Trustees' buildings, though if there ever was any such feeling it did not exist now, because they had not a single vacancy in any building, and there were always many competitors for any vacancy when it occurred. As regards the class of persons who inhabited the buildings, he might state that the average earnings of heads of families was a little over 23*s.* per week, while the average rent per room was a little under 2*s.* 2d. per week, and the average rent per dwelling a little over 4*s.* 9*d.* per week. As to the occupations of the tenants, the report gave a table of every family. The largest class to which the heads of families belonged was that of labourers. These numbered 667; porters, 524; needlewomen, 311; charwomen, 282; tailors, 105; carmen, 210; and other occupations were represented in smaller proportions. They all appeared to belong to the working classes, and not as a rule to the highly-paid section of that class. The Peabody Trust, it should be borne in mind, was not established to provide a kind of modified almshouses. He had been one of the original trustees consulted by Mr. Peabody himself, and he could say this of his own knowledge. In the early days of the trusts, Mr. Peabody consulted with his then trustees; the present plan was then adopted with his personal sanction, and it had been adhered to ever since. In one of their reports there was a letter from Mr. Peabody which showed that he approved of the administration of the trusts. Reference had sometimes been made to the supposed large profits which the trust was making. The object of the trustees throughout had been to secure neither more nor less than a return of 3 per cent, and taking the whole working of the trusts until now, the net returns had been rather below than above that figure. If any other statement should be required, he would have much pleasure in making it on behalf of the trustees. He could not help saying that the trustees were greatly assisted by the Government, of which the noble Viscount (Viscount Cross) was a Member, for enabling them to enlarge the amount of their capital. The trustees had expended the whole of their money, and had borrowed between £300,000 and £400,000, the greater part of it from the Government, and that money had been of very material assistance to them in enabling them to carry out their plans—while in that transaction there was absolutely no risk to the State—indeed, it was a gainer to a small extent, and the security was ample to cover the debt.

Lord NORTON said, as nothing was more undesirable than that almost all the poor people in London should fall into arrear for rent and contract bad debts, it would be interesting to know from the noble Earl how far successful the Peabody Trustees had been in introducing and enforcing, as they had a great opportunity, a better habit of short and punctual payments of rent, and so preventing that unfortunate practice.

The EARL OF DERBY said, he entirely agreed with the noble Lord in the doctrine he had laid down, and so also did his colleagues. He did not think it was any exaggeration to say, on behalf of the Peabody Trust, that there were no bad debts and no arrears of rent.

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 1*st March*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Charles John Darling, esquire, Q.C., *for* Deptford.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887-8); CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Vote 7; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES, Vote 5; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, Votes 1 and 2.

PUBLIC BILL — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Trawling (Scotland) * [155].

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL AND IMPERIAL FINANCE—INCIDENCE OF IMPERIAL TAXATION.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the proposals referred to in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, "for adjusting the relations between Local and Imperial finance," and in order to assist the House in arriving at a just conclusion as to the relative incidence of Imperial taxation on real and personal property, he will be good enough to lay upon the Table of the House a continuation of the Return (varied so as to exhibit the current rate of Income Tax) of "Imperial Taxation exclusively borne by Real and by Realised Personal Property respectively," presented by the Treasury in August, 1885, and in the concluding paragraph of which it is stated that—

> "It is quite certain that the figures which have been adopted for the purposes of this Return must approximate very closely to the truth?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am afraid I cannot agree with the hon. Baronet in thinking that it would assist the House in arriving at a just conclusion as to the relative incidence of Imperial taxation on real and personal property if I were to grant a continuation of the Return in question. The words he quotes from the end of the Memorandum annexed to the Return of 1885 as to the trustworthiness of the figures applied only, I am informed, to the figures relating to the Death Duties, and not, as the hon. Baronet appears to think, to the Return generally. I have studied the Return with some care, and I have consulted its compilers as to its value. They tell me that even in the less conjectural parts there was much division of opinion among them, and they had considerable difficulty in coming to any agreement; and I need not remind the hon. Baronet of the severe criticisms passed upon it at the time. To me, the figures given in the Return are very interesting, though I cannot help recognizing their conjectural and speculative character; but I think that Tables in which this conjectural element enters so largely should be published rather by private statisticians than on the authority of the Government—an authority which is apt to be misunderstood.

POST OFFICE, DUBLIN (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—MISS M. A. GOUGH.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that Miss Mary Agnes Gough, a clerk who was employed for over 14 years in the Telegraph Department of the General Post Office, Dublin, was called upon by the Head of the Dublin Department to resign her position in October, 1886, and was reluctantly obliged to leave her employment without pension for having married some short time previously, no other complaint having ever been made against her; whether it is a Rule in the Postal Service to discharge ladies after such long terms of service as 14 years, and against whom no complaint can be advanced, except getting married, without pension; whether he can say if there are any ladies, late clerks in the Dublin Postal or Telegraph Departments, now in receipt of pensions, who, like Miss Gough, retired in consequence of having married; and, if so, why was Miss Gough differently treated; and, whether, taking into consideration the fact that the health of this lady has been undermined by her long and faithful labours in the Public Service, he will consider her case, with a view to allowing her a pension?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It is a Rule of the Post Office that any single woman holding an appointment on the Establishment must resign on marriage. In October, 1886, there being reason to believe that Miss Gough had married, she was asked to state whether this was so or not, and, on denying the fact, she was requested to put her denial in writing. Her reply was to send in her resignation. I regret that it will not be possible to grant Miss Gough a pension. If other ladies, formerly holding situations similar to hers, are now married and yet in receipt of pensions, these pensions must have been granted before marriage and under medical certificate as prescribed by Statute. Miss Gough, on the other hand, according to the certificate of the medical officer, who was intimately acquainted with her case, was before her marriage in good health.

THE ANTHROPOMETRICAL SYSTEM.

MR. SALT (Stafford) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any decision has been arrived at as to the use and advantage of the anthropometrical system in this country?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Careful inquiry has been made into this subject, and Reports have been obtained from the French Government showing the working of the system in France. I have consulted the Prison and Police Authorities in this country; and they are of opinion that, under the present system, the proportion of prisoners who are not recognized is so small that the necessity for any change is not by any means established. The proportion is estimated at 2½ per cent. I am still continuing my inquiries into the matter. Legislation would probably be necessary to carry any change into effect.

POST OFFICE — ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, When will the Anglo-Australian Mail Contract be submitted for the approval of the House?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Three of the Australian Colonies being practically parties to the new Mail Contracts, and having agreed as such to contribute their share of the subsidy, it has been considered proper, before submitting the Contracts to Parliament for approval, to obtain from the Colonies in question a formal confirmation of the Agreement in this connection made on their behalf by their Agents General in London. When that confirmation has been given, the usual course will be taken in laying the Contracts before Parliament.

BRITISH GUIANA — ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS.

MR. CROSSLEY (York, W.R., Sowerby) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Wether the Ordinance (No. 5, of 1887) passed by the Court of Policy of British Guiana for the establishment of a town at Bartica, has been approved by the Crown without any modification of the provision for the payment to the Bishop of Guiana absolutely of one-third of the sums received for the lands formerly held by the Bishop at the pleasure of the Crown; whether, in that case, the grant has been converted into a permanent endowment of the Bishopric, contrary to the wishes of the unendowed Religious Bodies in the Colony; and, whether he will lay before Parliament Papers containing the objections of such Bodies, and the grounds on which the Crown has been advised to confirm the Ordinance without alteration?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to state that the Ordinance has been allowed without any modification of the provision referred to. One Religious Body—the Congregational Union of British Guiana—petitioned the Colonial Legislature against the provision alluded to, on the ground that it would increase the endowment of the Church of England; but the Legislature considered that the Bishop, as representing the Church, had a vested interest in the land at Bartica, which had been held, first by the Church Missionary Society and afterwards by the Bishop, for a long period, and upon the improvement of which large sums of money had been expended; and they are of opinion that the provision made by the Ordinance was an equitable compensation on the resumption of the land for the purpose of forming a town. The Secretary of State saw no reason for differing from this view. There are very few Papers on the subject, and it scarcely seems one of sufficient public interest to warrant the expenditure that would be incurred in printing them; but if the hon. Member wishes to see them I shall have much pleasure in showing them to him.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS AND THE PADDINGTON TRUSTEES—SALE OF LAND.

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked the right hon. Baronet the Member for Essex (West or Epping Division), as one of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, Whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, being interested to the extent of one-third of nearly 100 acres of land in Paddington now unutilized, the Trustees of the Paddington Estate being interested as owners of the remaining two-thirds, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners decline to concur in any sale or lease thereof unless they receive the equivalent of one-half of the proceeds; and, whether there is any objection to their joining in a special case for the opinion of the High Court of Justice, with a view to the determination of the respective rights of the parties?

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping): The Question is in a form which is misleading as to the extent of the interest which the Commissioners have in the land referred to. That interest comprises a dormant value, not limited, as implied, to one-third of its proceeds. What would be an equitable apportionment of that dormant value is, according to the 3rd section of the Act of 1875, a matter for voluntary agreement; and the Commissioners have on several occasions offered, and are still willing, to refer this question to arbitration, suggesting as arbitrators the Earl of Selborne, Lord Herschell, or Lord Bramwell. Last year the Commissioners, when there was a prospect of a sale of the property, were prepared to concur in the sale on certain conditions stated by me in this House on March 15; and should any such sale be in contemplation now they would adhere to that offer.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—CASE OF JOHN AULD, A BANKRUPT.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the case of John Auld, a bankrupt in Aberdeen, who was sent to prison on the 4th November last for contempt of Court, and has been kept there ever since; whether the said contempt consisted in the debtor's having, after having sworn that he had disclosed everything in his power with regard to his effects, alleged that he could not tell what he had done with one particular sum of money which he had received a year before; whether it is true that the Court of Session has decided that the Sheriff acted within his powers in committing Auld for contempt, and that the Sheriff has declared that it is not competent for him to consider whether Auld has been sufficiently punished by any amount of imprisonment, but that he should be "stultifying past decisions" were he to release Auld without any appreciable change in his position; and, whether, seeing that if the bankrupt's inability to answer the question is genuine he may be imprisoned for life unless the Crown interferes, he will order Auld's release and have him tried, if the facts seem to warrant prosecution, for perjury or fraudulent bankruptcy?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention has been called to this case. The bankrupt uplifted about £170 from the bank, and professed to account for the disappearance of a large part of this sum—some £60—by pretending it had been stolen by someone who broke open a locked drawer in his house. Of this alleged theft he never informed the police. He further gave no explanation of what he had done with the other sums of £50, £10, £10, and £20, admittedly in his possession. After repeated warnings by the Sheriff he was committed to prison. The statement in the Question regarding the Court of Session's decision is correct. The Sheriff stated, when the case came before him again, that it was not competent for him to liberate the bankrupt unless he complied with the order for disobedience to which he was committed, and used the words quoted in the Question. It is not in my power to order the release of the prisoner, nor do I intend at present to raise a prosecution. I must point out to my hon. Friend that there may be quite sufficient ground for confining a bankrupt who withholds information which by Statute he is bound to disclose, while there may be no sufficient evidence in a criminal prosecution in which the accused is entitled to withhold all information.

DR. CAMERON asked, why the man had been detained without any evidence?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The man is detained for refusing to answer questions which he is bound to answer.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — THE PROCLAIMED MEETING AT DROMORE— SENTENCE ON A BALLAD SINGER.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) (for Mr. M. J. KENNY) (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If on the 6th January, the date of the proclaimed meeting at Dromore, County Tyrone, a ballad singer was summarily sentenced by two Resident Magistrates to a month's imprisonment for singing some verses in the street to an audience chiefly composed of members of the Constabulary Force; if he can state the grounds on which the proceeding was taken; if the conduct of the ballad singer constituted a breach of the Proclamation; and, will the Government order an investigation into the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The man referred to was not proceeded against until after he had been frequently cautioned by the police. The ballad was of an inflammatory character, and calculated to incite a breach of the peace. The audience was not chiefly composed of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, but of the public. The two Resident Magistrates before whom he was summarily tried ordered him to find sureties to be of good behaviour, or in default to be imprisoned for one month. Failing to give sureties, he was committed. He was not charged with a breach of the Proclamation. The Government see no ground for making a further investigation into the matter.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked, if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman could inform them whether all the ballad singers of Ireland were to have a censor to whom they must submit their ballads before they could sing them in the street?

MR. P. M'DONALD asked, if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would lay the incriminating ballad on the Table?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)— MISS DONNELLY, AUGHIOGAN NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the period which elapsed between the appointment of Miss Donnelly as temporary assistant teacher at Aughiogan National School, County Tyrone, and her examination by order of the Commissioners of National Education; if the delay is usual; and, if so, why; and, if, in the event of the non-success of candidates under such circumstances, they are entitled to any part of the salary for the period during which they are employed as teachers?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that a period of about 11 weeks elapsed between the date of the appointment of Miss Donnelly and her examination. The delay appears to have been due to the absence of some information in the case which was not received from the manager until about five weeks after his notification of the appointment. Miss Donnelly has passed the examination, and is entitled to receive pay on the usual conditions from the date of her original appointment. Unsuccessful candidates are not entitled to salary for the interval between appointment and examination. Examinations of candidates are held by the Inspectors with the least possible delay; and it is, of course, the duty of a manager not to employ an incompetent teacher.

ARMY (ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT) — EXAMINATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF LEATHER.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in the Report of the Judge Advocate General, on certain transactions connected with the inspection of leather at the Ordnance Store Department at Woolwich:—

> "Par. 12. The duty, therefore, of the viewer is to master the meaning of the specification, to compare it with the sealed pattern and sample, and then to see whether the articles supplied by contractors are equal in all respects to those contracted for. It is obvious that to make this viewing examination efficient, the specification and the sealed pattern and sample supplied by the Department should correspond, yet, strange to say, this essential condition is not fulfilled in many instances. In many cases there was a considerable difference between both the specification and the sealed pattern, and again between the sealed pattern and the sample. . . . . . In a great many cases the sealed pattern attached to the specification was a very inferior pattern of the article described, and then again it often differed from the sample supplied to the manufacturer;"

who was responsible for this state of matters; whether the contract business in other Departments is conducted in a similar manner; and, whether measures have been adopted to prevent the continuance of such negligence in the conduct of Government business?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The person responsible for the state of affairs described is primarily the Commissary General of Ordnance. It is quite impossible for me, within the limits of an answer to a Question, to describe clearly how we propose to meet the evil; but when I tell the hon. Member that we have some 1,400 specifications, patterns, and samples, he will see that the task of keeping them up to date is a heavy one. In answer to the second Question, I do not know how the contract business is conducted in all other Departments; but in the case of the Ordnance Store Department it does not seem to me that the system was at fault, but the way in which it was administered, and that is the point to which our reforms are mainly directed.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked, whether it was not the case that the Judge Advocate General himself condemned the system?

MR. E. STANHOPE thought that the Judge Advocate General had not condemned the system so much as the administration of it.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) asked, whether there was any official specially charged with the duty of seeing that the sealed patterns and specifications were identical?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No; but I regard the Commissary General of Ordnance at the time as being primarily responsible.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY CONTRACTS—SPECIFICATION AND INSPECTION.

MR. MATTINSON (Liverpool, Walton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in accordance with the suggestion in the Report of the Judge Advocate General, the Government propose to modify the existing system of inspecting contract articles in the direction of casting further responsibility upon contractors, and reducing the present costly staff maintained for the purpose of detailed inspection, or what they propose doing on the Judge Advocate General's Report; whether the War Office purposes taking any, and what, steps to secure that the specification, sealed pattern, and sample supplied by the Department shall in the case of all contracts always correspond; whether, in regard to the method of storing hides, which has prevailed in the Ordnance Department for the last 20 years and more, and which the Judge Advocate General finds is "universally condemned by everyone acquainted with leather," he proposes to take any, and what, steps to compel the adoption of another and better method; and, whether he is in a position to give the name of the official who is responsible for ignoring the complaints which Mr. Crutchley states he frequently made on this subject?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have already stated that I propose to strike off, either temporarily or permanently, from the list any contractors who persistently fail to supply articles up to sample, and an entire consignment may be rejected if a certain proportion of inferior articles is detected; but I do not think it possible to rely solely upon enforcing the responsibility of contractors in the case of warlike armaments, and for this reason. If troops are sent on active service and their accoutrements fail, it is no doubt possible to punish the contractor; but, in the meantime, the safety of the troops may be imperilled. Some system of inspection will, therefore, continue to be necessary. I propose to re-organize the Inspection Department most thoroughly; and, indeed, provision is made for it in the scheme of re-organization lately adopted. The name of the official referred to in the last part of the Question is Captain Fenn; but the system has prevailed for many years, and was not initiated by him.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) asked, whether the Rule would be applied to the firms which supplied defective material and stores—namely, that their names should be struck off the list of contractors allowed to compete?

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he desired that the questions raised in the Report of the Judge Advocate General should be dealt with as a whole.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House when he will be able to deal with the subject?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No; I am not able to say.

SALE OF BEER—ADULTERATION OF MALT LIQUORS.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, The number of publicans during the year 1887 that have been summoned before a magistrate, and fined for the adulteration of malt liquors; and the number of publicans that have paid the full penalty of £50, without having to appear before a magistrate, and to which no publicity is attached?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The figures are rather interesting. During the year the hon. Member has alluded to 297 publicans were fined by the magistrates for the dilution, or other adulteration, of beer, and in 21 cases the full penalty of £50 was paid to avoid going into Court.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — BELFAST UNION — CHARGES AGAINST DR. SPEDDING.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that at a meeting of the Belfast Dispensary Committee, regularly convened, and held on the 10th February, 1888, to investigate charges against Dr. Spedding, one of the dispensary medical officers of the Belfast Union, it was resolved, after hearing the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Dougherty, Police Constable Stewart (who was called in to remove the doctor from the house of the dying girl), Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Campbell, and Mrs. M'Connell, by a majority of 14 to 7, that the charges were fully sustained, and that he be suspended at once pending the necessary action of the Local Government Board; is it true that, although the disclosures were disinterestedly made by these witnesses, the Local Government Board have not thought fit to enforce their authority, nor strengthen the hands of the Committee in their efforts; and, what action will be now taken in the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is the case that the Dispensary Committee on the 10th of Februrary decided by a large majority to suspend the medical officer referred to in consequence of the charges brought against him. He, however, having asked for an inquiry on oath into such charge, the Local Government Board directed their Medical Inspector to hold such inquiry. He did so on the 24th of February. His Report thereon was received yesterday, and will have the careful attention of the Local Government Board.

SCOTLAND — REGISTER OF SASINES, EDINBURGH—THE KEEPER.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether complaints have reached him that the name of the recently appointed Keeper of the Register of Sasines, Edinburgh, is now being used by a firm of practising legal practitioners in Edinburgh in all their business transactions; and, whether such a step is in conformity with the provisions of the Act 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 64, s. 20?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The name of a private firm is often maintained, although the persons in the partnership may change. The Keeper of the Register of Sasines has fulfilled all the requirements of the Statute by giving up all personal connection with, or interest in, the business of the firm of which he was formerly a partner.

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the firm had issued a Circular to the effect that—

> "We beg to inform you that our Mr. Finlay has been appointed Register of Sasines, and that we have assumed as our partner Mr. John Shaw. The business will be carried on under the old name?"

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he was not aware of the fact; but it was quite common to retain the name of an old firm, even though all the partners might be changed.

PRISON COMMISSIONERS (SCOTLAND)—CLOSING OF CUPAR COUNTY PRISON.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the fact that the Commissioners of Supply of the County of Fife, and the Town Council of Cupar, and those of other neighbouring burghs, have petitioned the Secretary for Scotland against the Order of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland closing the county prison in Cupar on and after the 31st of March; and, whether, in view of these strong protests by the Local Authorities against the proposal of the Prison Commissioners, Her Majesty's Government will consent to postpone the operation of this Order, as regards Cupar Prison, until an opportunity has arisen to raise the question in this House?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Secretary for Scotland, after careful consideration of the Petition of the Local Authorities, is unable, in the interests of the Public Service, to alter the decision he has come to.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM—LOANS OF WORKS OF ART.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether pictures and other works of art have been lent to Duncombe Hall, North Islington, by the South Kensington Museum; whether he is aware that this is not a public Institution under public management, but a private adventure, at the sole cost and risk of the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley), the so-called Museum (the charge for admission to which is 1*d.*) being a concert room in connection with a coffee and refreshment room; whether he is aware that for some time after the Museum was opened admission was only obtainable by tickets from the hon. Member for North Islington; and, whether he will consider the propriety of such an application of public property to the private hall of a Member in his own constituency?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): A loan was made in 1886 to a temporary exhibition at Duncombe Hall, which, it was understood, had been organized with the view to the establishment there of a permanent Museum under local management, an undertaking being given that any profits from the temporary exhibition would be devoted to that object. When it was found that a permanent Museum under local management was not established, the loan was, in accordance with the Rules, withdrawn in July, 1887.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: The grounds on which the loan was asked for turned out not to be well founded.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: The purpose in view was not realized.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it is not a common practice to lend works of art to promote Science and Art Museums in different parts of the country; and, whether this is not one of the objects which the Department have in view?

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: I think my answer to the Question is conclusive. It was an attempt in that direction; but it was not consummated.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Is there a single instance in which the Department has made a loan of this kind to the Member for a constituency, the admission to the Museum being in the hands of that Member?

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: I cannot answer that Question offhand. The loan was made before I entered upon my present Office.

Mr. BARTLEY: Might I ask, whether it is not true that a Committee was appointed to carry out that object, and that a Local Committee is being established at the present time with the object of establishing a Museum in that part of London?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: That does not affect my original reply, that these objects were withdrawn because the necessary conditions had not been complied with.

POST OFFICE—CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE—DEDUCTIONS FROM PAY.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Why clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office, when absent from duty owing to illness, incur a deduction of one-third from their pay; whether no deduction was made previous to the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the Government in 1870; whether the present deduction is only made from the salaries of the main body of the staff, the higher paid administrative officers retaining full pay; and, whether he will restore the earlier Rule, and so place them on a footing of equality with other Civil servants?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Where large bodies of persons are concerned, it is found to be necessary, as a matter of administration, that some deduction from their pay should be made during absence from illness in order to check absence on false or insufficient pleas. This has not been considered necessary where the more highly paid administrative officers are concerned. Prior to the acquisition of the telegraphs by the State, I understand that some of the Companies allowed full pay during absence from illness and that others did not. On the whole, the Companies' Rules on the point were less favourable than those of the Post Office.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments will commence their inquiries into the Revenue Departments of the Customs, the Post Office, and the Inland Revenue?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Commissioners that they see no prospect of being able to enter upon an examination into the Departments referred to during the present Session of Parliament.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—PURCHASE OF BOATS.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, in regard to the purchase of new or second-hand boats for Highland fishermen, Whether the Secretary for Scotland intends to place any restrictions as to where boats are bought or built in making advances for the purchase?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): No, Sir; no restrictions are contemplated such as those referred to in the Question.

CUSTOMS ESTABLISHMENT—OUTPORT WRITERS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, When he will be able to announce the decision of the Government in the case of the outport writers, employed under the Board of Customs, who have been recommended to the Treasury for promotion?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The Treasury have before them the case of the copyists at the outports recommended for promotion; but other points of organization are connected with it which have to be settled before a decision can be given.

CUSTOMS (STATISTICAL DEPARTMENT)—REPORT OF COMMITTEE.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the cause of the delay in carrying out the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Statistical Department of the Customs; and, whether, in the retirements which may be necessary in carrying out the recommendations of that Report, the same Rule will be applied as laid down by the Treasury for the recent changes in the Inland Revenue?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The Report to which the hon. Member refers is a confidential document, and I do not know how he became possessed of it. I am certainly not in a position to make any statement with regard to it.

WAR OFFICE—ISLAND BRIDGE, DUBLIN.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) (for Mr. MURPHY) (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether "Mansfield stone," brought from the middle of England, is being used for the cut stone dressings of the barrack works at Island Bridge, Dublin; whether the best descriptions of various kinds of stone suitable for such work can be had in Ireland, and even in the vicinity of Dublin; and, whether steps will be taken to provide that Irish stone, and, as far as practicable, other Irish materials shall be used for the extensive barrack works at Grangegorman, Dublin, which are now about to be erected?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The quantity of stone used for dressings at the Island Bridge Barracks is insignificant; but it is the red Mansfield stone from England. The Secretary of State is advised that there is no stone in Ireland which can, from an architectural point of view, take its place. As far as practicable, the Grangegorman Barracks will be constructed of Irish stone and other building materials; but unless a stone of the same colour and quality as Mansfield stone can be obtained in Ireland the dressings must be obtained elsewhere.

INDIA—GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any steps have been taken, in accordance with previous suggestions, to render the publications of the Indian Government more accessible; whether they are made available for sale at a reasonable price anywhere in London, or how they are to be got at; whether they are sent to the British Museum, or any of them are presented to any important Libraries and Institutions; and, whether the Secretary of State will now take steps to make the more important and interesting of these publications more accessible in this country?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The agents for the sale of publications of the Indian Government are—Messrs. Allen, Waterloo Place; Messrs. Trübner & Co., Ludgate Hill; Quaritch, Piccadilly; Stanford, Charing Cross; Whittington, Gracechurch Street; where they can be procured at a reasonable price. They are, also, sent to the British Museum and other Copyright Libraries in the United Kingdom. Scientific works and others of general interest are widely distributed to Institutes and individuals at home and abroad.

INDIA—THE ANNUAL REPORTS—STATISTICS OF CRIME.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Why statistics of crime (as distinguished from judicial statistics) are not given in the Annual Report regarding India presented to Parliament; and, whether such statistics are in any form presented; and, if so, whether he will see that they are in future presented, so as to enable the House to judge of the success or non-success of the present police system in keeping down crime in the various Provinces?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Table 153 of the Statistical Abstract gives the number of offences reported as well as of persons brought to trial. More detailed information is contained in the Provincial and Departmental Administration Reports, which are accessible at the India Office to persons engaged in the line of research indicated by the hon. Member.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—INCREASE OF THE SALT TAX.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, while in all other respects the increased Indian Salt Duty is brought into immediate operation, in accordance with the practice of this country, an exception is made in favour of British merchants whose cargoes afloat on the way to India are exempt, so that they will pay the lesser duty while they reach the profit of the increased price resulting from the new duty?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Yes; in compliance with Section 37 of the Sea Customs Act (VIII. of 1878).

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MRS. RYAN, A PRISONER FOR CONTEMPT.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Mrs. Ryan, kept a prisoner in Limerick Gaol since June last for contempt of Court; whether her offence consisted in neglect to pay over to the Receiver of the Court of Chancery the proceeds of a quantity of hay valued at £30; and whether she excused herself by a difficulty in realizing, caused by the interference of the Court, with the mode of sale; whether her husband suffered 14 months' imprisonment for contempt arising out of the same transaction; whether Mrs. Ryan, when arrested, was separated from an unweaned infant to the danger of mother and child; and, whether he will take such steps as may be necessary to secure Mrs. Ryan's immediate release?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: My attention has been called to the case of Mrs. Ryan. The facts are as follows:—An ejectment decree was obtained in the County Court against John Ryan, this woman's husband, for one and a-half year's rent—about £45—in July, 1884. The Receiver then made every effort to bring about an amicable settlement with him, but failed to succeed, and was ultimately obliged to put the decree into force, the 12 months' limit being about to expire. In July, 1885, possession was obtained through the Sheriff; Ryan and his family re-took possession of the farm, and, among other things, saved 30 tons of hay. Notwithstanding the exertions of the Receiver to prevent it, this hay was removed and sold by Ryan. Its value was at least £60. The Receiver then, with a view to take up the farm, obtained a conditional order of attachment against Ryan, who, however, was such a reckless and desperate character that it could not be served personally. It was eventually served through the post, and Ryan was arrested in June, 1886, and imprisoned for 12 months. Notwithstanding this, Mrs. Ryan and her sons and daughters remained in possession of, and continued to crop, the lands. An attachment was then issued against Mrs. Ryan and a son aged 18 or 19 years. The latter evaded arrest; Mrs. Ryan was arrested and committed to prison in June, 1886, for 12 months. It has, of course, been all along open to the Ryans to purge their contempt by surrendering the farm or coming to some settlement. This they not only failed to do, but in a letter written by a member of the family to the local Press expressed their intention of continuing in the possession of the farm, and that, aided by the League, they should conquer. The Executive Government had no power to interfere in the matter.

Mr. PICTON: Is it not a fact that Mrs. Ryan was prevented from disposing of this hay as she might have done; and was not it insisted that it should be sold by auction?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: No, Sir. Mrs. Ryan, in defiance of the Receiver, sold about 30 tons of hay, which must have been worth at least £60.

Mr. PICTON: One part of my Question has not been answered at all. Is it not a fact that Mrs. Ryan was nursing a baby, which was not yet weaned, when she was arrested, and which was separated from her to the danger of both mother and child?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I did not see that in the Question. ["Oh, oh!"] I see it now. There was a young child. I do not know whether it was weaned or not.

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—EMPLOYMENT OF MILITARY.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will inform the House at whose request the military were called to attend tithe sales in Flintshire; what were the representations which induced the authorities to consent to their being sent; upon whom will the cost of the military ultimately fall; and, whether the cost is a legal charge on the county rate?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The military were called out at the request of the Local Authorities, on the representation of the Chief Constable that their presence was necessary for the preservation of the peace and good order of the county. The cost, if any, will fall upon the police rate. I cannot undertake to give an opinion on a question of law; but I am advised that the rate may properly be applied to this purpose.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked, was not the Local Authority the Court of Quarter Sessions?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was not aware whether it was the Court of Quarter Sessions or a Committee of the Court.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS asked, was there any resolution of the Local Authority, or was action taken on the word of the Chief Constable alone?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was informed it was done on the representation of the Chief Constable, addressed to the Court of Quarter Sessions, and thereupon the latter made application to the Military Authorities.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table a list of the Resident Magistrates "of whose legal knowledge and legal experience" the Lord Chancellor has satisfied himself, as required by Section 1 of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887;" and, also, a list of the Resident Magistrates "of the sufficiency of whose legal knowledge" the Lord Lieutenant has satisfied himself, as required by Section 11 of the same Act of Parliament?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): A Return is being prepared by the Government, which will be laid on the Table, and which will furnish the information required by the hon. Member.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE TOWER HAMLETS ENGINEER VOLUNTEERS—BURGESS SHORT.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, as stated in the evening journal *The Star*, Mr. George Short, a retired printer, who in 1886 adopted the name of Burgess Short, was in that year, on the recommendation of Colonel Kirby, commanding the Tower Hamlets Engineer Volunteers, appointed lieutenant in that corps, being at the time some 48 years of age, and never having handled a rifle; whether Colonel Kirby recommended him in 1887 for a captaincy, and whether the War Office refused to promote him, on the ground that such promotion would involve the supersession of four officers equally or better qualified; whether he was introduced in December last by Mr. Morton, of the War Office, to General Lyon Freemantle as "the Editor of *The Broad Arrow;*" whether, in *The Gazette* of 9th December, 1887, he was appointed captain in the 3rd and 4th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment of Militia, passing over the heads of 11 lieutenants and six second lieutenants; and, whether he had previously served in the Militia?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: Nothing is known at the War Office as to the former name or profession of Mr. Burgess Short. He was appointed a lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets Engineers in 1886, being then about 47 years of age. His promotion to captain in May, 1887, was refused, as he was not qualified, though he did subsequently qualify in August of that year. He called upon General Freemantle in November; but was not introduced by Mr. Morton, nor was General Freemantle aware that he was in any way connected with the Press. Upon the recommendation of the Commanding Officer of the regiment and the General of the District, he was appointed captain in 3rd and 4th battalions Manchester Regiment, on the 10th December, 1887. He passed over the subalterns, none of whom had, or have since, qualified for promotion, although there are still four vacancies for captains in the regiment which cannot be filled up. He had never previously served in the Militia, though he had been attached for instruction to a battalion of the Guards and to the 1st Manchester Regiment.

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1887—SALE OF FOREIGN MEAT.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether offering for sale and ticketing foreign meat as British meat is an infringement of the Merchandise Marks Act under Clause 3 (b) relating to "the country in which any goods were produced?"

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I am not in a position to give an authoritative opinion upon the construction of an Act of Parliament; but I might call the attention of the hon. Member to the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act, which enacts that every person who applies any false trade description to goods is guilty of an offence against the Act, and to the fact that the expression "trade description" includes any description, statement, or other indication, direct or indirect, as to the place or country in which any goods were made or produced; and that the expression "goods" is defined as meaning anything which is the subject of trade, manufacture, or merchandise.

INLAND REVENUE—SALE OF JUDICIAL STAMPS FOR INDIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the contract for the supply of judicial stamps for India expires in the course of the next few months; whether there is any truth in the report that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, acting for the Secretary of State, are desirous of continuing the employment of the present contractors without any competition; and whether, some months since, the Secretary of State decided upon calling for tenders for the supply of these judicial stamps; and, if so, what is the cause of the delay in sending out the conditions of tenders, and does it in any way arise out of any action on the part of the Inland Revenue or their Comptroller of Stamps?

MR. KING (Hull, Central) also asked, Whether hitherto it has always been the practice of the Director General of Stores for India to send out all invitations to tender for Indian stamps (as in the case of all other articles) and to receive such tenders to be finally decided upon by the Stores Committee of the Council; whether, in the case of the judicial stamps, for which the contract is about to expire, this practice has been departed from, and the invitations sent out by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue on the part of the Secretary of State; whether the tenders to be submitted are to be decided upon by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue; whether it is intended by the Secretary of State that the Stores Committee and the Director General shall in future abdicate their functions in the matter of stamps in favour of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue and their officers; and, whether, in the matter of contracts, anything more is required from the officers of the Inland Revenue Department as against the salaries paid them by the Indian Office for the general supervision of the manufacture, than that their technical knowledge shall be at the disposal of the Stores' Committee and the Director General, so as to enable them to arrive at a proper decision upon purely technical points?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The contract for judicial stamps for India expires in a short time, and the further supply will be open to competition among a limited number of selected firms. In 1886 the late Secretary of State made an arrangement with the Board of Inland Revenue, by which the latter were to act as his agents in, among other things, the renewal of such contracts for the supply of stamps as might expire from time to time. It is in pursuance of this arrangement that invitations to tender for the supply of judicial stamps for India have, since the Question was placed on the Paper, been sent out by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. The Board, however, acting in this matter as the agents of the Secretary of State, will take no step of importance without consulting him.

ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC—SAMOA.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any arrangement has been arrived at with Germany and the United States for the settlement of the affairs of Samoa; and, whether he can give any information as to the fate of King Malietoa, who was deported from Samoa in a German man-of-war?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): No fresh arrangement has been arrived at with Germany and the United States for the settlement of affairs in Samoa. The Conference which met at Washington last June adjourned for the consideration of the several proposals submitted by the Governments concerned. In the meantime, the rights of British subjects in Samoa remain unimpaired. We have no official information where Malietoa now is. He surrendered himself to a German man-of-war, on board of which he left the Island. It is stated in *The Morning Post* of yesterday that he has arrived at the Cameroons.

WAR OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—DEFAULT FOR TENDERS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government will make it an absolute Rule that, when contractors and others deliver goods according to tender, and those goods are found not equal to sample, the names of the said contractors and others shall be struck off the list of those to whom tenders are sent?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): It is seldom that each and every article of a contract is sent in up to the standard. Looking to the necessity of insuring ample competition, it is not possible to go beyond the Rule. I have already stated that contractors who persistently disregard the standard will be excluded from the list.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT)—RECENT APPOINTMENTS.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, after the remarks of the Judge Advocate General, in his Report concerning the Ordnance Store Department at Woolwich, as regards the appointment of Messrs. Hunt and Engleston, over the heads of Messrs. Dunn, Chase, and Orr, steps will be taken to promote the latter, or give them some compensation for being passed over; whether, after the statement of the Judge Advocate General that Sergeant Hawkins' "evidence is a tissue of falsehoods," and the declaration of "his extraordinary inability to tell the truth," Sergeant Hawkins will be continued as a viewer on the establishment; whether, after the threatening letter sent by Messrs. Ross and Company to Mr. Moody and Mr. Dunn, the two complainants in the Department, and the statement of the Judge Advocate General "that the letter was a very improper one, and there is no foundation whatever for the charges therein made," the said firm of contractors will be further dealt with by the Government; whether, of the 11 specimens of hides selected for examination, eight of them contained glucose of from 20 per cent to 25·20 per cent; whether, as a matter of fact, glucose is a well-known method of leather adulteration; and, whether Inspectors and Viewers, who are admittedly incapable of detecting this mode of leather adulteration, will any longer be employed by the Government in that capacity?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have most carefully considered the responsibility attaching to all the individuals named in the inquiry before the Judge Advocate General, and I am quite prepared to state my decision. But I am sure that the House will see that a statement dealing with transactions extending over many years, and gravely affecting numerous individuals, cannot be made in answer to a Question. When I do so, I will deal with all the individuals mentioned by the hon. Member. The amount of glucose in hides is one upon which experts appear to differ very widely. The most recent Report puts the glucose at 10 or 12 per cent. It is a modern method of loading leather which seems to me to have been clever enough to deceive the Government Inspector. In the re-organization of the Inspection branch every effort shall be made to make it thoroughly efficient.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had any information as to the adulteration by a material which added nearly double the weight to the goods?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I am afraid that is a new point, and if the hon. Member will give me particulars I will give him the information I have.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I will do so, and furnish a sample.

WAR OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—RETURNS.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will grant the Return, standing on the Notice Paper for Friday, relating to Army Contracts?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am afraid we cannot give this

Return, because the material for it is not in our possession. I am exceedingly sorry that this is the case; and if the hon. Member will confer with me again, as he did the other day, I will explain my difficulty to him, and will give him every information which is possible on this point.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—NUMBERS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What is the number of constables, and what is the number of officers of each grade, who have been added to the Metropolitan Police Force since the 17th of September last?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The hon. Member is aware that the strength of the London Police Force constantly fluctuates. Comparing the strength of the Force now and on the 17th of September, it is now greater by 292 men, of whom 157 are Inspectors, 111 sergeants, and 24 constables. The numbers in the ranks of Inspector and sergeant were at that time under the required strength.

WAR OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—TENDERS FOR TWEED.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a firm named Messrs. Colbeck, having sent in tenders for the supply of tweed at prices varying from 5*s.* 6½*d.* to 5*s.* 11½*d.* a-yard, and the tenders having been accepted, that at the highest price being for 7,000 yards only, the firm nevertheless were paid that highest price for the whole amount of 73,000 yards; whether a contract was entered into with Messrs. Wilson and Son to supply tartan at 2*s.* 4½*d.* a-yard. Messrs. Smith and Son, former contractors for this article, applied to be relieved of some surplus stock, leaving the price to be settled by the War Office. Their request was complied with, but the price paid was not that of the current contract with Messrs. Wilson, but the higher price of 2*s.* 8*d.* under the expired contract with Messrs. Smith and Son; whether a firm named Messrs. Davies were paid 20*s.*, 16*s.* 3*d.*, 10*s.* 6*d.*, and 27*s.*, for the same articles, which another firm, Messrs. Thorp, had already contracted to supply at 14*s.*, 11*s.* 11*d.*, 10*s.*, and 17*s.* 6*d.*, respectively; and, whether the War Office accepts the view of his duties taken by the Comptroller and Auditor General in his correspondence with them on these payments—namely, that his control extends to these and similar cases in which administrative action appears to involve a loss to the public?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The hon. Member has misread the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General. Messrs. Colbeck tendered only at the prices of 5*s.* 11*d.* and 5*s.* 11½*d.* The tender at 5*s.* 6½*d.* was by another firm, to whom an order for the quantity with which they could safely be entrusted was given. All the cloth Messrs. Colbeck offered at 5*s.* 11*d.* was taken before the price of 5*s.* 11½*d.* was paid. When an order for 73,000 yards supplementary to the original supply contracted for—namely, 107,000, became necessary, it was given to Messrs. Colbeck as tried and responsible contractors at the price then in force; the other contractors at lower rates having failed on a previous occasion to carry out their contracts satisfactorily for this tweed. As regards the tartans, an effort had been made to break down what was practically a monopoly by Messrs. Wilson; and Messrs. Smith had been to a great expense in carrying out very satisfactorily a triennial contract for 9,000 yards per annum, at a price lower than that of Messrs. Wilson. When, however, the contracts came to be renewed in 1885, the latter tendered at a price still lower, and were accepted. Messrs. Smith then applied to have 3,000 yards taken off their hands; and, as there was every reason to be satisfied with the way in which they had done their work, this was permitted, according to many precedents, at the price governing their contract. The contract of Messrs. Thorp was comparatively an unimportant one for forage cap ribbons. They were new contractors, and their tender was much below all other competitors; but disputes arose as to measurements and other matters, and their contract was cancelled instead of being enforced against them. This is the usual course as regards new contractors, the object being not to deter firms from widening the area of competition as regards future supplies. The ribbons were obtained under another contract at rates higher than those of Messrs. Thorp; but lower than those which had obtained before they entered the field. The whole of these facts will, no doubt, be investigated by the Public Accounts Committee. It is clearly shown by the correspondence at page 208 of the Army Appropriation Account that the Secretary of State does not accept the claim of the Exchequer and Audit Department to control his discretion in matters of administration; and that correspondence will be laid before the Public Accounts Committee.

INDIA—GRAVING DOCK IN BOMBAY HARBOUR.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What steps are being taken to provide graving dock accommodation in Bombay Harbour for iron-clads and large mercantile steamers?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Estimates and plans are being prepared, and schemes have been submitted by the Secretary of State to the consideration of the Admiralty.

BURMAH (UPPER)—THE RUBY MINES.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated by Mr. Streeter at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society on Monday night, that the Secretary of State has, by refusing to carry out the concession entered into by the Earl of Dufferin for the lease of the Ruby Mines in Burmah, caused a loss to the Indian Revenues in one year of 3¾ lakhs of rupees, or £37,500?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): It is impossible to state the exact loss to the revenues of the year by the working of the Ruby Mines having been postponed. On the other hand, the exhaustion of the mines has not commenced, and the revenue lost in the present year will, in ordinary course, be realized in years to come.

INDIA—LICENSING OF IMMORALITY—WORKING OF THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the case that in the cantonment of Muttra the medical officer, under the Contagious Diseases Acts, reports complaining that—

> "The regimental matron lacks energy, and does not take trouble to attract good-looking women,"

and suggests that—

> "She should be got rid of, and a more suitable woman appointed;"

whether he further reports that—

> "If, as a precaution against venereal diseases, women are necessary to be entertained, steps should be taken to ensure that attractive women are kept;"

and, whether similar recommendations have been made by the medical officers of any other cantonments?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): I can only refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to him on Tuesday, when I informed him that I had already stated last week that the Secretary of State has no information which corroborates such statements as that implied in the Question; but that he was in communication with the Government of India on the subject.

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—TITHE SEIZURES AND SALES.

MR. J. ROBERTS (Flint, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is a fact that, at every tithe seizure and tithe sale which has taken place in Flintshire during the last six weeks, the "Emergency men" attending the solicitor to the Clergy Defence Association have invariably been armed with cutlasses and revolvers; whether the solicitor himself did, at a tithe sale held at Nannerch, in the said county, on Thursday, the 23rd February last, draw out a revolver, which he displayed to the people; and, whether he approves of such a bodyguard, who have not been sworn in as special constables, and who are so armed, following an irresponsible individual among excited people?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have no information on this subject beyond that which I gave to the House on the 23rd of February in answer to the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), and have nothing to add to what I then said.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CROSSING SWEEPERS.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that at Clerkenwell Police Court on Tuesday two crossing sweepers were charged by the police with begging, and that they were both discharged by the learned magistrate, who remarked, in the first case, that—

> "The prisoner seemed to get his living in a legitimate way as a crossing sweeper, and he did not see why the constable had taken him into custody;"

whether these prosecutions were undertaken with his sanction or knowledge; whether the defendants were, or either of them was, detained one night in custody; and, whether provision is made for sweeping crossings by the Vestries, or any other Public Authority; and, if so, whether he will take steps to prevent the interference of the police for the future with crossing sweepers plying their occupation?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): As to one of the boys alluded to, I have not been able to obtain any information. As to the other, the Commissioner of Police informs me that he was charged because, although he had a broom, he was seen begging and receiving money away from any crossing, and at a place where the roadway had not been swept. I had no knowledge of these prosecutions. I understand that the boy was detained all night in custody, no bail being offered. Vestries and District Boards have power, under the Metropolis Local Management Act, to appoint and pay crossing sweepers; but I am not aware that they have acted on this power. The instructions to the police, given in 1881, are that crossing sweepers who do not beg or run after people are not to be interfered with; but that if they annoy passengers by begging they may be charged.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ASSIZES—NORTH EASTERN CIRCUIT.

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the fact that for the first time in the history of the North Eastern Circuit the Assize business has been commenced at Leeds instead of at Newcastle; whether he is aware that Her Majesty's Judges have been unable to finish the civil business at Leeds and have proceeded to York, it being stated that they will return to Leeds at a future date to finish the civil business; and, whether he will take steps to prevent a recurrence of an arrangement by which great inconvenience is caused to the public?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; it is the fact that the Judges arranged to go to Leeds first, instead of to Newcastle this Circuit. The Lord Chancellor informs me that he has no official intimation as to the second paragraph of the Question. If it should be found at Leeds, or elsewhere, that inconvenience has been caused by the recent attempt to discontinue the grouping of counties for criminal business without unduly prolonging the Circuits, the Judges will, no doubt, carefully consider the matter, and, if possible, remedy it, if that can be done without causing still greater inconvenience to other places.

ARMY—PURCHASE OF ARTILLERY HORSES.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, as stated by the Auditor General in his Report, the authorized charge for Artillery horses purchased in England is £45, and for Cavalry £40; whether an offer was received from a Mr. Patterson, of Toronto, to land 400 to 600 suitable Canadian horses at Liverpool at a cost of £40 each; and, whether it is the fact that the cost of the horses and mules procured in Canada amounted to over £52 each, in addition to the expenses of the Committee despatched to purchase them; or, if not, what was the cost?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The authorized charge for horses is as stated in the Question. Mr. Patterson did make the offer quoted; but the offer in itself was no guarantee that the horses would prove suitable for military requirements. As the purchase was of an experimental nature, it was considered preferable that the purchasing officers should themselves view the conditions obtaining in the Canadian markets. Including all expenses, the horses purchased in Canada have reached £54, and their ages averaged 4 11-12th years. Those bought in the United Kingdom averaged £43, with an average age of 3 9-12th years. A horse is useless for military purposes till five years old, and costs about £25 a-year for maintenance. Consequently the Canadian horses, when they become available for service, will have cost £56 each, while those of home growth will have cost £74. The Canadian horses have given great satisfaction. Pending inquiries into their cost and other circumstances, I have stopped the further purchase of Canadian horses; but my military advisers now press me to decide whether it would not be desirable to keep touch with the Canadian horse supply by purchasing from there a limited supply annually.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOLS.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government intend to carry out the recommendation of the Departmental Commission on Agricultural and Dairy Schools, that a central normal school of agriculture, provided and maintained by the State, should be established in the neighbourhood of Rugby?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): A sum of £5,000 has been inserted in the Estimate of the Agricultural Department as a grant in aid for giving effect to such of the recommendations of the Departmental Commission on Agricultural and Dairy Schools as may be adopted by the Government. The details are still under discussion, and the above amount is not intended to represent the final amount of the grant.

BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE—POLITICAL SERVANTS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Board of Inland Revenue last year addressed to a Civil servant in their Department a letter containing the following sentence:—

> "You cannot be permitted by them (the Board) to lecture on, publicly speak on, or take any public part in the discussion of Home Rule;"

and, whether Sir Alfred Slade, Receiver General of Inland Revenue, was at that time a prominent member of the Primrose League?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The words quoted by the hon. Member were addressed to an officer of the Inland Revenue Service, and only gave expression to a Rule which is general throughout the Civil Service, in regard to all shades of politics. Sir Alfred Slade, Receiver General of Inland Revenue, is a Trustee of a certain portion of the funds of the Primrose League; but, as such, I do not consider that he can be regarded as a prominent member of the League.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—POLITICAL SERVANTS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the following Rule is in force in the Customs Department:—

> "You are not to hold any corporate office, nor are you in any way to inferfere in the election of Members to serve in Parliament, beyond recording your vote, should you be so entitled, nor are you to be a Member of any Orange Lodge, nor to take part in any Party procession, nor belong to any Political Society, nor are you to subscribe to, or to be a member of, or attend any meeting of any Association for a political purpose, nor to subscribe to funds raised for such purposes."

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member quotes a Rule which was altered by the Board of Customs in 1874, when the Revenue Officers Electoral Disabilities Removal Act was passed. Since that time the restriction as to "non-interference in the election of Members of Parliament beyond recording your vote" has been removed from the Rule.

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT ACT, 1887—CHARGES FOR SEARCHING.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN asked the First Lord of Treasury, Why the sum of 2*s.* 6*d.* is charged for searching the Registers under Section 12 of "The Deeds of Arrangement Act, 1887," whilst only 1*s.* is charged for a similar search in the same office under "The Bills of Sale Act, 1882;" and, whether, considering that the Act was passed for the better knowledge and benefit of the trading classes, and that the sum of 1*s.* is specifically mentioned in the Act, it is possible to reduce the charge to 1*s.*?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The fee under the Deeds of Arrangement Act differs from that under the Bills of Sale Act, because it is imposed, not only for the search, but also for the extract taken from the Register. Under the latter Act there is one fee for search and another for extract; under the former Act one fee covers both.

ARMY — CIVIL APPOINTMENTS FOR RESERVE AND DISCHARGED SOLDIERS.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, to encourage recruiting and to reward faithful service, a proportion of suitable minor appointments in the various Governments Departments can be allotted to reserve and discharged soldiers; and, if so, what that proportion will be?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The question of the employment of reserve and discharged soldiers in the Civil Service is one that has been frequently under the consideration of the Government, who, as their Predecessors have done, admit the desirability of such employment being found, when practicable, for both soldiers and sailors. Whenever it is possible, the Rules for entry into the Civil Service have been relaxed, so far as regards the age limit, in favour of soldiers and sailors; but I think the House will agree with me that while such relaxation should be granted in regard to age, no such indulgence should be given with respect to other qualifications. The qualifications required for the minor posts alluded to by my hon. and gallant Friend are not of a high order, and are only those absolutely necessary for the efficient discharge of the duties attached to the situations. Constant progress has been made in the direction of the more frequent employment of these men; and I think Members of this House would recognize such progress if they looked at the Rules governing entry into the Civil Service and noted the number of posts which, by relaxation of the age limit, have been thrown open to soldiers and sailors.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can inform the House what progress, if any, has been made in the Public Departments towards carrying out the recommendations of the Select Committee which sat in 1876 and 1877, on the Civil Employment of Meritorious Discharged and Reserve Soldiers; and, whether, in view of the desirability of further popularizing recruiting for the Army, he can hold out hopes that the question will be further practically developed this year?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply, said, they had not made so much progress as they had hoped for in carrying out the recommendations of the Select Committee. He had lately circulated a letter addressed to himself by the Duke of Cambridge, strongly urging on the Government the necessity of giving effect to those recommendations.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in moving—

> "That the Orders of the Day subsequent to Supply be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to Public Meetings in the Metropolis,"

said: I think that, in all probability, this will be the last occasion on which it will be necessary to make such a Motion, as under the new Rules it will be in the power of the Government to put Motions on the Paper in the order in which they will be taken.

Motion *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887-8).

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

(1.) £130, Supplementary, London University.

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Expenses of Special Missions Abroad."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I need not say that I do not propose to enter into the merits of the Treaty which has been signed by Mr. Chamberlain in the United States. I assume for the sake of argument that the very best man was sent out. I will assume that the Treaty is the very best Treaty that could possibly have been signed, and I will also assume that the time chosen for sending the right hon. Gentleman out for the signing of the Treaty was the very best time, although it used to be a rule of diplomacy in regard to the United States that it was a radical mistake to treat with that country just before a Presidential Election, when the Ministry would probably not have a majority in the Senate to ratify the Treaty. I assume all this. My objections are entirely of a financial character. Diplomacy, I find, costs this country £241,000 per annum, besides what we pay for the Consular Service, and these diplomatists are engaged in political matters, and political matters alone. In the United States we have an eminent gentleman as our Minister, who has a large staff, and a salary in excess of that of the Prime Minister. I should like to know, then, why Her Majesty's Government should have considered it necessary to send out the right hon. Gentleman on a special Mission, instead of entrusting the negotiations of the Treaty to a gentleman of such high authority and character, which is obviously the fact seeing that our Representative receives so high a salary? I maintain that if it is necessary to send out special Missions, we ought do away with our permanent Legation, which in the United States costs us £8,000 a year, or make use of it when it is found necessary to enter special Treaties. We have had many special Missions—that special Mission of Sir H. Drummond Wolff was a matter which came on for repeated discussion during the last two years. The objection taken against that Mission was not that Sir H. Drummond Wolff was not an eminent diplomatist, but that he was sent to Constantinople and Egypt, and that at both places we had a permanent Representative of the highest class who could have done the business. I am opposing this grant not only because I object to these Missions as being altogether unnecessary, but also on the ground of their excessive cost. The House, no doubt, was surprised to find that so large a sum as £3,900 was put down as the cost of the special Mission to Washington; but the House will be more surprised to learn that this is not the whole of the expenditure. It will be found that the sum taken generally for special Missions last year also included part of the expenditure upon the Washington Mission.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): That was a mistake. The Vote of £3,900 covers the whole expenditure.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I can easily understand the right hon. Gentleman jumping up to correct that statement, because in itself it is so monstrous that it would have been too outrageous to ask for more. It appears that this sum of £3,900 is the cost of Mr. Chamberlain's Mission.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to allude to a Member of this House by his name, but must confine himself to the place which that Member represents.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I thought I was in Order, because I was only quoting. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) went out to the United States to undertake this Mission. The journey to America would cost, there and back, £180. [An hon. MEMBER: Second-class.] My hon. Friend says that that would be second-class; but it is not so; it would be first-class. Supposing that the sum amounted to £190, it would be necessary to account for the rest of the money we are asked to vote. The right hon. Gentleman started on his Mission on the 29th of October, and returned on the 1st of March. That would be 123 days. Reducing it further by the 14 days during which the right hon.

Gentleman was at sea, about 109 will be left. I think, if hon. Members will make an estimate of what the cost of this Mission has been during those 109 days, it will be found that it amounts to something like £33 or £34 a-day. The right hon. Gentleman has spent at Washington more than £30 per diem. Now, in Washington, as everybody knows, there are fixed charges. I appeal to any hon. Member who has been there, whether at Washington the charge is not about 5 dollars per diem—or £1—for lodging, and the same for bed? Then, allowing the right hon. Gentleman £1 a-day for wine, and £2 a-day for incidental expenses, the total would come to about £5 a-day. Well, here we have an excessive charge of more than £30 a-day, exclusive of clerks. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to spend even more than that if it is to come out of the pockets of the public. It may be said that the right hon. Gentleman was hospitable; but we have a Minister there—Sir L. Sackville West—who receives a salary which is intended to be expended in hospitality, and there was no reason why a Special Commissioner should also indulge in hospitality. Sir Charles Tupper was sent by the Canadian Government; but I should be very much surprised to learn that his expenses amounted to £30 a-day.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): He had 10 or 12 followers.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I am speaking of Sir Charles Tupper himself, and not of his followers; and I want to know whether that gentleman put in his pocket £30 per diem? I certainly think that the charge is far too much, and that when we send out a gentleman on a special Mission it is not necessary that he should live like a Prince, and practise princely hospitality at our expense. I may be asked why I do not move the rejection of the Vote. I do not take that course, although I object entirely to special Missions. My hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Jesse Collings), who also comes from Birmingham, voted against the cost of Sir H. Drummond Wolff's Mission last year; and I have no doubt he will vote with me on this occasion. When a gentleman goes out on a special Mission, we are always told that he is making noble sacrifices for his country. That, I am bound to say, is all claptrap. Gentlemen are glad to go out on special Missions, and obtain some sort of political position by negotiating Treaties, spending the country's money, and enjoying themselves. I trust that the Committee will refuse to sanction this expenditure, not only because the expenditure is excessive, but because this House ought, once and for all, to set down its foot upon special Missions for the discharge of duties which ought to be performed by our permanent Ministers. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £3,900, the cost of the special Mission to the United States.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The hon. Gentleman has directed his remarks chiefly to the question of special Missions. I think that course is greatly to be approved, inasmuch as he has not introduced any material topics beyond those of broad policy; and it is very right that the House should be informed of the reasons why these special Missions are employed. When the hon. Member spoke to me the other day in the Lobby about this Mission, as far as I can remember, I said that this Supplementary Estimate must be considered as in excess of the sum already provided by Parliament, but that there might be some balance from the general Vote which had not been absorbed. But, looking at the particulars, I find that that is not the case, and, as far as can be ascertained, the total expenses of the Mission of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) will be covered by the Vote now presented to the Committee. The hon. Member has said that the expense of this Mission is monstrous. Those who are acquainted with the usual expenses on these occasions will consider it a moderate amount; and I do not think that the expenses of any Mission was ever covered by so low a sum. It was the special wish of the right hon. Gentleman that the numbers of the Mission should be kept within the narrowest limits compatible with its efficiency. He was accompanied by the able head of the Treaty Department in the Foreign Office, and a very efficient clerk also from that Department. That was all. But I should like to show how small this Vote really is. Since 1880, it is very much the smallest Vote under this head, by a comparison between the Supplementary Estimates for special Missions during the past 10 years. The yearly average has been £27,000, whereas this year it is only £6,500; and if it had not been for the Mission of the right hon. Gentleman, and those of Mr. Portal to Abyssinia and Sir Frederick Weld to Borneo, no Vote at all would have been necessary. No doubt, it is very inconvenient to have Supplementary Estimates at all. The hon. Gentleman says that when we have a Representative at any foreign Court it cannot be necessary to send out a special diplomatist, and that we have already a very able diplomatist at Washington. But that has not been found in former years to obviate the necessity of special Missions. The special Mission of the Marquess of Ripon bridged over a very serious international difficulty. Special Missions are resorted to only after long negotiations of the ordinary character, when, for various reasons, such as national sentiment, matters have not been brought to a conclusion. It is then only right, and highly desirable, that fresh minds should be brought to bear upon the subject, and that a special conference, partaking somewhat of the nature of arbitration, should be brought together, by which a compromise and a settlement should be arrived at. In some cases serious difficulties have been avoided between nations by such means. In the present case, for a great many years differences, now happily brought to a conclusion, were the source of a great amount of friction between this country and America; and they had only recently threatened severe complications by Acts passed by Congress giving discretionary powers to the President to stop Canadian imports. It appeared to Her Majesty's Government that the occasion was one for a special effort to be made in order to bring these unfortunate difficulties to a conclusion. The time chosen for the Mission was simply that at which the negotiations were ripe. The negotiations had been going on for years; but, happily, last autumn they arrived at that stage when they were ripe for a conference; it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to bring the matter to an end at the earliest possible time; and it would not have been right to have put off the conference because a Presidential Election would take place before it was completed. It was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to take up the matter at the earliest possible moment. The hon. Member said he was not going to discuss the nature of the arrangement which had been arrived at, and I certainly do not propose to enter into any details with regard to it, and the Papers which have been laid upon the Table this evening will be in the hands of hon. Members immediately. I believe, however, it will be found to be a just and honourable settlement, and its negotiation to have been marked by the most gratifying features. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham conducted the negotiations on the part of this country with very great ability and patience; and he was met by the Representatives of the United States in a most conciliatory spirit. The Canadian Representatives and Government have seconded Her Majesty's Government by giving up some things long considered as their inalienable rights, and all parties have exhibited a sincere desire to bring about a satisfactory settlement. The Treaty requires ratification in America, and, I hope, will be ratified; but in the meantime a *modus vivendi* has been established by which the provisions of the Treaty will come into operation at once and remain in force for two years, until it is ratified. It would be most unfortunate that a nation, than whom there is none we more desire to live on friendly terms with, should suffer itself in any way to be guided by Party spirit in reference to the ratification of the Treaty. It is a matter of international rejoicing and of congratulation for all who have the good of this country at heart that we have arrived at a settlement of this matter, and that the cordial relations which should always subsist between this country and the United States will continue unimpaired.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I was in America and in Washington while the Conference was sitting, and I certainly do not agree with the hon. Member for Northampton

(Mr. Labouchere). I therefore feel bound to say a word or two on the subject. I have nothing to say in depreciation of the diplomatic talent of Sir Sackville West. I think that Her Majesty's Government were well advised in sending to America as their special Commissioner the best man they could lay their hands upon. Again, I say, apart from the wider and more difficult political considerations to which the Mover has alluded, in my opinion the Government did send about the best man that could be found. They could not have selected a man more grateful to the Americans than the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The Americans have recognized his tact, talent, and ability, and I believe he has achieved a success in the matter which few men in the country could have accomplished. No doubt there are some political considerations which still stand in the way; but it is an agreeeble surprise to me that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham has succeeded as well as he has. He had to conciliate in these matters not only the United States, but also the Dominion of Canada. I think that Her Majesty's Government and the country are very much to be congratulated on the measure of success which has been obtained. It is a matter of great congratulation that a *modus vivendi* has been arrived at, and that so much has been done under the circumstances. I would not feel inclined to criticize too narrowly the expenditure which has been incurred. Nor am I in a position to criticize that expenditure. Those who are acquainted with America know that Washington is an extremely expensive city. The Americans themselves do these things handsome, and it is only right and proper that our Representative should do the handsome also. I presume that this Vote does not include any part of the expenditure incurred by Canada, and with regard to the expense of the Mission the *personnel* of the right hon. Gentleman, which numbered two or three persons only, was nothing compared to the splendid Mission which came from Canada, and which consisted of 10 or 12 Canadian officials. The following of the right hon. Gentleman was humility itself compared with the Mission from Canada. I think that what has been achieved is very well worth £3,900 and a great deal more. If it has unfortunately happened that the treaty has not been immediately ratified, that has been due to wider considerations not immediately connected with this fishery dispute. I can testify to this fact, that 999 out of every 1000 of the population of the United States do not care two straws for the Fisheries Question, but the interest in that question is confined to a single County in New England. No doubt it is the duty of the Government of the United States to consider the interests of that Country; but if ultimate success does not succeed the labours of the Conference, it will be due to other causes. I would suggest that there should be some standing system of arbitration upon questions of this nature, and I wish that the Mission of the right hon. Gentleman to the United States had been in the character of Arbitrator. I trust that the Committee will pass the Vote and that steps will be taken to make it impossible that difficulties of this kind should hereafter arise between ourselves and the United States.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): There can be no doubt, Sir, of two things. In the first place, I think that when Her Majesty's Government selected the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) as their negotiator with the United States on the Fisheries Question, they chose a man of very eminent abilities and of very great competence, indeed, for the particular case with which they desired him to negotiate. Secondly, there can be no doubt also that when my right hon. Friend accepted that Mission, he did an act which the whole country recognizes as an act of public duty and public spirit. My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has brought forward two points on which he desires the rejection of this Vote. He has argued in part that the cost of the Mission is excessive. Upon that subject I was very glad to hear what has been said by the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs without reference to the general question. I do not find myself in a position to say whether the precise sum in the Vote is singularly moderate and economical, or whether it is in excess of what was absolutely necessary. We are relieved very much from the difficulty which there would be in undertaking to pronounce precisely upon it by the fact that my hon. Friend did not found his main argument upon it, as he felt we were really not competent to discuss it, as we could not tell what the causes of the expenditure were. For my own part, I find myself entirely unable to enter into that question; but my hon. Friend has founded himself mainly upon the objection to special Missions taken broadly and taken altogether. In opposition to these Missions the hon. Gentleman has propounded the doctrine that as we had able Representatives—able diplomatists—abroad, they ought to be competent to deal with every question that may arise in the diplomatic arrangements with the Courts of the countries to which they are accredited. I own I am not able to adopt that proposition. It involves a strong interference with the traditions of this country. The Committee is aware that these special Missions have been by no means unusual. Questions have arisen which were entirely outside the ordinary business of the diplomatist, and it was desired that this country should be represented not only with particular capacity, but with particular authority. What I would further desire to point out is this—that the practice of sending these special Missions, so far as I recollect, has been particularly favoured by Parliament and the country in the case of the United States of America. Allusion has been made to the most recent case, that of Lord Ripon and his coadjutors, among whom was the late lamented Lord Iddesleigh. Going further back, I may remind my hon. Friend that there was a case of great interest, that of Lord Ashburton, which took effect in the Ashburton Treaty. That Treaty was made the subject of a debate and a Vote in this House, and it was criticized upon its merits. I am not now discussing the merits of this arrangement, though I am alive to the beneficial character of it. I am undoubtedly disposed to believe that, whatever happens in America, some progress has been made towards the final adjustment and settlement of this question by the proceedings which have taken place. When Lord Ashburton's Treaty was made the subject of discussion in this House it was objected to. The most decided Representative of economy in this House at that time, Mr. Joseph Hume, whose mantle has since fallen upon my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), so far from objecting to the proceedings with regard to it, made a Motion, which was carried by the House in distinct approbation of that Treaty. I think that that is an important precedent as far as regards the general discussion by Parliament of these questions. Undoubtedly, I bear testimony to the general reasonableness of the conduct of the Government in sending a special Mission on this occasion, because I believe unquestionably, and without the smallest disparagement of the abilities and experience of Sir Sackville West, that it was in the power of a special Envoy to represent this country with greater efficacy and greater authority on an occasion of this kind than could have been done by the unaided exertions of our ordinary Representative. Therefore, I am afraid that I am not able to adopt the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, although I am glad to think that on this and on every other occasion he has proved himself to be a very vigilant guardian of the public purse.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I only propose to say a few words. I also must congratulate the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) on his vigilant guardianship of the public purse. That is a duty which hon. Members opposite below the Gangway very efficiently discharge. I wish to express my opinion of the services rendered, not to the Government alone, but to the country, by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. There can be no doubt that the undertaking of a task of this character in the middle of the winter was not the most agreeable to a Gentleman who had spent the greater part of the Session in attending Parliament. I desire, therefore, on behalf of the Government and on behalf of the country, to express our deep acknowledgment to him for the services which he has rendered to the State in bringing, as we hope, to a termination a dispute which threatened at one time serious consequences to the amicable relations of this country with a great and neighbouring people, with whom we desire to be upon the most intimate and cordial terms. It is unfortunate that differences of this character should have arisen to render a Mission of this kind necessary; but the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has observed, with very great force, that a Mission undertaken by a statesman of known ability and high position in this country with the object of arriving at a settlement of a question of this character was far more likely to attain success than if it had been undertaken by an ordinary Representative at Washington. I wish to join with the right hon. Gentleman in testifying to the great ability of Sir Sackville West; but negotiations had been in progress for a long period, and had been spread over many years, which Sir Sackville West was unable to bring to a successful conclusion. We believe that the presence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has brought about a settlement which probably could not have been attained in any other way. If that settlement is not made a permanent one at once, the right hon. Gentleman has secured an arrangement by which the causes of difficulty will, at all events, be removed for at least two years. That is a result upon which we may congratulate the people of this country and the people of the United States, our neighbours and friends, and also the people of Canada. I trust, therefore, that the Committee will at once agree to the Vote; and I hope that the hon. Member for Northampton will not press his Amendment to a Division.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I am encouraged by what has fallen from the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition to take a Division upon this Vote, because they have congratulated me on my vigilant guardianship of the public purse. Under those circumstances, I think I can do no less than take a Division, in order that I may carry my argument to some practical conclusion. My feelings are in favour of special Missions, and I can well understand that they may be made a good system; but I think that if we go to the expense of sending out special Missions, we ought not to continue the expense of £241,000 per annum, which is the present cost of our Diplomatic Service. My contention is that if you are to pay these large amounts for special diplomatic duties performed abroad, you ought to reduce the permanent expenditure of the Diplomatic Service. Why should you have special Missions at all if you are satisfied with the men you have as your permanent officials, and to whom you give these large salaries? Under all the circumstances, I am afraid that I shall have to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I congratulate the Government on the success of the Treaty which has been obtained by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I should like to ascertain the departure in the new Treaty from that of 1818, and also of the difference between the new Convention and those since 1818. There have already been four treaties in reference to the Fisheries Question, the last of which was in 1871. What I wish to know is how far the arrangements which have just been made at Washington are in harmony with either one or the other of these treaties, and whether the whole treaties are to continue in operation or to remain in abeyance. I should also like to have some information from the Government upon another point—namely, why the right hon. Gentleman was not authorized to settle the Alaska dispute which has arisen between this country and the United States? I am of opinion that the Government ought to have given the right hon. Gentleman full power to enter into that dispute, and I wish to know whether, as that was not the case, all questions with regard to the Alaska fisheries are to remain in abeyance, or whether they are to be referred to the mixed Commission said to form one of the provisions of the new Treaty. I want to know precisely what the arrangement is which has been arrived at between America and this country with regard to all the questions that were in dispute when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was sent out to America, and also what is intended to be done in regard to the Alaska question.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): There are two questions mixed up in the subject now before the Committee. One is the success or failure of the Mission which has been unnecessarily mixed up with another question—namely, the cost of the Mission. Hon. Members may have been pleased to hear the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). It was only one of the many instances of the magnanimity the right hon. Gentleman has displayed in his attitude towards the worst and most venomous of his political opponents. I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman's magnanimity had any chance of being reciprocated; but, judging from past experience, I do not think there is much prospect of that. It appears to me that the First Lord of the Treasury and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have been, to use an Americanism, "a little too previous" in the speeches they have used this evening. They have spoken as if the Treaty was already ratified. Does the Under Secretary make it his business to read the telegrams which come over here from the United States? If not, I would advise him to spend 10 minutes every morning in studying the cablegrams which appear in *The Daily News* or some other trustworthy paper. Lately I have been reading *The Daily News* with very great attention, and I find that according to the cablegrams of the correspondent of that newspaper there that this Treaty, which the correspondent most strongly advocates, stands in great, if not of supreme, danger of being rejected by the Senate. I will not venture to prophesy, but if I were a betting man I should be disposed to enter into a wager with the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as to the Treaty being ratified. I think if the right hon. Baronet will exercise his own intelligence in the matter he will arrive at exactly the same opinion as I have. Why do I allude to that matter? It is for this reason—that it is most evident the Treaty will not be ratified. The First Lord of the Treasury has eulogized the right hon. Member for West Birmingham for his services; but the First Lord of the Treasury will be mainly responsible for the failure of the Treaty, if failure there be. Why? Because the right hon. Gentleman could not have made a more grotesque selection of a Representative than when he selected the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. It is one of the elementary principles of diplomacy that you should not send as your representative a person who is obnoxious to a large portion of the people of the country to which it is proposed to send him. In France there is a large Party who do not conceal their intention of waging war on the first opportunity, in order to restore to France Alsace and Lorraine. At the head of that Party is M. Paul Delarain. What would be thought if, in settling a dispute with Germany, the French Republic were to select M. Delarain, the President of the Anti-German League, to negotiate the matter? Yet that selection would not be more absurd than the selection of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham to conduct the Mission to the United States of America. Anyone who knows the right hon. Gentleman well knows his infirmity of temper. There is no man who has a greater power of making enemies and making himself personally obnoxious. Just before the right hon. Gentleman went to America he added to his original sin by making two or three speeches which were most insulting and offensive to a large number of persons of great influence—namely, those persons who are Irish, either by birth or extraction. Possibly the First Lord of the Treasury thinks Her Majesty's Government can flout the Irish people of America, but he will find himself mistaken. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) has spoken of his experiences in America. Let me ask him if he did not find that in that country one of the most potent forces was the Irish-American element. As I have said, it is one of the most grotesque infringements of all the rules of diplomacy to select a man for a special Mission who is personally obnoxious to the people of the country to which he is sent. But it is not merely to the Irish-American people that the right hon. Gentleman has made himself obnoxious. He is disliked in America by a large section of Native Americans, because of his action towards the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of his own Party, towards his Colleagues, and towards the Party to which he formerly belonged. Nothing has disgusted large masses of native American opinion more than the return which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham has made for such magnanimity on the part of the Leader of the Opposition as we have seen displayed to-night. Then, if the Treaty should be rejected by the Senate, the responsibility will rest, in the first place, on the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and, secondly, on the Government who were foolish enough to appoint him. I believe that right hon. Gentlemen opposite were thinking more of their own political interests and of damaging the right hon. Member for West Birmingham when they selected him, than of settling this great question between the two countries. The First Lord of the Treasury has spoken of the great fitness of the right hon. Member for the task of negotiator. If I had to choose between the two, I think the First Lord of the Treasury would himself have been 10 times preferable to the right hon. Member. I will prophesy that the treaty will not be ratified, and I will lay the whole blame on the obnoxious character of the negotiator and the offensive speeches he has made. And now as to the expenditure. I do not know whether the First Lord of the Treasury ever reads the American papers. I read them nearly every night, and I have been dazzled and astounded by the almost Belshazzar-like splendour of the feasts which have been given by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. All the fashion, all the statemanship, all the wealth, and, though last not least, all the beauty and luxury of America seem to have been invited to the bounteous and hospitable board of the right hon. Gentleman. If I could have known that this discussion would have been prolonged, I would have armed myself with a few extracts from the fashionable newspapers of America which depicted that Belshazzar-like splendour of the right hon. Gentleman's banquets. His hospitable turn of mind and his admiration for the wealth, fashion and beauty of America does credit to his taste. But at whose expense was all this done? The right hon. Gentleman took care to advertize that in addition to his other claims to public distinction, he is a very wealthy man. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) laughs. We all know how much importance to attach to anything which proceeds from the hon. Member who is the *fides Achates* of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. I would as soon go to Sancho Panza for the character of Don Quixote. Whether the wealth of the right hon. Gentleman was advertised by himself or not, we all know that he is a man of very large means. Why, then, did he not give these banquets out of his own pocket? What are we to think of the niggardliness of a man of such splendid wealth who, at the expense of the taxpayers of this country, spreads a bounteous banquet for every American who chooses to attend it? My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton frequently makes proposals for diminishing the expenditure of the country, and he is generally supported by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division and the Radical Party. At any rate, he has always had my vote, and I want to ask the Radicals with what face they can vote against grants to Members of the Royal Family, who are not men with large business arrangements, who have no great means or fortunes of their own, and who are unable to support those emblems of vast wealth which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham always displayed? Then how can they vote for giving the right hon. Gentleman this extravagant sum of £3,900 because he had been making a big man of himself at Washington at the expense of the ratepayers of this country? I was in America, and went all over that country for seven months; I addressed meetings in more than 100 towns, and I did it all for £350, and I enjoyed myself very well.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): Before we proceed to a Division I would like to ask the hon. Member who brought forward the subject why it is that, though he objects *in toto* to every kind of special Mission in every shape and form, when there is a Vote which contains three special Missions, he selects one, and one only, for dividing the Committee against. Why did not the hon. Member object to all three?

MR. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps I ought to have explained that my objection is to special Missions where we have Envoys Extraordinary. In the other two Missions we had no Envoys Extraordinary.

MR. CAINE: I regret that the hon. Member has not challenged a Division on the whole of these Missions, but has selected one particular item in the Vote. The hon. Member certainly made no attack on the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, but his speech was followed up by one of the most vitriolic and disgraceful attacks upon that right hon. Member which I ever heard made in this House.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: Perhaps I may be allowed to say, for the information of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley), that the Papers to which I referred will be laid on the Table to-day and will be found in the Library to-morrow afternoon.

Mr. GOURLEY: I also asked a Question in regard to the Alaska disputes.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: There have been negotiations on that subject, and we have good reason to hope that they will come to a satisfactory result.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 68; Noes 314: Majority 246.—(Div. List, No. 24.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £18,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and for the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and for other Charges connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875.'"

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I rise to ask for some explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury in reference to the grant in aid to New Guinea, which amounts to £18,500; and, also, why this item appears in the Supplementary Estimates, instead of forming part of the ordinary Estimates for the Colonies in the coming financial year? Let me call attention to the phraseology of a note which decribes the arrangements come to by Her Majesty's Government. It says—

> "In the course of the proceedings of the Colonial Conference Her Majesty's Government undertook to provide, as a grant in aid on the first establishment of British Sovereignty, a suitable steam vessel for the service of the territory as soon as satisfactory arrangements were made for the administration of New Guinea by Queensland."

I see the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House, and he will, perhaps, correct me if I am wrong. My impression is that the arrangements made at the Colonial Conference was that the Colonies were to pay £15,000

a-year towards the administration expenses of New Guinea, and I apprehend that the ordinary course of procedure would have been to wait until the necessary Statutes granting this payment had been passed by the Colonial Parliament. One would have thought that it was certainly better to wait until the guarantee came. The note appended to the Vote goes on to say—

> "It is proposed to pay over this amount to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, to the credit of the Administration of New Guinea, and to arrange for the purchase of the vessel as soon as the arrangements are completed."

That is to say, that we are going to pay over £18,500 to the Crown Agent who is not going to spend it on the vessel. I want to know what evidence the Government would have to show that all these arrangements will be completed, and that the vessel will be bought and paid for before the 31st of March? I am speaking in the presence of four right hon. Members of this House who have filled the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I would ask whether the bringing forward of a Vote in this way is not in direct contradiction to the principle on which our financial arrangements have hitherto been conducted? I contend that this sum of £18,500 ought not to have been asked for in the shape of a Supplementary Estimate, but that it should have been included in the ordinary Colonial Vote next year.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I submit that he has himself supplied the real answer to the question he put, because I observe that the words in the Estimate are "as soon as satisfactory arrangements were made for the administration of New Guinea by Queensland." That is precisely the reason why the Government ask for this Supplementary Estimate, because they believe that satisfactory arrangements have now been made for the administration of New Guinea. The sum stated in this Estimate is required now, and therefore could not be made the subject of the Estimates for next year. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the arrangement agreed upon at the Colonial Conference. All I have to say is that the agreement then entered into is being satisfactorily carried out. The Queensland Government have fulfilled the conditions set forth in the Act of last year; and, that being so, the right hon. Gentleman will agree that it is expedient that Her Majesty's Government should perform their part of the contract and provide the necessary sum for this steamer. It is essential to vote this sum of £18,500, which is required in the current year. I hope this explanation will be satisfactory.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I desire to know if it is not the case that the undertaking of Queensland does not depend on the assent of the other Australian Governments, some of which have declined to accept the arrangement?

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Her Majesty's Government have no reason to believe that the agreement has not been carried out. The Act sets forth that the Colonies of New South Wales and Victoria should join with Queensland in a guarantee for the expenses of the administration of New Guinea, and the Government believe that satisfactory arrangements have been made.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I have no great desire to intervene in this discussion, because we are all of us anxious to pass on to another matter; but I must say that the explanation of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies is very unsatisfactory. In the first place, Parliament has not been consulted, and when I was Chancellor of the Exchequer I absolutely refused to give one sixpence towards these Colonization schemes. I am of the same opinion now. If the Colony of Queensland likes to embark upon such schemes, and is desirous of Colonizing New Guinea, by all means let her do so; but I object to the British taxpayer being made to pay for it. There has been no discussion in Parliament as to the desirability of making this expenditure. This is an Estimate which professes to be a Supplementary Estimate, but which is not a Supplementary Estimate in the true sense of the term. It is an Estimate which the Government seek to obtain before the Estimates of the year are submitted to Parliament. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies is perfectly unable to say, as a matter of official knowledge, whether the Colonies of Queensland, Victoria, or New South Wales have ratified the agreement entered into or not. He says "he believes;" but how can he ask the House of Commons to vote money on his belief? We want absolute official knowledge and Papers before money can be voted by Parliament in this way. Who wants this vessel; is it the Government or the Crown Agents, or the Colonies? What check can you have upon the expenditure by the Crown Agents? Have you any guarantee that the Crown Agents will render any account of the expenditure? How do you know the money will be expended? Really money should not be voted in this hugger-mugger way by Parliament, without any inquiry. I protest against the whole principle of the Vote. Supplementary Estimates are bad enough in any circumstances; but here Her Majesty's Government are introducing a totally new expenditure into the Supplementary Estimates in order to induce the House of Commons unknowingly, so to speak, to vote the money. I protest, as being contrary to every principle on which the House of Commons has previously acted, against the Vote being brought before the Committee as a Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid-Lothian): There is some force made in the observations of the noble Lord. I think it is most unfortunate that this Vote, although it does not involve any considerable sum, is of so anomalous a character and raises a very nice and delicate matter of principle. It is inconvenient that such a question should come before the Committee at all in the shape of a Supplementary Estimate, even if the facts were sufficiently ripe to require our immediately dealing with them. I certainly am of opinion that Supplementary Estimates, except in the case of grave matters, ought not to be made the occasion for discussing questions of principle. I will not, at the present moment, give any opinion on the subject of the noble Lord's decision. The noble Lord may have been right or wrong in withholding his assent from the proposal made, but at any rate it was a very important subject, which ought to have come before Parliament without prejudice and without difficulty, and without the Committee having now to dispose of it at the fag end of the

Estimates, which everybody desires to get rid of in order to proceed with another subject. That is not the way in which questions of importance ought to be disposed of. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies did not observe in the observation he made that he was speaking in flat contradiction of a material part of the official explanation laid before the House in which it is said :—

> "It is proposed to pay over this Grant to the Crown Agents for the Colonies to the credit of the present Administration of New Guinea, and to arrange for the purchase of the vessel as soon as the arrangements have been completed for the administration of the Territory by the Government of Queensland."

Was it proposed to do that immediately ? —[Baron Henry De Worms: Yes.]—Very well. The official statement says "and to arrange for the purchase of a vessel"—that is not immediately—"as soon as the arrangements have been completed for the Administration of the Territory by the Government of Queensland." It appears to me first of all that the occasion for paying this money has not yet arrived. According to the statement of the Government, it has not arrived because the Government have not stated—that is directly stated—that the arrangements are yet made ; and I did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he is prepared to strike out the latter part of the official note. If that is so, surely it is important. Nothing can be more at variance than that unless arrangements have been actually made, we should, before our liability arrives, and before the time for paying the money has come, pay over this money to Gentlemen over whom, as the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) has undoubtedly said, we have no control.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS : It is to be paid to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, who are responsible to the Colonial Office, and therefore responsible to the Government.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE : Then if he is directly responsible to Her Majesty's Government, how in the world can he be responsible to Her Majesty's Government in reference to the expenditure of money which is to be paid over to the credit of the Administration of New Guinea. Is the time come for paying this money or not ? that is really the Question. If it has come and the Government tell the Committee so, then the principle of the policy can be debated ; but if it has not come, then the proceeding is altogether premature.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS : Allow me to call attention to the wording of the Act which was passed in 1887. One of the clauses states—[Mr. W. E. Gladstone : What Act ?]—The Queensland Act. One of the clauses states that there shall be issued and paid to Her Majesty out of the consolidated revenues of Queensland, for 10 years after the passing of the Act, a sum not exceeding £15,000 in respect of the necessary expenses of the Administration of New Guinea. According to the proposal of Her Majesty's Government, the British Government should provide a steam ship which would cost about £18,000 for the use of the Administrator of New Guinea.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE : Was that a guarantee on the part of Queensland alone ?

Baron HENRY DE WORMS : It was an arrangement between Victoria and New South Wales and Queensland, but that arrangement as between themselves does not affect the position of Her Majesty's Government. The report of the proceedings of the Colonial Conference was in the hands of Members in July, and a debate upon the matter took place in this House in the month of September, when the whole question was thoroughly ventilated. I believe that in the event of New South Wales or Victoria not paying, Queensland would certainly have to pay. In the meantime Queensland, having fulfilled her part of the contract, it is incumbent upon Her Majesty's Government to fulfil theirs. And the time for the payment of this £18,500 has arrived.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) : The explanation given by the right hon. Gentleman may be perfectly clear and satisfactory to him, but it is not at all clear to me. The words, which had been already twice quoted, appeared to suggest that it should be a condition precedent to the payment of this money that a certain vessel should be purchased. But they were now given to understand that there was to be an agreement between three different parties, and Her Majesty's Government did not appear at present to be sufficiently informed that there was such an agreement. The money was to be paid at once, and the purchase of the vessel afterwards to be arranged for. After what had been stated it was evident there would have to be a Correspondence between this country and New South Wales and Queensland, to ascertain whether the Colonies had agreed in any common purpose. He asked whether it was possible within the financial year that this sum should be voted, and if it were so voted how were they to know that the money was spent in accordance with the statement laid before the House of Commons. What would be the position of the Comptroller and Auditor General with reference to the money if it were voted? He could not see how the money could be voted with justice to Sir William Dunbar unless there was before him more information than he had at present.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, the history of the case was this—the Government promised that they would this year make provision for the sum of £18,500, and the Treasury were called upon to present an Estimate for that sum. The very question which the hon. Gentleman and some preceding speakers had raised had naturally occurred to his mind—he had asked what security would he get that on parting with this £18,500, the other portion of the contract would be carried out. And it was with that object that these words were inserted; they were inserted at his request to insure that when the money was paid they should not lose their control over it. The whole of the arrangements were expected to be completed within the financial year, and it was with that distinct purpose that the Estimate had been included.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he was afraid that by the last sentence of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury about retaining the control of the money he had destroyed his own case. The question was whether a certain ship would be paid for before the 31st of March that year. If it were not, then by no possibility under our financial rules could the charge be included in the Supplementary Estimates. Our system of voting money provided separately for the services of each year, and in accordance with that system they could only vote money coming in course of payment during the financial year. But this amount could not come within the financial year. Upon this principle the Government might just as well put into the Supplementary Estimates the pay for the coming year of officers in the Army and Navy, paying the amount to the Accountant General, and treating his receipt as a final voucher. It was true that the Government might in excuse say that they retained control over the money. But the very fact of retaining their control excluded the idea of a final payment and adequate voucher. The receipt of the Crown Agents for the Colonies would be no receipt at all, for they were servants of the Imperial Government. This question had become rather more serious than it at first seemed, because it was clear now that if they voted the money asked for they went against all precedents. If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would say that the ship would be paid for before the end of the financial year, the matter would stand upon quite a different footing, but if the money was to be paid to the Crown Agents it was no payment at all under the Supplementary Estimates, and it ought to be withdrawn from them and put into the Estimates of next year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, when this Estimate was put on the Paper the Government had every reason to believe that the ship would be paid for in the course of the financial year, but looking to the fact that they were under an obligation to give the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) an opportunity of making the Motion in his name, and having regard to the question which had been raised by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), he thought it would be better to withdraw the Vote and bring it forward at another opportunity.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he must express his acknowledgments to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury for the very handsome manner in which he had met his objection.

Motion made, and Question, "That a reduced sum, not exceeding £300, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(4.) £7,500, Supplementary, Temporary Commissions.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he would like to know when the Assistant Commissioners — who had been appointed to take evidence for the Tolls Commission—would make their Report. Many months had elapsed since the Commission was appointed, and from the want of this report the work was much retarded.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he had no control over the work of the Commissioners. If the hon. Gentleman desired it, however, he would make inquiries.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,240, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he rose to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £5,658 for Orders of Knighthood, Medals, etc. If the Committee would look at the Estimate they would see that they were now asking for nearly double the amount of the original Estimate. He had no idea who received these distinctions and why they were received. He had been under the impression that no one received an Order of Knighthood who had not done something to merit it. He could not understand why anyone should be knighted because Her Majesty had reigned 50 years. The expenditure seemed to be excessive in any case. Surely the original Estimate was sufficient for the purpose without doubling it, and he would like the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) to state on what basis the original Estimate was made; and whether application was made first to the Treasury, or whether the medals were scattered about profusely, and application to the Treasury made afterwards. He should have thought that a person receiving the insignia of knighthood would have paid for the insignia himself, because a piece of metal and a piece of ribbon could not cost very much, probably not more than 30*s.*; indeed, that would be rather an excessive price. He had not had one of the medals conferred upon him; but he had seen them, and they appeared to be about the size of a 5*s.* piece, and their intrinsic value would be about 3*s.*; besides which a large number of these medals were of bronze. The medals were scattered in the most profuse manner possible; some on hon. Gentlemen opposite, some, he understood, on Ladies of the Bedchamber, and other such ladies; and he was informed that cooks and kitchenmaids had also received them. Surely it was ridiculous for the country to be asked to vote money for these things at all, but still more ridiculous that they should afterwards be called upon to double the amount. For these reasons he should ask the Committee to support him in the Division he intended to take on his Motion to reduce the Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a reduced sum, not exceeding £582, be granted for the said Service." —(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, the hon. Member was entirely mistaken with regard to the medals which he believed had been distributed so profusely. The medals were not included in this Vote at all, or in any other Vote.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If the hon. Gentleman looked at the Vote he would see "Orders of Knighthood, Medals, etc."

MR. JACKSON said, that the title of the original Sub-head of the Vote had been preserved. The hon. Member asked whether the sanction of the Treasury had been obtained, to which he replied that the sanction of the Treasury was first obtained to the expenditure and the enlargement of the Orders given. The occasion on which these Orders were conferred was, no doubt, a very great one; hon. Members should bear in mind that this and the Vote asked for in respect to Westminster Abbey were the only sums voted by Parliament in connection with the celebration of the Jubilee. He did not think the Committee wished to discuss the details of the Vote, and after the explanation he had given he trusted the hon. Gentleman would allow it to pass.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, it was almost amusing to observe the way in which these Estimates were presented. They had here a demand of £5,658 for Orders of Knighthood and medals; but not the slightest information was conveyed to the Committee as to the composition of the Vote. He asked where were the details of those Orders; who had received them; what had been done to deserve them; could the recipients not afford to buy the insignia themselves, and what was the cost of the particular insignia given to each individual? He contended that when Parliament was asked to sanction these payments there should be full information as to details. His experience went to show that what was meant by consulting Parliament about the expenditure of public money, was that the public money was spent first and the sanction of Parliament asked afterwards. As had been observed by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), the estimate of these insignia had been absolutely doubled, and he (Mr. Picton) said that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen in that House were very much mistaken in supposing that Votes of this kind were regarded as trivial by the people of the country. On the contrary, they were closely watched; they created more irritation than they were worth, as everyone would know who had had experience and was able to judge of public opinion. But while these payments were made there were some important National Institutions which were starved. The expenditure on the British Museum was £5,000 below the Estimate, and he said it would be far more worthy of the dignity of that House to bestow £5,000 on the British Museum than upon such matters as were asked for in this Vote. He protested most earnestly that these Votes were being regarded with increasing dissatisfaction by a large section of the people, and he should, of course, feel it his duty to support the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has not replied to my questions—what were these insignia and what was their cost?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) said, he should not go into the general question that had been raised, because, as had been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), the occasion did not arise for doing so on a Supplementary Vote, but there were some details which he was able to give. The largest expenditure was connected with the Military Order of the Bath, and amounted to upwards of £4,000; that on the Civil Order amounted to £1,900, and the remaining principal part of the expenditure was almost entirely upon honours conferred upon distinguished visitors from the Colonies who visited this country on the great occasion of last year's celebration. He reminded the Committee that the insignia were returnable upon the demise of the holder. Alterations in the Statute relating to the different Orders were being made, to which the Queen had given her assent.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he wished to know what was the cost to the Treasury of the insignia of the Military Orders on which £4,000 had been spent. He had seen these insignia, but he had not seen the blaze of jewellery which one would infer belonged to them. He wanted to know the absolute cost to the Treasury of each of these Orders.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) asked if the insignia had ever been returned?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL said, in almost every case, with the exception of certain foreign holders, they had been returned. The explanation he had given he trusted would satisfy the hon. Member.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he must again ask the hon. Gentleman for the particulars.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL said, the Collar of the Military Grand Cross of the Bath cost £356, and was returnable. The Badge £38 10*s.*; the ribbons, stars, and other things came to about £20, and these latter were not returnable.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he now asked, whether persons were allowed to send in contracts for these things?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, that when Gentlemen were appointed to Offices under the Crown as Cabinet Ministers they had to provide their uniforms at their own expense, and was it a fact that a man who was made a K.C.B. or a G.C.B. had to be supplied at the expense of the country with the insignia of the Order?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he had stated that these were returnable on the death of the holders, and were not the property of the Knights.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 151; Noes 238: Majority 87.—(Div. List, No. 25.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE METROPOLIS.—RESOLUTION.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): Mr. Speaker, the Motion which I have to submit to the House runs in the following terms:—

> "That, having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of open air public meeting for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis and with a view to prevent ill-will and disorder, it is desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by a Committee of this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings may be held and the limits of the right of interference therewith by the Executive Government."

I think I shall probably have the general assent of the House if I say it is almost a matter of course that a debate on this subject should take place in view of the action of the Executive Government and of the police, because that action has excited very considerable feeling in a large portion of the population of this country, and especially of this Metropolis. Rightly or wrongly, a feeling is somewhat widely entertained—a feeling of disquiet—that there has been a serious invasion of the accustomed right of public meeting, and that this invasion has received more importance, perhaps, from certain utterances that have come from those who are charged with the administration of Her Majesty's Government. I recollect that the late Attorney General for Ireland claimed, on behalf of the Executive Government, the right to interfere with any meeting which the Government deemed to be held for an improper purpose. That, I submit, is not the law; and I am glad to recollect that my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) at once challenged that statement. The Home Secretary also, in the course of the discussion which took place in reference to this very occurrence in Trafalgar Square, claimed, if I understood his language correctly, the right to judge, acting for the Executive Government, as to what was or was not a *bonâ fide* political meeting; and he claimed the right to interfere or not to interfere, according to the judgment of the Executive Government, as to whether the meeting in question was or was not a *bonâ fide* political meeting. Again, I enter my protest against that as being a correct statement of the authority given by the law to the Executive Government. With regard to the particular transactions in Trafalgar Square, which have been the occasion of this Motion, I understand that the matter stands thus—that Trafalgar Square is not within the Royal Parks Act of 1872, that it is not within the jurisdiction of the various Acts of Parliament giving authority to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that it is at this moment entirely without legal regulation in the matter of public meetings of any kind whatever. My Motion demands inquiry with a view to such legal regulation. Further, there is the fact that for at least 40 years the people of the Metropolis have been accustomed to meet in the Square for the discussion of their grievances, or what they consider their grievances, without interruption and without challenge as to the legality of their action—nay, declarations have again and again been made by Members of the Executive Government of the day that they were in their legal right in holding meetings there, so long as the right was exercised in orderly conducted meetings. I am not exaggerating the case in asserting that by the recent act of the Head of the Police Force of the Metropolis there is a peremptory and, so far as his will is concerned, a perpetual mandate proceeding from him, in the exercise of a supposed authority, forbidding any persons to assemble in

Trafalgar Square, however lawful their objects or however legal their conduct may be. I will put before the House the grounds on which I challenge that act of the Chief Commissioner. I am aware, of course, that there are very marked divisions of opinion on this question of open-air meetings in the Metropolis. I know that a large and influential class say that meetings such as were lately held in that square are in these days an anachronism, that they are no longer needed, that they are a nuisance, and that they ought be done away with. ["Hear, hear!"] I quite expected that that was the opinion on the other side of the House, but to that class I do not belong. There are others who believe that public meetings in the open air may be held at any hour of the day or night, on any day of the week, and in any place. In that opinion I do not share. I am for preserving and protecting the right of public meeting wherever it has been accustomed to be exercised; but I am for protecting that right by legal means, and under legal regulations, and so as to cause a minimum of public inconvenience. A statement has been made by some that this right of public meeting is but a Liberal fiction, and that no right of public meeting in the sense of open-air public meetings exists. As interpreting the spirit in which I put this Motion before the House, I will read to the House the words used by Mr. Baron Alderson upon the occasion of the trial of the Chartist Vincent in relation to an open-air meeting. He said—

> "There is no doubt that the people of this country have a perfect right to meet for the purpose of stating what are, or what they consider to be, their grievances. That right they always have had, and, I trust, always will have; but in order to transmit that right unimpaired to posterity, it is necessary it should be regulated by law and restrained by reason."

The learned Baron may not have been quite right historically in his statement, but in the spirit of that statement I submit this Motion to the House. I may point out that if London were a self-governing community this question could hardly have arisen. It certainly could not have arisen in the form and under the circumstances in which it has arisen. For if London had been a self-governing community, it would, as owner of its own property, have framed regulations for the use and enjoyment of it. All that would have been left to the Executive Government would be the right which the law gives them, and which I do not seek to impair or to diminish in the slightest, on their own responsibility to interfere with any meeting unlawful in its objects, or which becomes unlawful by reason of the circumstances under which it is held. But London is not a self-governing community. In the case of London we have as regards open spaces a variety of authorities, some of them with overlapping jurisdiction—Local Boards, Vestries, Local Trustees, the First Commissioner of Works, and the Home Office. In one sense Trafalgar Square was "No Man's Land," for it was neither under the Royal Parks Regulation Act of 1872, nor under the Board of Works. It is urged by some persons that open-air meetings are matters which, in London, could properly be dispensed with. But I think the general body will agree with the views of the right hon. Member for Derby when at the Home Office. The following is a letter addressed by him to the Metropolitan Board of Works in August, 1883, with reference to Southwark Park:—

> "You are aware of my sentiments on this subject. It is hard to expect that working men who claim to meet for the discussion of their own affairs should be put to the cost of hiring rooms for the purpose, which, if the assemblage is large, is in London a very expensive business. There is not a village or a town in England which has not some open space where gatherings of this kind can take place, and it would be intolerable if the population of London, amounting to 4,000,000 of people, were destitute of such opportunities, which are naturally and legitimately desired. Both Parliament and the Crown have, in the administration of the Parks under their control, evidenced their opinion that public meetings conducted in a peaceable and orderly manner constitute a proper and even useful employment of open spaces in the Metropolis. I think it would be a matter of regret if the Metropolitan Board took a different view of the open spaces which are under their management. Unnecessary repression of this character creates discontent and disturbance, and so far from tending to public order is calculated to provoke irritation and tumult."

I shall now have to trouble the House with a few words as to the historical creation of Trafalgar Square. In the course of the discussion which has taken place with reference to the Square sanction has sometimes been given to the view that Trafalgar Square is the private property of Her Majesty, and that in a legal sense it was like Hyde

Park before the Parks Regulation Act was passed. Nothing can be more mistaken than that view. Hyde Park was originally called after the manor of Hyde, which manor was one of the possessions of the Abbey of Westminster which was confiscated by Henry VIII. From the days of that Monarch it remained for a long series of years the private property of the Crown, just like any other property. The case of Trafalgar Square was absolutely and entirely different. I am informed by Mr. Charles Harrison, who has given me his assistance in getting up this matter in detail, that the first important Act with regard to Trafalgar Square was passed in 1813. It recited that it was considered a work of public utility and would be a great accommodation if, among other things, an open square was formed opposite Charing Cross. There were contained in the Act various other schemes for widening other streets. For this purpose, in connection with the improvement of the private Crown estate—then known as Marylebone Park, but now as Regent's Park—Public Commissioners were appointed and public moneys voted, and the property which formed the first half of what is now Trafalgar Square, but originally known as Union Square, was acquired by a public Vote of Parliament, paid for out of the taxes of the country. In 1826 another Act recited that it was a public object and for the public accommodation that there should be formed an enclosed and open square for the accommodation of the public which comprised the present Square; and one of its clauses, while imposing on the Commissioners the duty of completing the Square, at the same time imposed on the parishes its preservation and support. This Act related to the eastern half of what is now the Square, and which was in 1826 the property principally of the then Duke of Northumberland and the Governors of Bethlehem Hospital. By 1844 the property was substantially in its present condition, and had been so made by the public and at the public expense for public purposes. In 1844 a Statute was passed upon which was based the theory that this Square is the property of the Crown in the sense of private property of Her Majesty. I deny it. I know that it has been said that the Crown is the trustee for the people; but it has also been said that those who went into Trafalgar Square against the will or without the licence of the Queen commit a trespass. My contention is strongly against this view. The Act of 1844 recites that the Queen was seised in right of her Crown in the place called Trafalgar Square, which is no more than saying that the freehold or the fee simple is vested in the Queen, and that statement in no way detracts from the public character that has been stamped upon Trafalgar Square by the history I have given. The power of control over Trafalgar Square was wisely given to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests without in any way detracting from the public character of that place which was so originally stamped upon it, and no regulations either of those Commissioners or of the Chief Commissioner can properly set aside or alter the rights of the public in reference to it. Indeed, up to the present time no regulations of any kind have been made in reference to Trafalgar Square under the authority either of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests or of the Chief Commissioner of Police. I attach much importance to the Statute of 1854. The scheme of that Statute was this. It mentions certain statues by name, two of which are in Trafalgar Square—that of King George III. and that of Lord Nelson—and it then goes on to place under the control of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests the statues situated in public places in the Metropolis, and "public place" is defined to be one to which the public had "the right of ingress, egress, regress, or thoroughfare." That is practically a statutory admission of the right of the public to enter, leave, and return to that Square. The statutory history of the square to which I have referred entitles me to say that this Square was created by public money for the public accommodation, and not merely for the advantage of those who happen to live in its immediate neighbourhoood, and that, while the freehold or legal estate remains in the Queen, the beneficial use and accommodation of it lie in the public, and are in no sense properly to be limited and restricted by the powers of management vested in the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. The First Commissioner's power of management was, and ought to be, in point of law and in point of expediency, limited with reference to its public use and character. Lastly, I have pointed out that no regulations restraining or affecting that use have been made. What is the history of the user of the Square following upon these Statutes? The history of the actual user of the Square by the public is still more remarkable. In 1844, as I have stated, the care and control of the Square was vested in the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. In 1848, when Parliament was sitting, a Mr. Cochrane convened a public meeting in the Square with the object of protesting, among other things, against the Income Tax, and he was informed by the Police Commissioners that the meeting could not be permitted; whereupon Mr. Cochrane wrote to them to state that he had no idea that such a meeting in such a place was illegal, and that, in consequence of the Commissioners being of opinion that it was illegal, he would take no further part in it. The Commissioners thereupon at once wrote to him and informed him that he was under a mistake as to their grounds of objection to the meeting being held, which were not that it was illegal to hold such a meeting in Trafalgar Square at any time, but only when Parliament was sitting. It was on that occasion that Sir George Grey stated in this House that it was lawful to hold meetings in Trafalgar Square, provided they were legal and orderly in their character. The next occasion on which the question of the right of public meeting arose was the memorable one in relation to Hyde Park in 1866. Hon. Members will remember that it was suggested at that time, with a much greater show of reason, that the representatives of the Crown, under whose control the Park was placed, had a right to prohibit public meetings in it, as it was intended for the recreation of the people; and that, if a public meeting were held in it, the grass and flower beds would be trampled upon and destroyed. In the year to which I am referring, the point was taken that Trafalgar Square was the lawful and proper place for holding such meetings. It was then asserted that an open, unenclosed square like Trafalgar Square was not much used for the mere purposes of thoroughfare, and that, therefore, it was a most convenient place for holding public meetings. Sir George Grey went further even than that, because he stated in this House that, as long as the public meetings held in the Square were of a peaceable, orderly, and lawful character, the Executive Government had no right to interfere with them. That was undoubtedly a very important statement. The present Home Secretary and the Legal Advisers of the Government have access to what I have not—namely, a long current of opinions on the subject by distinguished Law Officers, and I should like to know whether, in the course of the long series of years since 1844, there is any instance of the Law Officers of the Crown advising the Executive to interfere with orderly meetings being held in the Square. I should like to know whether the Government can show that on any former occasion, either on his own Motion or on the initiation or suggestion of the Government, the Chief Commissioner of Police, by proclamation or notice or ukase—I care not which—has chosen, upon his own authority, to prohibit any meeting, however lawful or orderly, in Trafalgar Square. In 1885, when it was proposed by a Mr. W. J. L. Hooper to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square to celebrate the release of Mrs. Weldon from prison, that gentleman received the following letter from the office of the Chief Commissioner of Police:—

"4, Whitehall Place, S.W.,
"Sept. 9, 1885.

"Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 4th inst., I am directed by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis to acquaint you that it would be very inconvenient, both to the speakers at the proposed meeting and to the public, to have the meeting addressed from the steps leading from the pavement of the Square to the Terrace, and the blocking of this public way, which is unusual, might lead to disorder on the part of persons resenting it. The base of the Nelson column is not allowed as a platform for addressing meetings, and the usual and most convenient spot for such purposes is at the base of the wall at the north (or National Gallery) side of the Square. In many instances the promoters of the meetings bring with them a small portable platform to raise the speakers above the people, and this procedure is not interfered with by the police. The drivers of carriages in the procession should be instructed to obey the directions of the police, who would then arrange the empty vehicles at the north and west sides of the Square in the carriage way, so as to cause the least possible obstruction; and every assistance would be afforded to prevent disorder at the meeting.

"I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
"C. L. BATHURST,
"pro Chief Clerk."

I have further to say that up to 1886, although there were a large number of meetings, many of them largely attended, held in Trafalgar Square, no serious disturbance occurred at any of them. In 1886, however, there was a meeting which was attended by unhappy consequences. We know that those consequences resulted from a misunderstanding on the part of the police of the orders which had been given to them. They believed they were told to assemble in the Mall, and the order in fact, was that they should assemble in Pall Mall, to be ready if they were required. The result was that a considerable number of persons—the fringe of the meeting—[*a laugh*]—well, I think so, and I perhaps know as much about the meeting as the hon. Member who seems to doubt it—a considerable number of persons acted in a disorderly manner. I am not going to say they were exemplary characters. Taking advantage of the circumstances in which they found themselves, they indulged in looting, and disturbances of a more or less serious character occurred. I will now refer to the evidence given in legal proceedings by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), whose courtesy I ought to acknowledge in giving precedence to me on this subject. Charles Bradlaugh, being examined, said—

> "He had known Trafalgar Square for 35 years, and during that time the public had passed freely over every part of it. He had never seen a notice exhibited stating that the Square was private property. Between 1855 and 1884 he had taken part in public meetings there. After 1860 he had frequently convened meetings there, none of which had been dispersed by the police or prevented. On the 31st of July, 1871, he was served by Inspector Clark with a written notice on behalf of the Commissioners forbidding him to hold a meeting. A meeting had been called by Mr. Odger, which had been proclaimed and which he doubted the legality of, and he issued a notice convening another meeting. The notice stated that force would be used if he attempted to hold it, and Inspector Clark, who served the notice, asked for an answer. He answered that the meeting was legal, and that any attempt to disperse it would be illegal, and that he would resist force by force. That was about 11 in the morning, and about 12 he served a notice on the Home Secretary and the Chief Commissioner of Police to the same effect. He held the meetings. The Assistant Commissioner of Police was present. There was no attempt to disperse the meeting, although there was a large force of police present."

I have shown that meetings have been held in Trafalgar Square since it was Trafalgar Square, that the legality of those meetings has been admitted by the action of the Home Secretary in 1848 and in 1866, and by the action of the police who have assisted in carrying out those meetings, and that no disturbance of a serious character has taken place. I now come to the unhappy occurrences of the 13th and the 20th of November last. It is true that previous to the 13th of November there had been a number of meetings held of a more or less disorderly character; it is true that these meetings were the cause of very considerable annoyance and inconvenience, and even possibly of danger to business and injury to persons whose premises surround Trafalgar Square. My object in this Motion, which I think the House will appreciate, would be while preserving the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square to preserve it under such legal conditions and authority as should minimize inconvenience to the public and give security for the preservation of order by those who are responsible for its maintenance. With reference to the meetings that were held before the 13th of November, if they were unlawful, I want to know why the Home Secretary or the Chief Commissioner of Police did not previously interfere with them? I do not understand it is suggested that the object with which they were called was unlawful. If they were made an occasion for the delivery of seditious speeches or of speeches inciting to breaches of the peace or disorder, I want to know why steps were not taken against the individuals for the offences so committed? I now come to the meeting of November 13, which I beg the House to observe—and which I would fain believe the Home Secretary failed to distinguish—was wholly unconnected with any of the meetings that had gone before. The meeting was called by a responsible body of men—the confederated Liberal or Radical Clubs of London—for an object which the Crown cannot and did not suggest was an unlawful purpose. Unquestionably it was an "improper purpose" according to the view of the Government, because it was to denounce their policy in Ireland. I wish the House to observe the dates. That meeting was resolved upon on the 2nd of November, and it was announced by posters on the 5th of November. It was under the management of the representatives of a large number of clubs and political societies in the Metropolis; and I recollect that at an interview which several friends and I had with the Home Secretary the Chief Commissioner of Police admitted that on several previous occasions the conveners of this meeting had acted in harmony with the police in preserving order; the Chief Commissioner willingly and gratefully recognized that fact. On the 8th of November was placarded the public notice setting forth that disorderly scenes had occurred in Trafalgar Square, and with a view to preventing the recurrence of such disorderly scenes—

> "I, Charles Warren, do hereby give notice, with the sanction of the Secretary of State and the concurrence of the First Commissioner of Her Majesty's Works, that until further intimation no public meeting will be allowed to assemble in Trafalgar Square, nor will speeches be allowed to be delivered therein, and all well-disposed persons are requested to abstain from assembling there, as measures will be adopted to prevent any such meeting or the delivery of any speech."

Let me say that if this notice has any legal effect at all—and I shall be surprised if any lawyer says the contrary—on the legality or illegality of the meeting, its lawful or unlawful character; it derives no additional force from the fact that it is stated to have the sanction of the Secretary of State and the concurrence of the First Commissioner of Works. The Home Secretary represents the Executive, and has no authority in the matter special or peculiar to him; his authority is derived from the general Common Law; and as regards the First Commissioner, even if he had any power, this notice is no exercise of his authority, and he had no power to delegate it to anybody else. This notice stands upon its merits or demerits, whatever they may be—upon the simple statement that "I, Charles Warren," forbid until further notice any meeting whatever. I am a little uncertain as to how to treat this notice. In the Police Court my able and learned friend Mr. Poland spoke of it as being an act of the Executive Government; but I observe that at the Old Bailey my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General said there was not a tittle of evidence to show that the Government had anything to do with it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I must venture to correct the hon. and learned Member. What I did say was that the putting in motion of that notice came from the Police Authorities in the interest of public peace, but that there was no evidence that the Executive put the notice in motion, but that they approved the action of Sir Charles Warren on the statements laid before them by him.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: I do not find from the report in *The Times* that he said the Executive approved what was done; but I do find the statement that the responsibility rested not on the Government, but on Sir Charles Warren, who, he goes on to say, was appointed by a Liberal Government; but, apart from that, he continued, there was not a tittle of evidence from which anyone could venture to suggest that Sir Charles Warren took action on the suggestion of the Executive. That, I think, is what I substantially said. Well, we now hear for the first time that the Government, if they did not take the initiative, did approve what was done. After this I am entitled to draw the conclusion that it was the act of the Government. First of all, what is the effect of that notice? Will any lawyer say that that notice makes the least difference as regards the question whether the meeting intended to be held would have been a lawful meeting or not? Would it not be admitted that that notice or proclamation had had no effect whatever in determining one way or the other the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the meeting? I beg the House to bear in mind the point on which I insist in this matter. I do not now question, and never have questioned, the right of the Executive to stop any meeting which they could satisfy any proper tribunal was an unlawful meeting, either because of its avowed object, or because it was calculated to inspire the minds of ordinary persons in the neighbourhood with fear. I admit that to be the law. But that is not what this notice does. What it does is to peremptorily forbid, until it is withdrawn, any meeting being held in Trafalgar Square, however lawful and however peaceable. I will notice the observation which the Home Secretary made the other night with reference to this point. The hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire (Mr. Cunninghame Graham) put a Question to the Home Secretary as to whether this ukase, as he chose to call it, was or was not still in force. To that the Home Secretary answered—"The regulations of Sir Charles Warren in relation to Trafalgar Square are still in force." Is the defence of the Government this—that this document is a regulation as to the use of Trafalgar Square? No. What, then, is the defence and justification in point of law? Again I say I admit the right of the Executive Government, upon their responsibility and for either of the reasons I have given, to prevent a meeting in the Square; but I deny the right of the Executive Government, and still more the right of Sir Charles Warren, to issue a Proclamation forbidding any meeting, irrespective of its character. Having got rid of the idea that this notice was one for the regulation of Trafalgar Square, by what is it to be defended? Let me remind the Home Secretary that the finding of the jury and the termination of the case at the Old Bailey gave no colour or legal sanction of any sort or kind as to the legality or illegality of future orderly meetings in the Square. A deputation waited upon the Home Secretary on the 11th of November, and I should like to read to the House what took place. The Home Secretary used this language—

> "The public have no right of meeting in Trafalgar Square. It is only by the sufferance and permission of the Queen that they do meet there. That permission is, of course, ordinarily extended, and would be ordinarily extended to any *bonâ fide* meeting, to any real political assemblage that came there for *bonâ fide* political purposes; but it is on sufferance and with permission, and Her Majesty (or rather the Office of Works, who speak for Her Majesty in the matter) has a perfectly legal right to withhold that permission."

Now, I wish to know who made the Home Secretary judge, and who gave him, as the adviser of the Queen in these matters, the right of saying what is a *bonâ fide* meeting? This is very dangerous ground for the Home Secretary, and I venture to say there is no legal support for it. I deny that access to the Square is upon sufferance. The purpose for which the Square can be used, when access is obtained, is another and different question; but that there is a right of access to the Square I think is apparent. I have, I think, already made it clear that the public have a right of user of the Square, and the Home Secretary has no authority to take it away; but I will follow the matter a little further. Does not the Home Secretary see—do not all the legal Members of the House see—that even if a meeting was held on a place, and the persons holding the meeting were committing a trespass, that act of trespass would not necessarily make the meeting unlawful? People in those circumstances do not commit the offence of holding an unlawful meeting, but the offence of trespass only. And if you come to deal with the question of obstruction, it will be seen that obstruction will not make a meeting unlawful on that account only. It is not too much to say that you cannot hold a meeting in any public place at which you would not be guilty, in a greater or lesser degree, of obstruction which may extend over accustomed ways or footpaths. But will any lawyer say, if a meeting is held under circumstances which cause obstruction, that that fact necessarily makes it a meeting of an unlawful character? I deny it. The persons holding the meeting may be guilty of an offence for which they can be dealt with; but it is not the offence of taking part in or of holding an unlawful meeting. I should like to quote, on this question of public meeting, from an author whose opinions will be received with approbation by Dissentient Liberals on this side of the House. My friend Professor Dicey, one of the ablest and one of the most honest and candid of the advocates of our Dissentient Friends, says—

> "The right of assembling is nothing more than the result of the view taken by the Courts as to individual liberty of person and individual liberty of speech. There is no special law allowing A, B, and C to meet together either in the open air or elsewhere for a lawful purpose; but the right of A to go where he pleases, so that he does not commit a trespass, and to say what he likes to B, so that his talk is not libellous or seditious, the right of B to do the like with regard to A, and the existence of the same rights of C, D, E, and F, and so on *ad infinitum*, leads to the consequence that A, B, C, D and a thousand or ten thousand other persons may (as a general rule) meet together in any place where otherwise they each have a right to be for a lawful purpose and in a lawful manner."

The next step in the matter is the occurrence of the meeting itself. I think there are few men who have any doubt that if the authorities had permitted the meeting to be held undisturbed by the action of the police, although it might have caused inconvenience to some, it would not have resulted in any general tumult or disorder. But the course resorted to by the police, of stopping large masses of people who were on their way to the Square in the exercise of what they believed to be their long-accustomed right, undoubtedly had very serious effects upon the public temper, and ultimately upon the public peace. I am not going into this question, which is not pertinent to the Motion. I wish this Motion to be discussed apart from that point, and on its own merits. I will only say, with regard to it, that the Government based their contention as to the illegality of the meeting on three grounds—(1) that the defendants had taken part in a riot; (2) that they took part in a disorderly meeting, in which the police were assaulted; and (3) that the meeting was unlawful on the ground that it was calculated to inspire terror in the minds of persons living in the neighbourhood. The jury negatived the question of riot and the question of disorderly meeting, and found the defendants guilty on the third ground only. As to what took place on the occasion I forbear to say more than this—that the assault and riot having been negatived, I am sorry the learned Judge did not see his way, inasmuch as it was admitted by the Crown that the meeting was held in the assertion of what was considered to be a legal right—I am sorry the learned Judge did not see his way to allow the prisoners to stand out and come up for judgment when called upon. The finding of the jury must be taken as a justification of the action of the police in preventing the particular meeting from being held; but it is no justification in point of law or reason for this standing prohibition of Sir Charles Warren, which is now to be treated as the action of the Government, permanently and absolutely at their will and pleasure, to prevent all orderly meetings from being held in Trafalgar Square. Now, in this matter, I have to trouble the House with one word, and one word only, as to another ground of justification which is sought to be put forward. The only notice existing on the 13th of November was the notice of the 8th of November; but after the meeting of the 13th of November a further notice was issued by Sir Charles Warren, in which, citing as his justification—and I call attention to it—the Statutes of the 2 & 3 *Vict.* and the 7 & 8 *Vict.*, he purported to make this order or regulation that no meeting is to be allowed to assemble or any person to be allowed to deliver any public speech in Trafalgar Square or in the streets or thoroughfares adjoining or leading thereto, and that no organized processions shall be allowed to pass along the streets or thoroughfares adjoining or leading thereto. What are the Statutes cited in support of this? They are two. I dispose of one of them by a passing reference. The Act passed in 1844—7 & 8 *Vict.*—gives certain authority, limited, as I have indicated, to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests and now to the Commissioners of Works. The only section in the other Statute which has any bearing on this matter is the 52nd section, which makes it lawful for the Commissioner of Police from time to time, as occasion may require, to frame regulations for the route to be observed by all carts, carriages, horses, and persons, and for preventing obstruction in the streets and thoroughfares within the Metropolitan Police district, in all times of public processions, public rejoicings, or illuminations, and also to give directions to constables to keep in order and to prevent any obstruction of the thoroughfares in the immediate neighbourhood of Her Majesty's Palaces, the Public Offices, Parliament, the Courts of Law, the Police Courts, theatres, and other places of public resort, and in any case where the thoroughfares are thronged and liable to be obstructed. What does this Statute mean? It is not a Statute forbidding processions, but a Statute for regulating them. It is not a Statute forbidding public meetings, but it is a power given to the police to be exercised with the view of marshalling, so to speak, the traffic, so that there may be as little disturbance or inconvenience to the public as possible. Does the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary say that it is within the competence of the First Commissioner of Metropolitan Police to forbid anybody from coming down Parliament Street, or to forbid any procession from going down the Embankment? I should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman's answer is to that question. I should like him now to give, even by a nod of the head, some indication of an answer, because I submit to the House that unless the power claimed is a power to the extent and of the kind that I have indicated, there is no more power to stop processions in the direction of Trafalgar Square by a general order applicable to all occasions than there is to stop them in any thoroughfare of the Metropolis. I have so far dealt with this matter very much on the legal grounds, but I confess that I do not think this is a question which the House can afford or ought to discuss in the mere language of legal pedantry. I am fully aware of the technical legal difficulties in the way, in many cases, of affirmatively establishing in a Court of Law the concrete right of open-air public meeting. But this is a question in which a right that the public have exercised in fact has been restrained by a peremptory mandate of the Government, which they are called upon to justify, not only in point of law, but on Constitutional principles. I submit they can do neither. If they want to have further powers to maintain order and to keep the peace, let them come to Parliament and ask for them, and my Motion opens the road to inquiry. If the existing regulations are inadequate, let them be strengthened; but do not by an indirect method or side-wind make an invasion upon a long exercised right of the public, or interfere with it in this peremptory and unconstitutional manner. I have pointed out that the question of the right to hold orderly meetings in Trafalgar Square was not raised in the case heard at the Old Bailey. There was a kind of assertion by the learned Attorney General that there was no right of access to the Square, which in his summing-up Mr. Justice Charles did not seem to endorse. I know, also, there was a suggestion of Mr. Justice Charles as to the non-existence of the supposed right of holding public meetings in Trafalgar Square. In so far as any such suggestion was made by that learned Judge, I say with all respect that it was a mere *obiter dictum,* because the question did not arise in the case. The ground upon which the verdict of the jury at the Old Bailey rested would have equally applied to any like meeting in any place—even in a place in which it was admitted there was a right to hold the meeting. But when the Government had the opportunity of having the question judicially determined as to whether there was or was not the right to hold an orderly meeting in Trafalgar Square, I say unmistakably—I do not say it offensively—that they shirked the question. I allude, of course, to the case of Mr. Saunders, a former Member of this House. Mr. Saunders attended at Trafalgar Square, having given notice to the police that he would, on the 8th and again on the 11th of November. He said that he claimed his right to go there and to speak to the unemployed in terms of sympathy, and I think he said terms of comfort. The police told him they would not permit the meeting. He said that he would hold it. He went to the place of meeting and began to speak. An inspector or constable desired him to desist. He said he would not desist, but would persevere until he was forcibly prevented. Consequently, the inspector or constable put his hand on him to stop him, and the meeting was then at an end. Mr. Saunders was brought before a magistrate and was defended—ably defended—by my learned friend Mr. Corrie Grant, and the representatives of the Government on that occasion showed the most anxious desire to withdraw the charge. Mr. Corrie Grant wanted to know what was the offence that had been committed; and I call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to a very extraordinary thing—namely, to what Mr. Poland, a most able and competent counsel on the other side, said in his argument. In the first place, Mr. Corrie Grant said—"This is not a regulation under any Statute." Mr. Poland said—"It is quite clear it is not." Mr. Corrie Grant asked on what authority the prohibition rested—what section authorized it? Mr. Poland said—"No Statute. He does it simply as a servant of the Crown." So that we have here the old idea of private property, and that a trespass is committed by anyone going to the Square without or against the permission of the Crown. I had intended to allude to the case of the other public parks, and I shall be very short in my reference to them. The right of user by the public in other open spaces in the Metropolis than Trafalgar Square cannot be said to be in a satisfactory condition. It calls for inquiry as the Motion suggests. Shortly stated, these public places are of two classes—those which are outside the Public Parks Act of 1872, and those that are within that Act. Under the regulations framed in pursuance of the Public Parks Act of 1872 there are in London four places, and four only, so far as I am aware, in which there is the right of public meeting, and that right is given in rather a remarkable way. It is not expressly said that there shall be a right of public meeting, but that no public meeting shall be allowed to take place except within certain spaces and subject to various other conditions. Those four places are Hyde Park, Regent's Park, Victoria Park, and Battersea Park. Then, as to the places not within the Public Parks Act, they stand in this position. First, as to the licensing authority, where the Metropolitan Board is the primary authority for making bye-laws, the confirming authority is either the Secretary of State or First Commissioner of Works. Where the Local Board are the conservators, the confirming authority is the Local Government Board. Where the conservators are appointed from local residents, the confirming authority is the First Commissioner of Works. So that you have these various authorities, and not always acting in harmony. In regard to those places specially under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board of Works, there is a prohibition of a qualified kind against any right to hold public meetings in by far the largest number of open spaces in and around the Metropolis. I mean that such meetings cannot be lawfully held unless by the written consent of the Metropolitan Board of Works first had and obtained. This applies to a very large number of places, among which are—Blackheath, Hampstead Heath, Shepherd's Bush Common. Hackney Commons, comprising London Fields, Hackney Downs, Wells Street Common (otherwise Hackney Common), North Mill Fields, South Mill Fields, Stoke Newington Common, Clapton Common, and parcels of land at or near Dalston Lane, and Grove Street, Wormwood Scrubs, Shoulder-of-Mutton Green, Plumstead Common, Peckham Rye, Goose Green, Nunhead Green, Clapham Common, Brook Green, Eelbrook Common, Parson's Green, Tooting Beck Common, and Tooting Graveney Common. In all these cases the consent of the Metropolitan Board of Works is to be obtained. It does not seem to me that the right which unquestionably the public of this country greatly cherish should be, as regards all these open spaces, so entirely at the will and pleasure of an authority which cannot be in any real sense of the words be called a Representative Body, and as to which I will only say further that it is not a Body which can be said to command universal confidence. In particular, I cannot think that the Government can be satisfied, or ought to be satisfied, with the position in which the question of Trafalgar Square rests. I cannot think they will consider it a satisfactory state of things that there should now be in 1888 so remarkable an interference by the Chief Commissioner acting for the Government—and now, as we are to take it, by the Government themselves—with a long-established right. It is not a state of things that the public will put up with, or ought to put up with. They claim the right, according to the custom by which they have exercised it, to hold meetings in Trafalgar Square. I have no doubt they are willing and anxious to have proper and sober rules for the conduct and regulation of meetings, so as to minimize and reduce, as far as possible, any inconvenience to the public. But this question, it seems to me, touches a much greater and a much broader question, apart from its strictly legal aspect and character. Speaking of liberty in this country, De Tocqueville said that he was surprised to find how little there was about liberty and of liberty in the law of the country, and how much there was of liberty in the Constitutional understandings and customs of the country. Our right of liberty of the Press, reduced to its elements, means no more than that a man, without previous licence, publishes what he pleases, taking the legal consequences, and submitting himself, in what he writes, to the judgment of a jury. So as regards this public right of meeting. I have avoided arguing the question in any spirit—and I hope I have succeeded—of narrow, technical, legal pedantry. I desire to put it on broader and higher grounds than that. This question touches a right which the people of the country have long enjoyed, and which they deeply cherish. The exercise of that right has been of very great value in the past, and I believe it will be of great value in the future. What has been the result of the exercise of that right in this country? The result has been that while we have seen revolutions in other countries carried by violence and lawlessness and accompanied by crime, we have seen in this country revolutions as great and as wide-reaching as any which have occurred abroad, carried by peaceable means, because this country has lived and thriven upon the breath of free public discussion. The right of public meeting has helped to form public opinion; it has given voice to popular discontent; and I say that public discontent, even if it be unreasonable discontent, ought to have a voice. It has quickened the action of Legislatures —aye, and its action has quickened and roused the conscience of Governments. It has been useful in the past, so I believe it will be useful in the future; and, therefore, I hope the House of Commons will not, by vote or otherwise, do anything to impair, restrict, or weaken that power of expressing public opinion. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of open air public meetings for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis, and with a view to prevent ill-will and disorder, it is desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by a Committee of this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings may be held, and the limits of the right of interference therewith by the Executive Government."—(*Sir Charles Russell.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I should like, at the outset of the observations I shall make to the House, to express my cordial concurrence with the closing remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). The importance and value of public meetings the Government fully recognize. We entirely admit the truth of his assertion—that it is desirable that popular discontent should find a free and open voice, and should not be driven to express itself in secret conventicles and other ways. I believe that no one in this House is more convinced of those somewhat—I say it without offence—elementary maxims to which he has given eloquent expression. But I believe in this question of Trafalgar Square, which has now arisen between the authorities and some part of the public, we have done nothing to impair any public right—nothing to diminish any real right of public meeting which exists in the Metropolis. Our action has been entirely dictated by what I may call police considerations—consideration of public order, the protection of persons and property, and what was necessary to be done in order to prevent a repetition of the scenes that happened not much more than two years ago, and which certainly were a disgrace both to this Metropolis and its civilization. No doubt there does lie at the bottom of this controversy some necessary inquiry into the legal position of Trafalgar Square. The hon. and learned Gentleman has disclaimed the use of mere legal pedantry in dealing with the subject; but, at the same time, artfully —I do not use the word in an offensive sense—doing that, he has led the way over a series of Statutes, seeking to produce upon the House an impression that there was some legal right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square. If that was not his intention or purpose, then the greater part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's argument had no purpose at all. Now, as to the legal right of meeting in Trafalgar Square, I absolutely challenge it and join issue upon it. I say that such a right does not exist in law or in fact. No such thing can be pretended directly or openly by a lawyer, even of much less eminence than the hon. and learned Gentleman. I do not propose to follow the hon. and learned Gentleman at great length through the Statutes. I shall shortly put the view which I found accepted at the Home Office when I entered it. It is this. Under the Statute of 1844 Trafalgar Square was not created the property of the Crown, and certainly it was not the private property of the Crown; but Trafalgar Square was recognized by statutory enactment as one of the hereditary possessions of the Crown, the ownership of which was therefore in the Crown. The reason of that, I apprehend, was that Trafalgar Square was made out of an old Royal property called King's Mews.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: No; only a very small part of it.

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. and learned Gentleman was not strictly accurate in some of his facts; at least, they do not conform with the information I have been able to collect on the subject. Trafalgar Square took the place originally of a large building called the King's Mews and its appurtenaces, to which were added premises in part purchased by private and in part by public money. It is enough, however, to take one's stand on the Act of 1844, and I have no desire to lay before the House any technical or pedantic view of that Act. But how can anyone read that Act and understand otherwise than that Parliament intended to declare, as it does declare—

> "That the place or square called Trafalgar Square is by this Act vested in the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, her heirs and successors, as part and parcel of the hereditary possessions of Her Majesty."

Then the Act goes on to vest—I wish frankly to admit that it clothes Trafalgar Square with a species of public trust—the management, care, control, and regulation of the Square in the Commissioners of Woods—now of Works—as representing the Crown, and they are required to keep it in order. Then comes the 3rd section of the Act, to which the hon. and learned Gentleman did not refer, but which throws light on the position of the Square. That section says that the clauses of the Metropolitan Police Act shall apply to this Act and to the Square, so far as such clauses and provisions are not repugnant or inconsistent with the Trafalgar Square Act. That section makes it impossible for any lawyer to say that Trafalgar Square was an ordinary street or thoroughfare at that time. The provisions of the Police Act apply to all thoroughfares and streets of the Metropolis; but without that express enactment the police could have had no more to do with Trafalgar Square than with any private garden in the Metropolis, and they could not have gone into it to exercise any of their ordinary functions. The view at the Home Office was that it was vested in Her Majesty for public purposes and public objects. The management was committed to a great officer of State, namely, the Commissioner of Works—the right and title of Her Majesty, so far as owning the ground was concerned, was left untouched—in order that the Square might be best devoted to the public enjoyment and to the public advantage. At that time it certainly was not a thoroughfare, because the Act of Parliament contemplates that the Commissioner of Works may put up in it things which might be viewed as an obstruction. Things have been put up by the First Commissioner in Trafalgar Square which might be considered obstructions if put up in any ordinary thoroughfare. The statue of Sir Charles Napier was put up in 1858, the statue of Sir Henry Havelock in 1861, that of George IV. in 1845, and the great column between 1844 and 1847. Therefore things were put up in Trafalgar Square which showed that Parliament contemplated a condition of affairs inconsistent with the dedication of the Square as an ordinary highway, and that it was intended by Parliament that the public should have the use and enjoyment of the Square, possibly in a more complete way than they had the use and enjoyment of the Parks. Of course, I am not insensible to the contention which might be raised that subsequent user of the Square might have altered that condition of things and given the public a right of thoroughfare; but such a point has never been raised, has never been argued, and has never been decided. It would, indeed, admit of a good deal of argument; but I do not think it necessary to enter into that question, but I will take it the other way. If there be a right of user and of thoroughfare that only makes the case of the hon. and learned Gentleman the more untenable. It is undeniable that the right of public meetings in any street or thoroughfare, does not exist. It does not exist on the property of any private owner, but with the consent of that private owner. But nobody disputes that. Nor, on the other hand, would anybody deny that public meetings may be held—indeed they must be held—in places where they can be held, with the sanction of the owner. The right of public meeting is the right of expressing your opinions openly, publicly, on any subject whatever, whether you attack the Government of the day, or whether you defend it; but it does not mean that you may take possession of any place you wish for the purpose of holding your meeting. If, as I have said, you hold a meeting upon the land of a private owner, the consent of the owner must be obtained, and nothing is more clear than that you have no right to hold a meeting in a public thoroughfare. That is the law. I listened to the hon. and learned Member to see whether he would say that there was a right of public meeting in the streets or thoroughfares. He did not assert it; he assumed it. I should have been glad to draw him into that assertion if I could, but he did not assert any right of meeting in a public thoroughfare or street. It would certainly be most monstrous to say that any number of betting men might meet in Fleet Street to talk over the result of a race. [An hon. MEMBER: They do it now.] I know they do; but they ought to be removed, because the place is not devoted to the purpose of public meetings, but to other purposes equally useful. The hon. and learned Member spoke of this point not having been decided at the Central Criminal Court. I take it to have been decided. The point was raised by the hon. and learned Member for East Fife (Mr. Asquith). And what did Mr. Justice Charles say? He said—

> "I have anxiously considered the observations which Mr. Asquith has addressed to you, and I can find no warrant for telling you that there is a right of public meeting either in Trafalgar Square or any other public thoroughfare. So far as I know the law of England, the use of public thoroughfares is for the people to pass and repass along them. That is the purpose for which they are, as we say, dedicated by the owner of them to the use of the public; and they are not dedicated to the public use for any other purpose that I know of than for the purpose of passing and repassing; and if you come to regard Trafalgar Square as being a place of public resort simply, it seems to me it would be very analogous to that. Equally on the part of the public they have no right, although they may often do it without objection—the public have no right to hold meetings for discussion upon any questions, be they social, political, or religious. That is my direction of the law to you as far as regards the abstract right of the people to meet in public places."

That is a very accurate definition of the law, and it would be very unfortunate if any discussion in this House would allow the opinion to prevail that the public have a right to meet in every public thoroughfare. However much one may desire that public meetings should be held—and no one desires it more than I—I must say that to allow them in public thoroughfares would be to land London and other towns like London in hopeless confusion. The hon. and learned Member went on to say—"Oh, but there have been meetings held in Trafalgar Square," and he gave the instance of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who—according to his wont—held a meeting there in defiance of the authorities. The hon. Member for Northampton—and I congratulate him—won the victory on that occasion. The public authorities, perhaps wisely and prudently under the circumstances, in order to avoid a collison said nothing about it, and allowed him to go on and hold the meeting. Our whole life, public and private, is full of examples of that kind. You have no right to crowd the streets with carriages for private parties of an evening; but the authorities do not interfere to prevent it, because the inconvenience is so slight. There are numbers of things which people have no right to do, and yet they are not interfered with. Meetings have been held for years in Trafalgar Square—held as of right—they were not unlawful on that account, though there was no right; but they have been passed over because in the circumstances of the time there was no reason for the Executive to interfere. The question is whether last autumn the licence which had been good-humouredly extended in other cases ought or ought not to have been withdrawn? Whether you view Trafalgar Square as Crown property or strictly as a thoroughfare, is there a right of meeting there, or is the public injured and is any right taken from them when a meeting is prohibited? But although I have admitted that any wise and prudent Government would not insist upon its right to interfere in all cases, and would overlook a harmless infringement of the law, I invite the House to say whether the condition of things was such last autumn that we were not bound to prevent the meetings from taken place? I must remind the House what the course of events had been. The House will not forget how the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) expressed his sympathy with the wretched creatures who crowded into Trafalgar Square at night for the purpose of attracting charity—they had no refuge at night, had neither food to eat nor work to do—and the largest sympathy was felt for them, and then came the meetings of the unemployed. The meetings in the case of the unemployed were attended during the months of October and November with a growing danger of riots every day. Language was used of a seditious and dangerous character. I might quote language which was used at them, and which grew each day more and more violent and threatening. A certain organization was introduced into the movement, and speeches were made more and more likely to provoke disorder and tumult. I do not attach too much consequence to those speeches, but they are not to be altogether disregarded. Many things are said by excited public speakers, perhaps not meant to be acted on. But one could not altogether overlook the language used day by day, and which amounted to threats of violence if relief could not be obtained for the unemployed from the constituted authorities—relief for distress, which was truly alleged, I believe, in many cases. One person advised that they should go to the National Gallery, because he had tried it once himself with 200 men and had frightened the people there out of their senses. Another advised that 30,000 men should go to the Lord Mayor with lumps of granite in their pockets. Another said that if the Lord Mayor would not do so-and-so they would "terrorize the old scoundrel." [*Cries of* "Name!"] The author of this last observation was Mr. Allman, who afterwards admitted that he was paid so much a week by the Society for the Unemployed. We did not prosecute that sedition; we did not treat it as seditious; we did not think it worth it. Another orator said that pressure should be brought to bear by firing London in 400 places at once, while another urged them to carry sticks.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Will the right hon. Gentleman give any names? If he will give the name of the man who said that, I think I can identify him with the police.

MR. MATTHEWS: I do not know whether the hon. Member for Northampton suggests that the police employed people to make seditious speeches?

MR. BRADLAUGH: The person who threatened to fire London I am prepared in an inquiry to prove has since been seen in company with the police on more than one occasion, and not in custody.

MR. MATTHEWS: It is a new thing to me that to be seen in company with a policeman in the street is a matter of suspicion——

MR. BRADLAUGH: Not in the streets.

MR. MATTHEWS: I did not know they were banished from society——

MR. BRADLAUGH (again rising amid loud cries of "Order!"): I must ask the leave of the House to repeat what I said. My words have been misrepresented.

MR. MATTHEWS: I hope the hon. Member for Northampton will not cause me to detain the House longer than I can help. The hon. Member will have an opportunity of replying. Not only were there these seditious speeches, but there was also this feature about what took place last autumn—that Trafalgar Square was made use of by the persons who came there day after day as a sort of central fortress from which they organized processions which went round the City and West End, inspiring terror as they went, and causing the shopkeepers to shut their shops hastily and give up business for that afternoon, and from Trafalgar Square these people organized visits by so-called deputations to various public authorities. Early in October a visit was paid to the Chief Magistrate, Sir James Ingham, and *The Standard* office, by persons who insisted upon having work given to them and not relief, and who refused to accept the ordinary relief which persons in distress are content to put up with. A visit was also organized to the Lord Mayor, in which very inflammatory language was used, and in which black flags and red flags and caps of liberty were carried, and emblems which recalled recollections which I should think no inhabitant of London would wish to see revived. A visit was afterwards paid to Alderman Knight, who put off the deputation with some good advice. Those who led the crowd then advised them to pay visits to the Queen and to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to make him disgorge the £15,000 which they said he received, and then to help themselves to the shops. On the Sunday on which I had specially interposed in order that the meeting might take place there came that degrading and disgusting visit to Westminster Abbey, in which the procession which went there desecrated the place they visited. Then came a visit to the Board of Works, in which the procession threatened the members of the Board that they would come in their thousands and compel them to give them work. They made the announcement that they would continue visits of this sort until their demands were granted. I need hardly tell the House what the effect of this was upon London. I received—for it is my unhappy lot to receive all such complaints — protests and complaints from various bodies in the town. A deputation of Oxford Street traders, who desired that their names should be concealed—and I call the attention of the House to that significant fact as showing the terror inspired—implored to be protected against the inconvenience caused by these riots which were going on. The diamond merchants around Trafalgar Square called attention to the disorderly and riotous mobs which were going there with the sole object of robbery, and said that they would be obliged to close their shops if this went on ; the fear of these mobs kept away their lady customers, and they themselves were in danger of their lives ; they had to fear not only the loss of goods, for which they might obtain compensation, but also the far greater loss of their trade. The Royal College of Physicians complained that members of their institution were unable to go out owing to the riotous crowds, and that there was fear for the valuable property in their College. On the 11th of November a deputation of bankers, hotel-keepers, and merchants came before me. All represented to me that there was a daily loss of trade to them —that customers were kept away from London, and that trade was paralyzed by a state of things of that sort, from which the working men were the first and the largest sufferers, owing to the cessation of employment caused by it. Lastly, there was a Memorial signed by some thousands of ratepayers in the neighbourhood of the Strand, who represented that the assembling of crowds, largely consisting of rogues and vagabonds, was seriously affecting their trade, and who asked the Executive Government to prevent valued privileges of public meeting from being converted into criminal licence. I had as long as it was possible—and I acknowledge fully my responsibility—adhered to the policy, not of preventing the meetings and processions before assembling, but of watching and controlling them, without any further interference with them. But in order to follow these sporadic processions, which it was absolutely necessary to follow, from 1,000 to 2,000 police had to be in Trafalgar Square. The Police Force was getting worn out ; they were getting harassed and irritated ; so that another consideration came into view—of which hon. Members opposite will feel the weight—namely, that the defenders of public order and property might have got out of hand. There have been complaints made, justly or unjustly—I will go into that question another time—but if you once allow the defenders of public order to be harassed by the repetition of duties which are almost intolerable, by having to stand by while they are being hooted and abused and even pelted, and by having to accompany disorderly processions, you produce a temper in your Police Force which is extremely undesirable. The hon. and learned Gentleman knows the evidence which was given by Sir Charles Warren and which was unchallenged. That evidence only repeated to the public what I had on other occasions heard from Sir Charles Warren. He pointed out that for more than a month, from the 5th of October to the 13th of November, the police had had to watch meetings which were a source of danger to the peace of the neighbourhood, and that, having regard to the character of the people and the continued meetings in that place, he thought that it would have taxed the power of the police to keep them under control, and that it was absolutely necessary that these processions should be followed by the police. Those who attended the meetings were organized to act by signals, and to march out at a signal in an organized body. Those who organized and invited these meetings may be perfectly respectable men who wish to meet to express their views, but they cannot help the dangerous classes coming uninvited, though I think that all the speakers were not reluctant to see the dangerous classes there. You cannot help them attending these meetings and forming part of them, and thus adding to the danger of obstruction and to the danger to public peace and property. That was the situation which was growing upon the notice of the authorities and of the public during October and the early part of November. Now, will the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney say that the right of public discussion is advanced by all this saturnalia of disorder?

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I said not a word in defence or justification of disorder.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I did not mean to trouble the hon. and learned Member to rise. I know he did not say one word in defence of such proceedings; but I have to say many words about them, because the facts explain the action of the Government. In defence of the action of the Government it will not do to leave all these facts out of view. It had, I repeat, become unsafe in London to allow persons to go on being massed day by day in the very centre of accumulated wealth, in the midst of the most crowded thoroughfares, in a place where the preservation of order among thousands of persons was a task of the greatest difficulty, and where only a sheet of plate glass stood between the depredators and goods of the greatest value. And if the operations and precautions of the police are hampered by enormous crowds by whom they are surrounded, I should like to know how better protection could be given to persons and property? I should like to know, too, what judgment the hon. and learned Member himself would have passed upon the Executive if, by an unlooked for and unlucky chance, the events of February, 1886, had been repeated last autumn? The hon. and learned Member has quoted one precedent; let me quote one also. At a time when the hon. and learned Gentleman was Attorney General, for two days after that 8th of February, when London was looted, Trafalgar Square was closed to the public, just as it was last November. I say the same thing might have occurred again at any moment last autumn, and it was only by incessant vigilance, by the extraordinary activity and zeal of the police, that I believe London was saved from some similar catastrophe; and I assure the House that the strain on the force by the incessant vigilance they were obliged to exercise bacame at last intolerable and unbearable. I had apprehensions that the force might break down under that strain. That was the position of things. Were we, in that position, entitled to issue the notice which the hon. and learned Gentleman has read? He challenged me to defend that notice. I defend it fearlessly, absolutely, and on all points. I say that we should have failed in our duty to the State and to this town if we had not put a stop to those meetings. I say that we had a full legal right to do it; we were interfering with no right of the public when we said—"You shall not hold meetings in Trafalgar Square." It was not necessary that we should wait to see whether a particular meeting was unlawful or not. No meeting has a right *de jure* to take possession of Trafalgar Square, and occupy it to the exclusion of the rest of the public. A meeting that claims to do that is not unlawful in the somewhat fallacious use the hon. and learned Member made of the term. Of course, it is not necessarily unlawful in the sense of being riotous; but it is unlawful in the sense that it is trespass. A meeting convened for the most decorous, prudish, and regular object in the world, conducted in the most perfect order, is not unlawful, it is true; but it cannot lawfully come and be held in my garden if I say it is not to be held there, nor can it lawfully be held in a public thoroughfare, and, for that reason, it cannot insist upon being held in Trafalgar Square. It is true, it may be guilty only of trespass and only of obstruction; and it is quite true that neither of these vices of trespass or obstruction constitute an unlawful assembly so as to fall within the penalties that attach to unlawful assemblies, but they fall within the Law of Trespass. The meeting is unwarranted, if it is not an unlawful assembly in the technical sense of the law. The hon. and learned Member asked what is the meaning of the notice? As I read the plain words of the Trafalgar Square Acts, the Commissioners of Works have the management and regulation of the Square, and it rests with them, subject to any right of way that has been acquired—which certainly has not been ascertained as yet, if any such right exists—to manage and regulate the Square. They represent Her Majesty, who has the ownership of the Square in trust for the advantage of the whole and not a section of the public. In both capacities the Commissioners of Works have authority to say —"We will not permit a meeting to be held here either to-day, to-morrow, or next day. It is not a right belonging to any body of persons whatever, and we, for reasons that we think sufficient, do not intend to permit the thing in future." We of the Executive went to the Commissioners of Works and said— "Will you, in so far as you are justified, authorize us in excluding meetings from the Square until further notice?" We had that authority, and the act is justified on that ground. It is also justified under whatever powers belong to the Commissioner of Police under the Police Regulation Act. Of course, we all know that a notice does not make any meeting unlawful which was otherwise lawful in itself; but it has a perfect avail to make any attempt to hold a meeting unauthorized in the sense that those who have the ownership and control of the Square say—"We do not choose that it shall be done." It has also the effect of a warning to the public that it is considered an obstruction to the thoroughfares, which, although winked at and overlooked on many previous occasions, was not going to be winked at and overlooked on this occasion or the occasions following the 8th of November. I will not follow the hon. and learned Gentleman in his criticism of my speech on the 11th. I abandon the speech to him. I intended to say to the deputation what I have been saying to the House— namely, that while permission to hold meetings had been very naturally and properly, in my judgment, conceded time after time when it did no harm, yet that the time had arrived when it did do harm, and when it was manifestly being abused. I say that the anxiety naturally caused formed an abundant justification for putting, not mere technical rights, but solid, substantial, legal rights into operation, and thereby to put an end to a public mischief and a public danger. Did subsequent events justify our action or not? The hon. and learned Gentleman challenged me on the subject of processions, and he asked me if the Executive could stop processions going along the streets. It does not become me to construe Acts of Parliament in opposition to the hon. and learned Member, whose reputation stands so deservedly high. From the plain words of Section 52, I should have thought that processions, whenever they are liable to lead to obstruction, may be regulated and dealt with.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: Regulated, not prohibited.

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. and learned Member says "regulated," but not "prohibited." But if regulation does not go the length of prohibition, of what use is it to stop obstruction? The power of regulation is a power which must avail to this extent at least, that it shall enable the Commissioner to overcome an obstruction. When a procession is marching through London, filling both carriage way and footway, how is he to overcome it but by stopping or dispersing it? It stops all traffic one way and heads it back in the opposite direction. It can only be regulated by dispersing it and breaking it down. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I should like to put hon. Members who dissent into the field against such an obstruction, and see how they would regulate without dispersing it. And now I come to the events of the 13th. Lamentable events they were I entirely agree. Nobody viewed them or heard of them with deeper concern or distress than myself. I think, however, the distressing character of that day was not due to the action of the authorities. I do not like when men have been convicted to even seem to press upon them at all, especially when one of the defendants is a Member of this House; but I cannot help saying that it is difficult to read the evidence given on that occasion and not see that—rightly or wrongly—those who had got up this meeting had formed a deliberate design of carrying Trafalgar Square by force and in spite of the action of the authorities. I am not saying that they are not people entitled to have their particular opinions; but one of the organizers—the secretary of the Federation—declared that he had got 60,000 or 70,000 men in the field ready to come in 60 or 70 organized processions to bear down on Trafalgar Square at the same hour, and the defendants who were convicted were manifestly waiting for those processions, and had since boasted in letters and speeches that "if our men had come to the scratch we should have carried the

Square—like a dose of salts," is the elegant expression. And how was the "plan of campaign" defeated?—[*Murmurs.*]—I do not mean any offence to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. How was that plan defeated? Why, by stopping the processions; and what were they? Why, a procession of men, some of whom were armed with oyster knives, with which they stabbed the police; some had gaspipes; some had sticks — [An hon. MEMBER: How many?]—and these sticks had nails in them. These were the component parts of this organized procession, all converging on Trafalgar Square, all led to the attack by the gallant cry of the hon. Member for North-West Lanark (Mr. Cunninghame Graham)—"Now for the Square." After that came the final rush. That may appear to the hon. and learned Member a perfectly lawful and peaceful assembly. It appeared to the jury—and I humbly agree with them—to be an assembly obviously unlawful.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: I must interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I said that I accepted the verdict of the jury, that it was an unlawful assembly, and that the Executive were justified in stopping that particular meeting.

MR. MATTHEWS: I am very glad to hear that.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: I said so in my speech.

MR. MATTHEWS: Well, I beg pardon. I thought the hon. and learned Gentleman, in referring to the finding of the jury, put it on some technical grounds, which my ingenuity did not enable me to master. I say the jury found this to be an unlawful assembly; that it was organized, and attempted by force to break into Trafalgar Square and overpower the authority of the police. No one can read the evidence and fail to see that that was the deliberate design, cleverly contrived, skilfully commenced, and only defeated by the courage and self-devotion of the thin line of men who met these processionists at every point, and prevented them, in the language of the hon. and learned Gentleman, "from becoming an obstruction." That is the moral I draw from the trial resulting from the occurrences of November 13, after reading the evidence on both sides with, I hope, as impartial a mind as any of the jury who tried the case and found the verdict. I will not discuss the question as to why there was no verdict for riot and assault. The learned Judge left it open to the jury, if they thought that the people went there for the purpose of carrying the Square by force — but did not succeed—to take the lenient view and convict them only of unlawful assembly, and not of riot. If these people had proceeded to any material extent in the execution of that purpose it was a riot; but the Judge left it to them to say whether the processionists had made it a riot. He left them to take the lenient view, and they took it. I am glad they did, as I am always glad, in trials of this sort, when the least harm falls to those involved. I invite the House to say that the Government acted rightly, instead of adopting the Resolution the hon. and learned Gentleman has pressed upon them. But it was not only in this trial that we had the fullest justification for prohibiting the meeting and the processions coming to the Square. Both juries and the magistrates concurred in finding that the proceedings were unlawful. There were 126 persons brought before the magistrates summarily. Of these 27 only were discharged. In 22 cases there were appeals to the Sessions, and in two cases only was the conviction quashed. In seven cases indictments were heard at either the Surrey or Middlesex Sessions, and none of these prisoners were acquitted, but all were convicted by the juries. Two cases were sent to the Central Criminal Court, and in both convictions were obtained. That makes a total of nearly 160 cases in which the juries, magistrates, and Judges vindicated the conduct of the authorities and held the meeting to be unlawful in every respect.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): Will the right hon. Gentleman state to which meeting his figures refer—the 13th or 20th?

MR. MATTHEWS: These are the convictions up to the 21st of January, 1888, and they cover all the charges made since the 13th of November. The butcher's bill is 112 police injured, more or less seriously, some of them being injured for life. It is a little remarkable that the hon. and learned Gentleman in his speech has said a good deal about the right of public meeting, and has given the House an interesting historical view of Trafalgar Square, but he said little or nothing about the Motion he has placed on the Paper. I hardly heard a word addressed to it. He asked the House to affirm—

> "That, having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of open public meetings for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis, and with a view to prevent ill-will and disorder, it is desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by a Committee of this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings may be held, and the limits of the right of interference therewith by the Executive Government."

I submit to the House that the conditions under which meetings may be held and the limits of the right of interference are fixed by the law. For centuries there have been a series of authorities uniform and, I think I may say, one developing and explaining the other, by which the conditions subject to which meetings in this country can be held, and the limits and the rights of interference with them by the Executive, have been settled in the interests both of liberty and order. Illustrious Judges have laid down rules of law applicable to the subject, and those rules are perfectly clear. I quite agree that the application of law to the facts is very often difficult—to ascertain the precise moment of time when a meeting, by reason of obstruction or riotous conduct, ceases to be a lawful and becomes an unlawful assembly—that that is a criterion of facts often difficult to determine. I grant that; but all the Committees in the world will not assist you in deciding it. The conditions under which meetings may be held are perfectly clear. The meeting must be for a lawful purpose. It must be held in a place into which you have got a right to go—either by the assent of the owner or otherwise—and it must conduct itself in an orderly manner; and if it fulfils these three conditions the Executive has no right to interfere with it; and it is absolutely free from all control or check or interference from the Executive. On the other hand, if one of those conditions fail, if the right to the place of meeting is not clear, if the man who has the right to the place says—"You shall not come here," then they will be treated as guilty of unlawful assembly; and if the purpose of the meeting is unlawful, it is not only the right but the duty of the Executive and the magistrates to interfere and to prevent its assembly if they are warned in time, or to disperse it while it is being held if they could not interfere sooner. I have said that it is not only the right, but the duty of the Executive. Onerous as that responsibility is—and nobody is more convinced of that than I am, after the experience of the last winter—painful as it is, difficult as it is, it is one that must be exercised by the Executive—and for which it must answer to Parliament and the Courts of Law, if need be—and it is one from which no Committee of Inquiry can relieve the Executive, or ought to attempt to relieve it. These things are so plain, Sir, that I cannot help thinking that is the reason why the hon. and learned Gentleman said so little about his Motion. The hon. and learned Gentleman felt it was an indefensible Motion. Let me suppose that this inquiry has taken place; let me suppose that every regulation that is suggested about Trafalgar Square is made; let me suppose that, after a great deal of labour, a set of rules are drawn up for the regulation, control, and harmony of meetings in Trafalgar Square. Let me suppose all these things done. Can it be denied that, if the instant after all these things are done, such disorderly scenes as took place last October and November arose at one of the hon. and learned Gentleman's regulated meetings, it would be the duty of the Executive to interfere? Can it be denied that if such disturbances arose in his well-manipulated, committee-regulated meetings in Trafalgar Square, it would be the duty of the Executive to step in and say—"This must not go on longer?" We think that there is abundant protection both for the interest of the public and for the safety of the public in the law as it stands. We can only meet the Motion as a Vote of Censure on the conduct of the Executive, and as such we must ask the House to meet it with a direct and emphatic negative.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, he was aware a good many hon. Members desired to take part in the debate, and he would, therefore, take care to confine his observations within as narrow a limit as possible, in order to enable the London Representatives to speak on a matter of such great importance to their constituents. But the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the

Home Secretary deserved some little notice, as it appeared to him that what the right hon. Gentleman had delivered had been little less than the funeral oration of the right of the public to meet in the open air in the Metropolis. That right had been enjoyed for many years; it had been abused in very few instances; and yet they had heard from the right hon Gentleman the Home Secretary what was equivalent to a declaration that it was to be destroyed so long as the present Government remained in power and not to be revived again. He (Mr. R. T. Reid) wished to say a word or two in regard to the ground on which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary announced this remarkable intention—the grounds on which he announced the intention of the Government to resist the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). The right hon. Gentleman said that Trafalgar Square was the property of the Crown, and quoted an Act of Parliament for the purpose of showing that it was vested in the Crown—a matter which, in point of law, everyone must admit. He (Mr. R. T. Reid) did not think it was a very wise policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government to rest their acts and their conduct on the ground that the soil of Trafalgar Square was by Statute vested in the Crown. The place was not all vested in the Crown until the Act, which had been quoted, was passed, and the place had been embellished and laid out wholly at the public expense, and, as the Act recited, for the public convenience. It seemed to him to be rather an unwise thing to say that it was absolutely at the mercy of the Crown—theAdvisers of the Crown—whether public meetings should be permitted to be held in a place which had been entirely laid out, and, indeed, constructed at the expense of the public. Then the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the Police Statutes. He did not know—it was a very delicate question of law, and he was not sure whether it had ever been decided—whether the Police Acts enabled the Government to put an end to meetings in Trafalgar Square; but this he would say, that anyone who read these Acts impartially would come to the conclusion that it was never intended to do anything of the sort. These Statutes related solely to the regulation of traffic and processions, and he should be most certain that the Parliament who passed the Police Act would be very much surprised indeed if they had been told that the habit and freedom of public meeting was intended to be interfered with by the Act. What the right hon. Gentleman chiefly relied upon was a few phrases used in speeches at a few meetings before the 13th of November. It was a pity the right hon. Gentleman had not referred to the long series of years during which the Square had been dedicated to public meetings. For 40 years meetings had been held constantly in Trafalgar Square, and with the exception of the meeting of the 6th of February, 1886, and the meetings which took place at the end of last year, there had been no instance of disturbance or interference with order. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had greatly exaggerated the disturbances which took place at these meetings. He had given them descriptions of a most dramatic kind, embellished with language of a most epigrammatic character. He had multiplied one stick with nails in it into a whole host and multitude of sticks with nails; he had used his whole power of picturesque description in order to inflame the imagination of the House, and make hon. Members believe that a very saturnalia had taken place in Trafalgar Square. He (Mr. R. T. Reid) had been at some of these meetings, and had heard the language used. He did not agree with that language; but, speaking with every respect for hon. Gentlemen opposite, he was bound to say he did not think the language used at these meetings was any more violent than the language often used on Conservative platforms to describe the opponents of the Conservative cause. He was sure that a few expressions scattered here and there in the course of a number of speeches was a very scanty excuse for endeavouring to put an end to the old custom of public meeting as it had been enjoyed in Trafalgar Square. One word more in reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman had discussed the meeting of the 13th of November, which ended so unfortunately. For his (Mr. R. T. Reid's) part, he was very sorry the right hon.

Gentleman had made any reference—or, at any rate, such a pointed reference—to the defendants who were tried for what took place on that occasion. No one would dispute here, and he hoped no one ever would dispute in the House—certainly he never should—that it was not only right, but the absolute duty of the Government, to maintain order, and to put an end to meetings which became disorderly or assembled in a disorderly way. He thought the Government would not be worth their salt if they did not interfere to prevent turbulence and to protect the public. That was a very different thing from saying that, because at one or two meetings in the course of 40 years symptoms of turbulence had been shown, therefore they were to issue a Proclamation putting an end to public meeting in Trafalgar Square altogether. If the Government merely confined themselves to saying that when the meetings exhibited symptoms of disorder such as would lead a man of "reasonably firm mind" to apprehend disorder and tumult, they would stop those meetings, he should have no words but those of commendation to apply to their conduct; but what he did object to was saying that, after a long series of quiet and orderly meetings held in Trafalgar Square, because one or two were disorderly, the Government were to be at liberty to put an end to meetings being held there—to take advantage of some technical and legal argument to justify putting an end to the privilege that had been enjoyed for many years. He had no desire to underrate the difficulties surrounding this question of meeting in Trafalgar Square. He was quite aware that there were the interests of tradesmen to be considered, and he was by no means one who sneered at tradesmen. Tradesmen had to pay high rates, and had to maintain their wives and families as well as other people, and, of course, were entitled to protection. He did not dispute for a moment that the interests of these people had to be fairly considered in dealing with the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square; nor did he deny that there might be obstruction, and even danger, to many of them in disorder. That was precisely what they had to guard themselves against. Nor did he dispute that these meetings in Trafalgar Square might in some cases cause interference with traffic; but the difference between himself and the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary was this: he, in common with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney, believed that with careful consideration and fair inquiry these defects could fairly be met and obviated, whereas the Government did not choose to inquire at all, but preferred by one stroke of the pen to abolish the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square altogether, without attempting to reconcile that right of meeting with the rights of persons such as those he had described. The real question that was to be considered by the House was not a question of legal pedantry nor a question of mere naked legal right. It was a question of the wisdom of the policy of the course the Government had pursued, or that they ought to pursue. Nor did the question turn upon whether the Government were right in regard to their action as to one particular meeting, but whether they were right in pursuing a policy which they had, he might say in perpetuity, declared it to be their intention to pursue—namely, that of putting an end to all open air meetings in Trafalgar Square under a claim of law which would equally entitle them to put an end to all open air public meetings in London. Practically the contention of the Government placed all rights of open air meeting in London—or if they preferred to call them customs, he was altogether indifferent to the word used—absolutely at the mercy of the Executive Government, and he thought that it was not uncharitable to hon. Gentlemen opposite to suggest that they had less love for big public meetings in the Metropolis than those who sat on the Opposition side of the House. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, if that statement touched the susceptibilities of hon. Gentlemen opposite, he would withdraw it. In his view, valuable as was the right of open air public meeting in all parts of the country, it was exceptionally valuable in London; in the first place, because there were few open spaces available where large meetings could be held, and again because those who were in the habit of attending these open air meetings were often so poor that they could not go to the expense of employing public halls. Then again it was essential that the people of London should have the right of open air meeting, because they had grievances which were most acute and affected enormous numbers of them. He would not, of course, enter into the question of what these grievances were. It would be sufficient to refer to the existence in London of vast multitudes of people honestly wishing for employment, but unable to obtain it. He knew that this was a topic which enlisted the sympathies of hon. Members on all sides of the House. Then they had the fact that among the municipal authorities of London, some were corrupt and most were incompetent, and that there was no central Government in London at all. He need not refer to that which was the subject of debate the other night—such evils as the sweating system, under which people had their lives and almost their souls destroyed by working for starvation wages under insanitary and demoralizing conditions; and still less need he refer to that flagrant grievance in London—namely, that the dwellings in which the great part of the population resided had been condemned as a scandal to civilization over and over again within the last five years, not only in this House but by a Royal Commission; yet the evil was today as bad as it was five years ago, and, seemingly, would be as bad five years hence as it was now, unless a powerful agitation were got up in regard to it. The question was when, inasmuch as agitation could not under the circumstances of the case be confined to meetings in large halls, the evils under which London has suffered were to be reformed by lawlessness or by Constitutional methods. He thought that within the last few years they had learned a good deal as to the consequences of refusing to listen to moderate agitation. They had come very near teaching the people in some parts of the country, notably in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland—and he trusted they were not going to teach them the same thing in London—the fatal lesson that mere remonstrance or attempt to Constitutionally reform their grievances would do nothing until there had been some open defiance of the law which would arrest public attention and precipitate reform. The Government seemed to him to have improved upon this lesson, because they were now adopting a course, the effect of which would be to put a stop on the part of a large portion of the population to the right of expressing their grievances at all, inasmuch as they could not express them unless they were allowed to assemble in public meeting. He (Mr. R. T. Reid) could only say himself that it was from that point of view, and in that spirit, that he certainly should support the Motion of his hon. and learned Friend. The object of the Committee proposed was not as the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary suggested, to disarm the strength of the Executive or to deprive them of a single weapon they possessed for the purpose of maintaining "ordered freedom," which was the only kind of order he desired to see maintained in this country, but it was for the purpose of investigating and obtaining the opinion of the most competent persons as to whether it was not desirable that they should, safeguarding all legitimate private and trade interests, and, of course, the property and person of Her Majesty's subjects, not only in Trafalgar Square, but elsewhere, refrain from taking away from the people of London their right of open air meeting in a place used for the purpose for so many years, which might too soon be followed by taking away from them the right of public meeting in other places. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary entirely misconceived, or seemed to him to have misconceived, the object and spirit and purpose with which this Motion had been brought forward. Those who supported it desired to see order always fairly and properly enforced, and to see turbulence repressed in London; but they also desired to see the poorest of the population of the country, which were the poor of London, allowed an opportunity of ventilating their grievances in the accustomed manner, in the hope—perhaps the vain hope—that those grievances would obtain recognition at the hands of the public and the application of a remedy.

MR. C. HALL (Cambridge, Chesterton) said, if he did not follow his hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. R. T. Reid) in the able and sympathetic remarks he had just addressed to the House, he trusted he would not think that it was because he (Mr. C. Hall) did not feel with him in a good many of the remarks he had made. He thought if this question could be discussed in the way his hon. and learned Friend had discussed it—as an abstract Resolution, and without reference to what had taken place, and especially without reference to the speeches of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite—there was very much in the speech of his hon. and learned Friend which would meet with the acceptance of many of those on his (Mr. C. Hall's) side of the House. But they had to consider what was the history of the case which had led to the Resolution which was now brought forward and proposed to the House of Commons. If the House would bear with him for a few moments, he should like to call its attention very shortly to what took place only a few days ago. He was very glad that Her Majesty's Government intended to meet this Resolution with a direct negative, because in whatever words it was framed, and apparently it was concocted by the combined art of all on the Front Opposition Bench, it was nothing more nor less, and it was intended as nothing more nor less, than a Vote of Censure on Her Majesty's Government. What was the history of the case? They had not to look back for many days for that history, and to learn what its origin was, because he found that on the Monday before Parliament assembled the daily organ which represented hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite—*The Daily News*—had an announcement in leaded type that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), on behalf of the London Liberal Members, would give Notice of an Amendment to the Address raising the question of Trafalgar Square and the conduct of the police, and that the form of the Amendment thus to be moved was settled at a meeting of the London Liberal Members on the Friday. This announcement appeared in *The Daily News* on Monday, and on Friday night the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney addressed a meeting of his constituents at Hackney, and stated that there was one subject which ought to be brought before the attention of the House of Commons at the earliest possible moment, and that was the question of the right of public meeting. The hon. and learned Gentleman went on to elaborate what, in his opinion, at that time were the points relating to public meetings which were of importance. What were they? He (Mr. C. Hall) had taken the trouble to look into the reports of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speeches in *The Daily News* newspaper, and he found that he had put in the forefront and in the van of the question as regards the right of public meeting the conduct of the police and of Sir Charles Warren. He said that he would bring this matter forward at the unanimous request of his Colleagues, the Liberal Members for London and the surrounding boroughs; and he (Mr. C. Hall) thought the House would find that the hon. and learned Member had determined to take this step, not only at the request of his Colleagues, the Liberal Members for London and the surrounding boroughs, but after consultation with the Liberal Leaders. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that his Motion would demand an inquiry by the House of Commons into the action of the Executive and the police, not into an abstract question of the right of public meeting. The two points with regard to which he would demand an inquiry were in relation to the meetings of November 13th and 20th—he would demand an inquiry as to what would be the just and proper limits according to law of Executive interference with the right of public meeting. His hon. and learned Friend did not stop there. He went on to point out what the bases were upon which he wished to make this attack, which was nothing less than an attack upon Her Majesty's Government and the Executive. This was what he based it on. He said that a body of evidence had been furnished to him, which, if true, would show that there had been a very considerable amount of unnecessary violence on the part of the police. That was the first point his hon. and learned Friend made. He said that he thought that the attitude the Government had assumed with regard to Sir Charles Warren—whose name as the head of the police was received with loud hisses—certainly deserved a searching inquiry. Then his hon. and learned Friend proceeded to deliver what a right hon. Gentleman opposite would call a considerable number of platitudes as to the desirability of maintaining a good feeling between the police and the public. He said it was important if the police failed in their duty or exceeded it, that public opinion should promptly condemn them, and all the more so because of the responsibility and power that belonged to them. Then his hon. and learned Friend went on to remark that what the public desired to see was "right regulated by law and not by the capricious will of an Executive officer." ["Hear, hear!"] He heard hon. Gentlemen opposite say "Hear, hear!" but who was the capricious officer? Was that meant to be an attack upon Sir Charles Warren, or was it not? Was that meant to be an attack upon the police of London, or was it not? He (Mr. C. Hall) maintained that from the beginning to the end of his speech at Hackney, his hon. and learned Friend's remarks were an attack upon the police and on Sir Charles Warren. It did not end there. His hon. and learned Friend said that he should bring the matter forward at the unanimous request of his Colleagues, the Liberal Members for London and the surrounding boroughs. They found, however, that someone else was taken into counsel—no less a person than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt)—for they found that, making a speech to his constituents at Derby, on the same evening the right hon. Gentleman stated that the action of the police in London would have to be inquired into, but he would not touch on the subject, as it was in the hands of that very great lawyer, the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney. That was on the 17th February, and on the next day the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) returned from his visit to the South, which they all rejoiced to see had benefited him so much. On the evening of his return the right hon. Gentleman held a meeting of his supporters, and amongst the distinguished persons present on that occasion was the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney. He (Mr. C. Hall) could almost imagine—if it were not presumptuous in so humble a Member as himself to do so—what the feelings of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian were when he saw in the daily papers on his arrival in England that his trusted law officer was about to embark in a crusade against the police of the Metropolis. The right hon. Gentleman would think that an attack upon the conduct of the police in Ireland would be all very well—that it would be safe to say anything about the police at Mitchelstown—but that an attack upon the police of the Metropolis was a very different thing. Well, Parliament assembled on the 9th, and his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney got up and gave Notice of an Amendment. But was the Amendment he moved the Amendment he promised his constituents at Hackney—was it a motion for a searching inquiry into the conduct of the police and the condemnation of that capricious officer of the Executive, Sir Charles Warren? No, it was nothing of the kind, but it was an Amendment practically synonymous with the Resolution under discussion, and he (Mr. C. Hall) could not help thinking that it was drafted in that shape by the advice of an "old Parliamentary hand." The searching inquiry had vanished into thin air. The attack upon the police had gone by the board, and he could not help thinking that his hon. and learned Friend—whom he regretted was not in his place—could not help feeling, perhaps, somewhat relieved that the pressure of his friends the Members for the Liberal constituencies in the Metropolis and the surrounding boroughs was not able to urge him on to his original intentions. He (Mr. C. Hall) could not help thinking that it was a case in which—

> "Those behind cried 'forward,'
> And those in front cried 'back.'"

The hon. and learned Gentleman comes into the House, and, Janus-like, says, "I find no fault with the preservers of the public peace," and then he goes to his constituents, who hiss the very name of the police and Sir Charles Warren, and says, Janus-like, "See how I sympathize with you, and see what I have done to bring the brutal conduct of the police before the House of Commons;" and no doubt he would have liked to have been able to say, "When my resolution is moved in the House, you will see how I have succeeded in bringing the whole of this matter before the House of Commons." That would have been an attitude which might have been taken by an irresponsible person, but it seemed to him (Mr. C. Hall) that it was hardly the face that ought to be worn by an ex-

Minister of the Crown. What were the terms of the Resolution his hon. and learned Friend had submitted to them? He would deal with them very shortly, because he apprehended that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had practically demolished the first half of the Resolution. The Resolution begged the question entirely. It spoke of the right of Her Majesty's subjects to attend open air meetings in the Metropolis, and he hoped the House would bear this in mind, that after his hon. and learned Friend had given notice of such a very temperate Amendment, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian suggested that the Government should give his hon. and learned Friend a day for the discussion of this question. What was the question? It was not a question of condemning the police; it was not a question of condemning Sir Charles Warren; but it was an abstract Resolution with regard to the right of public meeting or the alleged right of public meeting in the Metropolis that was to be discussed. But this served as a very good peg for enabling irresponsible Members who sat below the Gangway on the opposite side to make an attack upon the police, and he ventured to say that it had been designed for that very purpose. The ex-Law Officer had kept that attack in the background. He introduced the Resolution in a manner worthy of an ex-Law Officer and of a proper Constitutional question; but it was only a peg for the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who at any rate had the courage of his convictions, and the hon. Member for North-West Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), to hang charges upon and to make attacks upon the police which this ex-Law Officer would take credit for when he next went to see his constituents at Hackney. What were the terms of the Resolution? It said—

> "That having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of public meeting for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis."

An hon. MEMBER: Open air public meeting.

MR. C. HALL: Yes; he was obliged to his hon. Friend for reminding him that those words had been put in the Resolution since it first appeared in print. He ventured to think that he should wait in vain for any hon. Gentleman of any legal experience on the opposite side of the House to declare that there was any legal right whatever for any open air meeting in the Metropolis except in such parts with regard to which there were special legal powers. Though his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney had thought it advisable to refer to what had been laid down by Mr. Justice Charles—a judge of great eminence—he (Mr. C. Hall) did not think it worth while to read all that the learned Judge said with regard to the case. The hon. and learned Gentleman was about to say, "there is an *obiter dictum*," but he changed his mind. He said, "there was something—but that had nothing to do with the case." As the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had pointed out, the point was clearly raised by the hon. and learned Member for East Fife (Mr. Asquith), and Mr. Justice Charles said this—

> "I can find no warrant for considering that there is any right to hold public meetings in Trafalgar Square or indeed in any other public place in the Metropolis."

That was a clear proposition which he ventured to say no lawyer would controvert in this House for one moment. He should wait to hear any hon. Gentleman on the opposite side say that that was not sound law. He had another authority—not so high as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby perhaps, but still a very high authority—an ex-Law Officer, one of Her Majesty's Opposition. If it were not an authority, at any rate it was a speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney. Only a few weeks ago he was consulted at a meeting of the Homerton Liberal Association as to whether or not they could insist on holding meetings in Trafalgar Square. What was the excellent advice he gave them? He said that they had better not insist upon the right of meeting there, because the legal right of the people to meet in Trafalgar Square was very doubtful. Now, what was the second part of the Resolution—if the House would bear with him while he went into it? It was this—"What were the conditions under which such meetings might be held?" He apprehended that the conditions were very simple. If meetings were to take place they must be of such a nature that they would not disturb the public peace—they must be of such a nature that they would not lead persons of ordinary temperament to fear a breach of the public peace, and they must be of such a nature as not to interfere with the legitimate user of the public place by the people who were entitled to use it. There was only one other point in the Resolution he proposed to address himself to, and that was the last branch of it—namely, what were the limits of the right of interference with open-air meetings in the Metropolis by the Executive Government. How could these limits be ascertained without reference to the circumstances of the case? The question of interference by the Executive, by the police, or by any one, must depend upon the facts of any particular case. He (Mr. C. Hall) apprehended that it was clear law that the police authorities were bound to interfere directly they had reason to suppose that a breach of the peace would ensue, and that if they did not interfere they were liable to most severe penalties. That had been laid down over and over again. If any rigid rules were to be framed by the House he ventured to think that it would be a very bad thing indeed for all parties, because it would do away with the elasticity of the Common Law. Directly they had rigid rules they found men of ingenious minds setting to work to drive a coach-and-four through them, and directly they laid down those rules they did away with the power of referring to and being guided by the Common Law. Now, he said at the outset he was very glad to hear that Her Majesty's Government intended to meet this Resolution by a direct negative, because he considered the Resolution a perfectly idle one. It was idle, because the law on the subject was perfectly well known and ascertained. The law could be ascertained by any hon. Member of the House if he consulted an elementary text book on the subject. The Resolution was mischievous, because its discussion was a waste of the valuable time of the House. But, on the whole, he was not sorry the Resolution had been proposed. The reason for its being brought forward was not far to seek. It was necessary for hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to do something to make good their brave words in the Recess; it was necessary after the tornado of abuse and the whirlwind of vituperation that was poured on the Government from week to week and day to day all through the Recess, for hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to do something to attack Her Majesty's Government. What arrows had they got in their quivers? It was alleged there had been a breach of Privilege because an hon. Member was most unluckily mistaken for some one else. That was the first attack; and this was the second attack. Her Majesty's Government would be able to withstand such attacks. Although this was an idle and mischievous Resolution, he was not sorry it had been brought forward. He was not sorry it had been brought forward, because it would give Her Majesty's Government an opportunity of showing that they were determined, without fear or favour of class or persons, to maintain law and order in this country. He was also not sorry this Resolution had been brought forward, because a vote on this Resolution would give the people of this country an assurance that it was not the Executive alone, not the police alone, who were determined that these disturbances should be quelled, but that a majority of Parliament by its voice made declaration that, as there was the duty of maintaining peace among the nations of Europe, a duty of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) approved, so, too, there was a duty no less important—the duty of maintaining peace and order amongst the citizens of this great country, and that in the performance of this duty Her Majesty's Government would be supported by all save those who loved disorder as a means of adding to their small stock of political capital.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) was afraid the discussion was going to resolve itself into a technical discussion on points of law which were not properly understood, and upon which they were by no means in agreement. So far as he was concerned he was not prepared to admit the statement of law which had been made upon this subject. He knew he ran a great risk in making this statement. If it were true that a little learning was a dangerous thing, it was especially true when applied to law; but he had endeavoured as one who had taken a great part in public open air meetings for a number of years past to understand the law upon this subject, and he absolutely denied the correctness of the statement of the law as laid down by the Home Secretary. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to place them in this peculiar position, that unless the statutory law of the land had stated that a person had this or that right, no such right existed. He (Mr. Howell), on the contrary, declared that the people of this country had a right and a legal right unless there be statutory law to the contrary. They had heard a great deal about the Common Law; he was not prepared to admit that the reading of the Common Law by the previous speaker was exactly in accordance with what that Common Law was on matters of public meeting. He had consulted the work of one who was supposed to be an authority on this matter, not for the purpose of this debate, but long years before this was anticipated to arise, Broom's *Commentaries on Common Law*. Broom laid down the principles in regard to the right of public assembly, and a great number of other things touching the law of public meetings. He said not one single word in regard to no such right existing unless that right had been defined by law. He (Mr. Howell) went a step further, and asserted that the House itself was legislating Session after Session as though the right absolutely existed until put down by statutory law. He called the attention of hon. Members to the Private Bills which were passed in connection with municipalities and public authorities. Session after Session Committees of the House were appointed for the purpose of investigating those Bills, and to see if they went beyond the ordinary law of the land. It was only during the last Session that he opposed a Bill brought in by the Corporation of Over-Darwen; he challenged one particular clause in that Bill, and, rather than be called upon to fight for the Bill, the clause was struck out, and the Bill was allowed to pass. Now, what point was involved in the Bill? Simply the right of public meeting, and the right of procession through the streets. Every municipality in the Kingdom, before they could interfere with this kind of thing, especially when it had been established by long usage, had to bring in a Bill giving the Police or the Local Authority the right of interference. No such statutory law existed in regard to Trafalgar Square, and none had ever existed. Hon. Gentlemen had referred to the past history of that Square; but no one yet had referred to the matter who had perhaps so wide an acquaintance with the subject as he had himself. He called for many years most of the large meetings held in the Square. The meetings were threatened with prohibition more than once, and on one occasion he believed a prohibition was issued; but the meeting was permitted to be held — that was to say, it was not interfered with. If a right existed at that time to interfere with meetings in Trafalgar Square, why was not the prohibition carried out; why wait until the present moment to give effect to the prohibition? That was not the first time that they had some rather sad scenes in Trafalgar Square. He well remembered that in 1878 there were scenes of disorder, and that that was the first time, perhaps, that meetings in Trafalgar Square were called in question. All meetings held prior to that date, and the great number held since, had not been complained of because of their disorderly conduct. Many people had their theories as to why the meetings on that occasion were disorderly. They knew that on that occasion men went about the streets breaking peoples' windows, and went as far as Harley Street with the intention of breaking the windows of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Some people knew pretty clearly where the money came from to call this disorder into existence, and who it was that instigated the disorder which continued for several weeks. That, however, was ancient history, and he would come down to the more recent meetings, which, perhaps, led absolutely to the prohibition and to the scenes of bloodshed which followed. Matters commenced at the beginning of 1886, and singularly enough, a very odd circumstance occurred. There were two sets of persons, both hating the Liberal Party, who were paid to get up a meeting at one and the same time. Like two sets of persons bargaining in an auction room one against the other for some particular article, these two sets of persons, though paid practically by the same parties, happened to come into collision. That was a favourable opportunity waited for so long by the Tory Party in order to put their foot down on meetings in Trafalgar Square. The question was dealt with, and dealt with in a way that was not satisfactory, at any rate to some. Some of them challenged what was done on that occasion; but the present Chief Commissioner of Police was appointed as a man, singularly enough, who was going to put an end to all this disorder. Persons prophesied that this was to be the particular man to put an end to the disorder; but he put an end to the disorder in a way that did not satisfy the prophets. With that he (Mr. Howell) had nothing to do; but with regard to the scenes of disorder which had taken place in the Square, allow him to say very solemnly to the House that they could not be charged upon the Liberal Party, allow him to say very distinctly that they could not be charged upon Members generally who spoke and sat upon the Opposition side of the House, and that they could not be charged upon the political clubs of London, who called the meeting for the 13th of November. It was very important that that fact should be borne in mind, and, in order to ease the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary upon that point, he would cite an instance which took place in his own constituency. His conduct was called in question with respect to this very matter; he was not in favour, as perhaps some hon. Gentlemen knew, of the meeting which was held on the 13th November, and he was still less in favour of the meeting which followed on the 20th November. His conduct was called in question, and he was blamed very severely by a great number of persons, and he went to face his constituents upon the matter. He happened, as the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary said of himself just now, not to have expressed himself very carefully on the occasion, and he was supposed to have said something that led some people to believe that he imputed to them a desire to go to the Square for the purpose of creating disorder. Now, the club to which he referred was one of the largest clubs in London, and, so far as this particular meeting was concerned, one of the most determined. If there was any club in London which was determined to run any risk in order to assert what it believed to be an honest public right, it was the club to which he referred; but it was supposed he had blamed them, or blamed someone in connection with it, for some of the scenes of disorder which took place in Trafalgar Square, and as one man they rose to resent that imputation. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had spoken about oyster knives and a great number of other formidable instruments which were taken to Trafalgar Square. He (Mr. Howell) said, and said advisedly and with some knowledge of the facts, that none of those instruments of torture were taken to the Square or attempted to be taken to the Square by the men who were responsible for calling the meeting. As he had said before, he had called some of the large meetings in Trafalgar Square; he would refer to one meeting which took place not absolutely in the Square, but in consequence of which the Square had to be taken possession of. It was the largest meeting ever held not only in London but, perhaps, in any part of the world, the largest, taking it from beginning to end, especially as regarded the procession which passed through the streets of London. Hon. Members of this House had an opportunity of seeing the effect of the great demonstration in 1884; one of the most intelligent officers of this House, who knew what he was speaking about, estimated the numbers which he saw from the Clock Tower at something like 500,000 of persons. He (Mr. Howell) thought that that estimate was not very far short of the mark. Now, he wished to call the attention of the House to the fact that on that occasion there was not a single shop looted, not a window broken, not a single plant in Hyde Park destroyed, no injury whatever was done, and therefore scenes of disorder were not, it was clear, a necessary accompaniment of meetings in Trafalgar Square or elsewhere. What he thought was that the police should have done their duty in regulating the meeting in Trafalgar Square. The right hon. Gentleman did not seem to see the difference between regulating and suppressing; but it seemed to him (Mr. Howell) that the two operations were absolutely opposite, and that they could not regulate a thing if they suppressed it. The police ought to have regulated the meetings, and to have taken care that any persons who showed a disposition to be disorderly were apprehended. That, he took, to be the duty of the police, and if they had been content with that, they would have had at their backs in support of their policy the great majority of the working men of London. It was a matter of very great importance that the populace should be on the side of the police. The right hon. Gentleman spoke about the irritation felt by the police, the police, who were the paid servants of the public, and who had a right, in the words of the Proclamation or the Police Orders which were issued in 1866, to take no notice of those wild expressions which were sometimes used. It was better for the police to feel and pocket, as it were, a certain amount of irritation, than it was to irritate the great mass of the populace, and have them against the police. One hon. Member had already spoken of the possibility of teaching London how to disregard law. He (Mr. Howell) felt more strongly upon that point than perhaps many Members; but having himself conducted, and successfully conducted, a great number of meetings at which there had been no terror and no disorder, he should be extremely sorry that his name should ever be associated with scenes of disorder either in Trafalgar Square or elsewhere. He was particularly anxious that the right of public meeting should be preserved, and he was as anxious as any hon. Member opposite to see law and order preserved; but the right way of preserving order and of maintaining law was to have the people on the side of the authorities, and in that way to give them justice. When they did justice towards the great mass of the people they would be always sure to have the people on their side. The people of this country had not yet learned, though he was sorry to say that they seemed to be fast learning, that the only way to get justice done by this House was to create scenes of disorder. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen had not attended so many meetings as he had. If they had, they would have heard sometimes, in large public meetings in various parts of London, and in various parts of the country too, that the men who were applauded most were not those who tried to prevent the assembly when there was a possibility of disorder, but those who rushed in at the time of the disorder, and who had since suffered for having so rushed in. It was a very dangerous thing for the Government, and a very dangerous thing for the Home Secretary, who was responsible for the good government of the country, to cause a suspicion to exist in the minds of the people that the only way whereby they could get their rights was to ally themselves to the party of disorder. The Liberal Members for London were not at all likely to forget that they had as great duties to perform as hon. Members opposite had in endeavouring to maintain order and in endeavouring to maintain peace; but they did want to see, at the same time, that the ancient right, a right which had been enjoyed for so long a time without any danger to the public peace, should be preserved to the people. His opinion was that if on the occasion in question the police had done their duty, if they had only acted in accordance with the instructions issued to them in 1866, there would not have been the scenes in Trafalgar Square they all had to deplore. He certainly thought that the scenes that took place in the Square recently would not have taken place under the Predecessor of the present First Commissioner of Police. There seemed, however, to be a determination to get rid of Colonel Henderson, the most humane man who had ever presided at Scotland Yard, but who was not thought to be severe enough with the people. Hon. Members opposite might be able to applaud to-day the action that had been taken by the Government in resisting this Motion for inquiry; they might be able to prevent an inquiry; they might possibly even be able to prevent the holding of meetings in Trafalgar Square; but, as sure as he was speaking to the House to-night, it would re-act not in their favour but against them; and, sooner or later, the people of England would re-assert the right they had enjoyed for so long a time. He trusted that this question would not be decided upon mere technical points of law; he did not think that if the law stood as stated by the Home Secretary it would be recognized by the great mass of the people as being a just and equitable law. The only way in which the Government could settle this question of the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square was by taking, if they would allow him to use the expression, the bull by the horns, by bringing in a Bill as they brought in the Parks Regulation Bill; that was the way in which they might regulate meetings in Trafalgar Square. He verily believed that further attempts would be made to re-assert this right, and be made in such a way as might become extremely dangerous to the public peace, extremely dangerous to the police whose duty it was to maintain order in the Metropolis, and extremely dangerous to the whole of the community. He urged upon the Government, as the easiest possible way out of their difficulty in regard to this matter, to assent to the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), whatever they might do with regard to other Motions on the Paper. It seemed to him that the Government could in that way relieve themselves of a great difficulty, for it must be borne in mind that the First Commissioner of Works was supposed to lend the high authority of his name to the meetings which took place, meetings which led to these scenes of disorder. The poor people took it for granted that, when a Minister of the Crown said he had no right to interfere if he wished, and that he did not wish to interfere if he had the right, they had a right to assemble in Trafalgar Square. They certainly interpreted the words of the right hon. Gentleman in that way, especially when they were in conjunction with the words uttered by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to the effect that the intention of the Government was not to interfere with a *bonâ fide* political meeting. It would be some comfort, perhaps, to the Home Secretary to know that it was upon the supposed assent of the Home Secretary as to the right of a *bonâ fide* political meeting to assemble in Trafalgar Square, that members of London clubs called a meeting in Trafalgar Square for the 13th of November, and held that meeting even in spite of the remonstrances of some of their friends. He (Mr. Howell) wished to have this right preserved to the people of London; to take it away would be one more proof given to this country of the value of unholy alliances. Working men's clubs would build—it would stimulate them to build—still greater halls in which to organize themselves very much more completely, and he should be glad to see that done. If it were done, and if the Bill which he had introduced to provide for a more complete system of registration were passed, there would be less need for public meeting in the open air, the people would be able to decide all questions at the ballot-box. But, he asked the House to hesitate before they put their foot down upon the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square, which meant, practically, the right of meeting in all the open spaces of London except those specially exempted in the Parks Regulation Act.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said, he represented that part of London immediately contiguous to the scene of these meetings and he asked the indulgence of the House for a few moments on that account. His constituency included not only the House in which they were now assembled, but also one of the most cherished possessions of Englishmen — Westminster Abbey. It was, perhaps, not unnatural that he should offer to the House an illustration of the results that might be looked for from these meetings, an illustration of what had already indeed taken place, because he claimed that it was the results which flowed from these meetings which was the title for the suppression of the meetings. On the 23rd of last October there was a meeting held in Trafalgar Square. For a considerable period up to that time the police had prohibited meetings in that place. The police then changed their policy and permitted meetings on the Sunday, on the ground, he believed, that the traffic on a Sunday was not such that it could be seriously interfered with by the gatherings. On the 23rd of October a platform was erected in the Square facing the National Gallery, and from it several speakers addressed the meeting. All of a sudden the crowd rushed away from Trafalgar Square, down towards Westminster Abbey. This was the day of what he might call a permissive policy all round, and this crowd rushed in through the northern entrance of Westminster Abbey. He could best describe what followed by reading the words of the official report:—

"The following are amongst the various acts of indecent behaviour and brawling by which

> the so-called unemployed molested, vexed and disturbed the clergymen ministering on the occasion, and the congregation—namely, shouting, swearing, hissing, booing, talking, hustling the congregation, standing on the backs of the benches already occupied, clambering up on the monuments, interrupting the service, waving handkerchiefs as a signal to boo and hiss, wearing of hats, smoking pipes, spitting about, and other disgraceful acts."

And this was free speech. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members opposite laughed; but he asked them if they were prepared to go to their constituents and say that this debate had not been raised in the interest of free speech. Unquestionably the results which flowed from the central acts and subject of this debate had direct reference to the question of free speech. He had read the account of the proceedings at Westminster Abbey with shame and indignation that that ancient and venerable church should have been so foully polluted and that a community of men practising their own form of religion within their own walls should be subjected to such an unmanly outrage. [An hon. Member: What was the date?] The 23rd of October. Let him give another illustration of free speech. It had often happened that a crowd had been amassed on the occasion of these meetings in Trafalgar Square, ostensibly for the purpose of listening to addresses. All of a sudden the speaker's voice ceased, the red flag or the black flag, around which the people were generally congregated, had gone down, and as if by a pre-concerted movement, the crowd had rushed off down some thoroughfare faster than the police could follow them, hooting, yelling, breaking windows and carrying terror and panic into every house in the vicinity. Was that free speech? No: it was meant to terrify and it did terrify. As long as such a state of things was permitted to be possible, it was a mere mockery to talk of the liberty of the subject. There was no question of free speech here; it was a question of the right of every law-abiding person or community of persons to the protection of the Executive Government in their life and property, their business and trade, and the peaceful pursuit of their daily avocation. It was a question upon which he claimed that any and every Government, no matter to which Party it belonged, was bound to speak with no uncertain voice. The incidents to which he had referred were mere illustrations of the danger and inconvenience which had been found to arise from these meetings in Trafalgar Square, and the point he wished to impress upon the House was that that danger and inconvenience was always immiment in these meetings in Trafalgar Square, was in fact inseperable from them, whether they were held on sufferance as under the present law, or under a new law which should legalize them altogether, whether they were held with or without the supervision of the police. That danger and inconvenience and terrorism being always imminent, these meetings were inherently and *de facto* unlawful assemblies. Now, what was an unlawful assembly? The legal giants had stood face to face in the arena; but he was not going to hesitate to quote a very well-known definition of an unlawful assembly—

> "Any meeting assembled under such circumstances as, according to the opinion of rational men, is likely to produce danger to the tranquillity and peace of the neighbourhood, is an unlawful assembly."

He would give his authority for the benefit of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). The definition he had read would be found on page 1 of 9, C. B. & P. The observations of Mr. Justice Charles at the last trial at the Old Bailey had been quoted. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had referred to them; but he omitted to call attention to the very important words which exactly bore out the definition he (Mr. Burdett-Coutts) had just given. Mr. Justice Charles said—

> "An unlawful assemblage is an assemblage which attempts to carry out any common purpose, lawful or unlawful, in such a manner as to give other persons a fear of a disturbance of the peace."

He could quote authorities to show that the meetings in Trafalgar Square for the last two years had certainly come under that category; but before he did so, he wished to say a word or two upon another question of law. It was often said that the House of Commons took very good care of itself in the matter of public meetings. By an Act of Charles II., any meeting of more than 10 persons for the purpose of presenting Petitions was made illegal; but by the Act which was quoted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), the Act 57 *Geo.* III., it was recited—

> "It is highly inexpedient that public meetings or assemblies should be held near the Houses of Parliament or near His Majesty's Courts of Justice in Westminster Hall on such days as are hereafter mentioned,"

and the days mentioned were those upon which either House of Parliament should be Sitting, or on which the Court of Chancery, Queen's Bench, Common Pleas or Exchequer, or any of them, or any Judge of them shall be sitting, and the Act went on to declare illegal on those days any meeting composed of more than 50 persons in any street, square, or open place within a distance of one mile of Westminster.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, the hon. Gentleman had omitted to read the material part of the section.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS said, he was sorry he had only transcribed the part he thought applicable. He assured the hon. Gentleman he had no intention of suppressing anything. If the hon. Gentleman was able to answer him, he should be very happy to listen to him. What he had quoted was cited at the time of the Chartist trials, and it had since been relied upon. The House, recognizing the danger and inconvenience which was likely to arise from these meetings, took very good care to protect itself; but the House, so far as the necessity for such protection went, was but a counterpart of every business and trading family in the Metropolis. He put it to the House to say by what justice they refused to the humblest shopkeeper or the humblest private dweller in this vicinity, the protection which they were so jealous to claim for themselves. Next to the House of Parliament the Courts of Justice were to be protected. Every meeting was illegal which was held during the sittings of the Courts of Justice within one mile of the Courts of Justice. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, the Act said so; and Trafalgar Square was certainly well within a mile of the Courts of Justice. Before he came to the proof that these meetings were, and always must be, unlawful, he would like to say one word with regard to the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell). That Motion the hon. and learned Member for the Chesterton Division of Cambridgeshire (Mr. C. Hall) had described as a Vote of Censure on the Government, as undoubtedly it was. The question was therefore a Party question. Further, the Motion must mean one of two things—either that the existing law required to be defined and expounded, and that was to be done in the terms of the Motion by a Select Committee, or it meant that there was no satisfactory law and that a new law ought to be made. In the first place, he ventured to urge that it was not the duty of a Select Committee of that House to expound or define the law. Secondly, if a new law was wanted, why, as his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) had asked, did not the Government bring in a new law? He (Mr. Burdett-Coutts) asked why, if the hon. and learned Gentleman wanted that, he did not bring in a Bill to legalize these meetings. The issue was whether or not it was advisable that these meetings should be held in Trafalgar Square. He had in his hands a diary of the meetings which had been held in Trafalgar Square during the last two years, with extracts from some of the speeches as well as a full record of the events which took place. But, although it would make his case very much stronger and enable him to prove that these meetings were necessarily dangerous and threatening in their nature, he would not trouble the House with reading the diary at length. But he would like to offer to the House the conclusions which were to be drawn from it, and first there was one specific detail in the diary of events to which he wished to call the attention of the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Motion made a great point of the announcement by a number of clubs published on the 5th November, that a meeting would be held on the 7th of that month. It appeared that something important happened between the date on which the November meeting was convened and the date on which it was forbidden. It was said that the meeting would be disagreeable to Her Majesty's Government, and immediately after that Sir Charles Warren issued his order forbidding that meeting. He did not charge the hon. and learned Gentleman with a wilful mis-statement, but there was in that statement a suppression of the most important facts in connection with those two announcements. At a meeting on the 2nd of November, Allman made a speech to a large crowd in Trafalgar

Square, in which he called upon his hearers to stand shoulder to shoulder and fight the police. Again, he said they would continue to meet every day and urge the Government to do something for them, until the 9th of November, when they would have a final demonstration and a big row and if necessary a big riot. On the 3rd of November another meeting was held in the Square in which the people were told to reserve themselves for to-morrow. On the 4th Allman and Lynch were arrested. The people were advised to strike a blow to terrorize, stagnate the whole trade of the City, and to unsheath the sword of Liberty. On the 6th of November the people were kept moving on by the police, and a constable was attacked by a man who, when arrested, had an open knife in his hand. These were the events which led to the issue of the regulations by Sir Charles Warren, and they had a most important bearing on the whole case. They happened between the announcement of the meeting and the announcement by Sir Charles Warren, and he thought it would have given a better view of the whole case if the hon. and learned Gentleman had read these extracts as leading up to the issue placed before the House. The conclusion which he drew from the diary of meetings in Trafalgar Square was that there had been no fettering of free speech by the Government, and no prohibition of meeting until riot had actually occurred. A riot had occurred in February, 1886, and that was a period in which there was no suppression at all in the sense referred to in the terms of this Motion. In the present case the police were hustled and assaulted; the public had been clearly warned that the mob was organizing, but in spite of what was done the mob grew more numerous and their language more threatening and violent, until it was obvious that a repetition of the riot of 1886 would take place. He claimed that what he had related with regard to these meetings in Trafalgar Square, established his premise, which was the central point of his remarks, namely, that there was so much danger attendant upon these meetings that they constituted unlawful assemblies. Free speech was not the prerogative of any political Party in the State. He attached due weight to the motives of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite, who had stated that evening that they would facilitate the Closure Rules. If he placed himself by anticipation in the time to which those hon. Members looked forward, namely, when they would be able to turn this weapon, which the House in the interests of free debate had placed in the hands of the Government, against Members on those benches, then he could see a thousand reasons for the employment of free speech. But they did not claim that that right should be exercised under conditions which would inflict serious loss, danger, and inconvenience upon any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. For these reasons he earnestly congratulated Her Majesty's Government on their having looked upon this matter not from a Party point of view, but from the broad and solid basis of justice to the community, and, moreover, he congratulated Her Majesty's Government on having offered a firm and decided opposition to the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton), who had given notice of the following, as an Amendment to Sir Charles Russell's Motion, at end, add—

"And that, in the opinion of this House, it would ensure much greater confidence in the administration of the Law if a full and public inquiry were granted into the alleged unlawful assembly in Trafalgar Square on Sunday, November 13, 1887, and the conduct of the Police in connection therewith,"

said, without discourtesy he would not enter into the full discussion of the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. Burdett-Coutts). The hon. Gentleman quoted as an enactment that which was not one. The hon. Member had told the House that it had been enacted by 57 *Geo.* III., c. 29, that no meeting whatever could take place within a mile of Westminster when Parliament or the Law Courts were sitting. That was simply not a fact. It was perfectly true that some meetings must not take place. These meetings were specified, and it was in kindness to the hon. Member that he asked him to complete the quotation in order to save him from making a blunder. He would not reply further to the speech of the hon. Gentleman. [*Cries of* "Read."] It was not absolutely necessary that legislators should know Statutes; but they had scarcely a right to oblige a Member at that hour of the night (11.20) to read a Statute to which he had referred specifically, and ignorance did not justify interruption.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS said, that he preferred very much to be thoroughly sat upon, and as he had been challenged to read the quotation he should now very much like to hear the hon. Gentleman read it himself.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he fancied that the operation to which the hon. Gentleman had referred had already been performed, and perhaps the hon. Member would now allow him to proceed. He wished to address himself to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews), and he did so with some misgivings, because none could deny the eloquence which the right hon. Gentleman brought to bear upon the subject. He regretted that it was the eloquence of the Advocate rather than of a Member of the Executive intrusted almost with judicial duty. The right hon. Gentleman left a number of important points put to him by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) without reply. The right hon. Gentleman made no answer in commenting on a letter sent from the Chief Commissioner of Police to the manager of Mrs. Weldon's meeting, although on the face of it it distinctly recognized the right which he denied. The right hon. Gentleman made no answer to the habitual user of the Square for more than 30 years as a right except to say that it was by licence and permission, when the facts quoted were facts of distinct disproof of any such licence or permission, and of distinct assertion of the user of right. The right hon. Gentleman took no notice of the appeal made by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney as to the advice given by the Law Officers of the Crown, which was quoted by Sir George Grey in that House, and which was in the Home Office for reference. The right hon. Gentleman did not venture to suggest that there was any mis-statement, but he left Sir George Grey's declaration that he had been advised that the public had a right of meeting in Trafalgar Square entirely untouched. Sir George Grey, on the 24th July, 1886, said that when the meeting was about to be held in Trafalgar Square he stated, as far as he was informed, that it was a legal meeting; that any meeting at which language was held that was calculated to produce a breach of the peace was illegal, but that a meeting held to discuss Parliamentary reform was not in itself illegal; that he gave directions to the police in regard to that meeting; and that he begged to inform an hon. Member who asked what means he had taken to preserve the peace that he gave directions to the Commissioner of Police that he was not to interfere with the meeting as long as it was legally and peacefully held. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, again, had entirely avoided the challenge put to him by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney as to why he did not allow the case of Mr. W. Saunders to be tried. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman why he did not. He would suggest that the Law Officers of the Crown pointed out that, although Mr. Saunders had disobeyed the proclamation and held his meeting in spite of the right hon. Gentleman, it was not an unlawful meeting, and that the question which would have to be tried would be whether it was unlawful from being held in Trafalgar Square, and that the right hon. Gentleman was advised that he would be beaten on that issue, and, therefore, he abandoned the prosecution. The matter which had to be considered on his Amendment differed very considerably from the question raised by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney; although his Amendment was in no sense hostile to the hon. and learned Member's Motion, but only an addition to it. There were two questions before the House for the expression of its opinion upon them. One of those questions was whether there was a right of public open meeting in England. He said, clearly, that there was. Was there such a right in the Metropolis? Notwithstanding what the hon. and learned Attorney General for the Duchy of Cornwall (Mr. C. Hall) said, he contended that there was. Was there such a right of meeting in Trafalgar Square? Notwithstanding the declaration, unqualified and unmeasured, of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, he equally contended that there was. But if there were not it would be a sad thing for this country. The only phrase, which lingered in his memory, of the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, was that free speech was of no English Party. That was true. It was only 160 years ago that the Conservatives—the Tories as they then called themselves—were pleading for what he should plead that night. It was because at that time they were denied the liberty of public meeting and were harassed when they tried to exercise their right, that they pleaded before the mother of Parliaments for affirmation for them of that of which they would to-day deny the use to the people. He asked hon. Members differing from him in politics to reflect on the great difficulties they put in the way of men who might hold strong views, but who desired to guide their fellow-countrymen wisely and peacefully in seeking useful reforms, if they took away from the people of England the only outlet and safety-valve which the poor had for making known their grievances to the world. The hon. and learned Member for South Hackney had dwelt on the great value of the right of public meeting. Now, he did not pretend that that right had always been wisely used by himself, but he did pretend that he had done his best his whole life through to keep it peacefully, orderly, and law-abiding. When he had thought that right unfairly challenged he had insisted upon it against the Government itself. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary was good enough to congratulate him that he had been successful. But if the right hon. Gentleman had proved that he had been successful in over-riding the law that would not have been a matter for congratulation across the floor of the House. It was matter of congratulation, because he had kept to the legal right and he had been content always to argue the questions raised step by step before the tribunals of the country, which he found did justice without reference to who was the man that was pleading before them; and he said that equally when he was defeated and when he was successful. Well, because some men might use violent language, was that a good reason why the whole right of public meetings should be withheld and denied? If that was attempted they might provoke an uprising which would require far stronger brains and stouter hearts to meet it than were possessed by the present occupants of the Treasury Bench. He interrupted the right hon. Gentleman in order to ask him for the names of the speakers whom he quoted. He was sorry to say with the exception of one name the right hon. Gentleman did not give them, because he alleged that one particular speaker, who urged the setting fire to London in several places, was the speaker whose speech gave the Government the right to interfere with this meeting. He told the right hon. Gentleman his excuse for his interruption, that if he could identify the name he was prepared with evidence to show that the speaker who used that language had been seen in company with the police, but not in custody. The right hon. Gentleman, with a skill of tongue which he did not possess, said that he did not know that the police were not fit company; but surely the right hon. Gentleman hardly misunderstood his suggestion. What he was prepared to do if the name be given—it was difficult to make a charge upon it until he knew the name—was to show that the man who was in custody in connexion with the Trafalgar Square meetings was dismissed by the magistrate, and that, while in custody, he pointed out from a window overlooking the yard to Mr. Burleigh—a reporter of the Press—a man in plain clothes with the police in the yard, who, he said, was the man who used those words in the Square. The communication he had received might be untrue; but the writer stated that he was prepared to make the statement in a formal way so as to subject him to prosecution for giving false evidence. While not committing himself on the subject he was ready to hand the letter over in order that an investigation might be made, provided he was first furnished with the name of the person who was supposed to have made the speech. As to the right of meeting, he pointed out that the late Lord Derby, speaking in the House of Lords on July 24, 1866, said:—

> "There is no desire on the part of anyone to interfere with that which is the right of British subjects—namely, to assemble for the discussion of political and public questions wherever they do not infringe upon public or private rights." —(3 *Hansard*, [184] 1372.)

But there was such a desire manifested that evening. The Government, as he understood, claimed for the Executive the right to guess when a meeting ought to be stopped. [Mr. MATTHEWS dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman claimed for the Executive that whenever they had reason to think that a meeting would be unlawful they might stop it. The Executive should have no such right. If they had such a right Parliament should take it away, because it placed all meetings at the mercy of the Executive. The Executive ought to have a right to interfere if the avowed object was unlawful, or at the moment when the breaking of the peace had begun at the meeting. The Executive ought to have the right to arrest any persons guilty of seditious speaking at the meeting; but the Executive had no right whatever to imagine that any public meeting, however numerous, would be unlawful, and, therefore, to prevent it; still less had it the right to fasten upon one meeting the sins of another, or upon one set of men the sins of another set. It was a matter of common knowledge in Europe now that one Government, at any rate, had not hesitated to employ *agents provocateurs* in Geneva in order to utilize them against the men whom they were endeavouring to punish in Berlin. Although he was quite sure that it would be too dangerous an experiment for any Government to get found out at in this country today, he could not forget that our Parliamentary record showed that within the space of 60 years such dangerous and wicked experiments had been made and had been exposed by Committees of the House. In the charge of Baron Alderson in the case of Vincent, quoted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney, it was stated as distinctly as words could be that—

> "There is no doubt that the people of this country have a perfect right to meet for the purpose of stating what are or even what they consider to be their grievances. That right they always have had, and I trust always will have."

It was because he (Mr. Bradlaugh) adhered to that view that he intended to charge upon the Government that night the mischief which arose out of the Trafalgar Square meetings. The Government first vacillated, forbade and then permitted, changed its mind and purpose, now threatened and now did not, took notes of treasonable and seditious language, now prosecuted those who were misleading the people, and then punished the people who had no part in the utterances. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had been good enough to give the House the limits of the right of public meeting, saying that meetings must be held for a lawful purpose in a place where the public have a right to meet. And then the right hon. Gentleman built on that definition the conclusion that Trafalgar Square was not a place where the public had such a right. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) believed that Trafalgar Square was a thoroughfare and something more. It was also a place of public resort. It was not a thoroughfare for traffic over which carts and carriages might go; but it was like Hampstead Heath and Primrose Hill, a place where people might resort to amuse themselves or in the exercise of their political rights. For the last 50 or 60 years progress without violence or collision had been possible in this country, because successive Governments, except, unfortunately, in Ireland, had allowed all sections of the community to express their opinions, however strong, with the greatest possible freedom. The agitation for the Charter, which might have been revolutionary, was thus a movement of reform, and the bulk of the points of the Charter were now the law of the land. There was scarcely any great reform which had not been achieved by the outside pressure of the people, and there had been many great crises in our history where the voice of the people had gone for truth, for peace, and for progress, when the Government of the moment was for war, for hindrance, and for retrogression. In the Metropolis they had a population larger than that of Scotland, and where were their buildings in which they could meet? They were too few and too costly. But for a mere accident in his own case it would not be possible to get a hall in the Metropolis. On one occasion he was in St. James's Hall when the gas went out, and he managed to keep the audience quiet; since then he had been very much favoured by the proprietors. But St. James's Hall would not hold more than 5,000 people. There was a population of over 4,000,000, and there ought to be some place where the people could assemble in the exercise of their political rights. Mere numbers should not carry terror; they did not create terror when they wanted them to welcome Royalty in different parts of the town. He had been present at 40 or 50 meetings in Trafalgar Square, and he admitted the great responsibility of those who called them there. It was a right which should not be lightly used. He was quite ready to admit that the Government should regulate those meetings, and the Government, ever since the Parks' Regulation Act of 1872, had the power to lay down regulations for them, but had never done so. The meeting in question was convened by the Federation of the London Clubs. He was sorry not to see the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in his place, because the right hon. Gentleman had in the Provinces spoken of those clubs with great contempt, saying that they were in debt. The London Working Men's Clubs concerned were not rich, but they were not so much in debt as some clubs—which could be named —were. It was a libel to say that these clubs were only houses in which five or six men could live. The right hon. Gentleman spoke also of them as places where a few men met to drink. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer libelled these London Working Men's Clubs. Last night he (Mr. Bradlaugh) attended one club with 1,800 members, with lecture hall which would hold some 500, with library and reading room, and this not the largest club even in that district. The members of these clubs had rough hands, but they were men who worked to live. He knew those working men, he was born amongst them, he belonged to them; and, so far as he could, he would defend their rights. The meeting of November 13 was called by the Federation of London Clubs, which were not the drinking houses the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer represented them, but embraced some 30,000 or 40,000 men. At his own meetings in Trafalgar Square he had had 2,500 stewards chosen from these clubs, and that was the way in which he had been prepared to resist illegal force if used against him. He admitted that if the police were on the spot first the people had no right to break in; he had never encouraged people to break the law, but to stand by their rights. With regard to the Acts of Parliament relating to Trafalgar Square, the quotations from and references to these by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney has been entirely ignored and evaded by the Home Secretary, who repeated the fallacy that the bulk of the Square had been formed from the private property of the Monarch. This was not so. There were plans specifically referred to in the Statutes, and these plans showed that the bulk of the land had been private property, and that the King's Mews only formed a very small portion of the land. That private property had been bought by public money in order that there might be an open space, which the right hon. Gentleman now wished to close by his mere will. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had thought it right to introduce the name of the Sovereign and to speak of the Sovereign as the private owner of the land. The Sovereign of this country had no rights, except by the law, and the user of Trafalgar Square was not in the Sovereign to hold or to withhold. The Home Secretary is reported in *The Times* of December 12th to have stated to a deputation which waited on him at the Home Office, that "The public have no right of meeting in Trafalgar Square. It is only by sufferance and permission of the Queen they do meet there." And to-night he has talked of Her Majesty as the private owner on whose sufferance only the public might use the Square. At Bow Street Mr. Poland held the same monstrous doctrine, and contended in Mr. Saunders' case (*The Times*, November 18th) that "no person had any right to make speeches in Trafalgar Square," "it was the property of the Crown," and that the proclamation of Sir Charles Warren was "under no Statute, but under the Common Law, and as an officer of the Crown." The Crown had no right to interfere with public meetings in this country, except where Statute gave it to the Executive representing it. Personally, the Sovereign had no other right than the law defined. The Sovereign was the chief magistrate and first servant of the State, but the law was master alike over the Sovereign and the meanest of her subjects. The right hon. Gentleman had attached importance to the 3rd Section of the Act, which incorporated the Metropolitan Police Act. But the Metropolitan Police Act gave no power to the Commissioner of Police to prevent meetings in Trafalgar Square. All it did was, by Section 52, to make it lawful for the Commissioner of Police from time to time, and as occasion should require, to make regulations for the route to be observed by all carts, carriages, horses, and persons, and to prevent obstruction in the streets and thoroughfares, and in all times of public processions, rejoicings, or illuminations, to give to the constables instructions to prevent disorder and to prevent obstruction of the thoroughfares in the neighbourhood of Parliament, the public offices, courts of law, theatres, and other places of public resort, and in any case where the streets might be thronged or liable to obstruction. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; regulating it, but not forbidding it, and the best proof of that was contained in the 9th rule in the next Section. When there was any great procession, the Chief Commissioner of Police had imposed upon him the duty of making such provision as would render as little as possible the necessary obstruction consistent with the happening of that event. He contended that there was nothing in the decisions which had been pronounced which gave any sort of credence to the claim made by this Officer of the Crown to prevent meetings. It was impossible for any great theatrical performance to be held without causing some obstruction; but the Chief Commissioner had no right to prevent the performance taking place, or to bludgeon the people. The Commissioner was only to do his best to make the obstruction cause as little injury as possible to the people. At that hour (two minutes to 12 o'clock) he thought that he would not be consulting the convenience of the House in entering upon another division of his speech; and he, therefore, begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member could not properly under the circumstances take that course; but if he spoke till the hour of adjournment, he would be entitled to resume on the next occasion.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that he had once resolved that he would never speak to occupy the time of the House for the mere purpose of passing time; but it would be an absurdity for him to commence another division of his argument at that time, and he would, therefore, only thank the House for having listened to him.

And it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

TRAWLING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hunter, Bill to prohibit Trawling in Scotland; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hunter, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Barclay, and Mr. Esslemont.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 155

House adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

APPENDIX.

LORDS ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, February 9, 1888.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

"WE, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty continues to receive from all other Powers cordial assurances of their friendly sentiments, as well as of their earnest desire to maintain the peace of the world.

"We learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty's Officers, in conjunction with those of the Emperor of Russia, have completed the demarcation of the Afghan Boundary, in conformity with the terms of the Convention of last year. We thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty trusts that the work which has thus been brought to a conclusion may tend to remove the possibility of misunderstanding between the two Powers in regard to their Asiatic Possessions.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that Your Majesty, animated by a desire to prevent the effusion of blood, dispatched a Mission to the King of Abyssinia, with the hope of dissuading him from engaging in a war with Italy; and that Your Majesty deeply regrets that Your Majesty's efforts have not been successful.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the deliberations of the Conference assembled at Washington to adjust questions which have arisen between the Dominion of Canada and the United States are still in progress.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that the negotiations which were commenced in 1885 with respect to the regulation of the Suez Canal have been brought to a conclusion so far as points of difference between Your Majesty and the French Republic are concerned.

"We learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty has also entered into an Agreement with the French Republic for the protection of life and property in the Group of the New Hebrides by a Joint Naval Commission.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that a Conference of Delegates from the Powers interested in the sugar industry was summoned in London in the autumn, to consider the possibility of putting an end to the injurious system of bounties; and that they have made considerable progress towards the conclusion of a satisfactory arrangement.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that the measures which, at the cost of great labour, were passed during the last Session for the benefit of Ireland have been carefully carried into effect during the period which has since elapsed.

"We learn with satisfaction that the result of this legislation, so far as it has been tested by a short experience, has been satisfactory; that agrarian crime has diminished; and that the power of coercive conspiracies has sensibly abated; also that measures tending to develop the resources of Ireland, and to facilitate an increase in the number of the proprietors of the soil, will be laid before us.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that our attention will be invited to the subject of Local Government in England; and that measures will be submitted to us for dealing with it, in combination with proposals for adjusting the relations between Local and Imperial Finance, and for mitigating the burdens at present imposed upon the ratepayers.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that the prospects of Commerce are more hopeful than any to which Your Majesty has been able to point for many years past. We join with Your Majesty in deeply regretting that no corresponding improvement is observable in the condition of Agriculture. We thank Your Majesty for commending the interests of that great industry to our attentive care, in the hope that means may be discovered for enabling it to meet more effectively the difficulties under which it labours.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that we shall be invited to consider legislative proposals for cheapening the Transfer of Land; for modifying the procedure by which Tithe Rent-charge is collected; for the promotion of Technical Education; for preventing undue preferences in the Rates charged by Railway Companies on foreign and domestic produce; for remedying abuses in the formation of Companies under Limited Liability; and for amending the Law as to the the Liability of Employers in case of Accidents.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that measures for improving the position of the Scottish Universities, and for regulating the Borough Police in Scotland, will be laid before us, and that proposals will be submitted to us for diminishing the cost of Private Bill Legislation.

"We humbly assure Your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Your Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the measures which may be submitted to us; and we earnestly trust that in these and all other efforts that we may make to promote the well-being of Your Majesty's people, we may be guided by the hand of Almighty God."

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCCXXII.

Explanation of the Abbreviations.

Bills, Read 1°, 2° 3°, or 1^a, 2^a, 3^a, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—*1st. Div.*, *2nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings
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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 105]

Belfast Government Bill
(*Mr. Tuite, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Biggar, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. O'Doherty*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 50]

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 47]

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BURDETT-COUTTS, Mr. W. L. A. B., *Westminster*
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c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 111]

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CAMERON, Dr. C., *Glasgow, College*

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(*Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. Sexton, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Henry Campbell, Mr. Crilly*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 64]

Charities (Rent-Charges) Bill
(*Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cobb, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Arthur Williams*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 52]

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(*Mr. Peter M'Donald, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Jordan*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 48]

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(*Mr. Francis S. Powell, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Addison, Mr. Tomlinson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 28]

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- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 218

Colonial Marriages Bill
(*Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, Sir John Puleston*)
c. Ordered; read 1º* *Feb* 17 [Bill 130]

Colonies — Secretary of State (*see* Holland, Right Hon. Sir H. T.)

Colonies—Under Secretary of State (*see* Onslow, Earl of)

Colonies—Under Secretary of State (*see* De Worms, Baron H.)

Colonization
- *Answers to Circular,* Question, Lord Sandhurst; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Onslow) *Feb* 17, 697
- *Colonial Conference,* Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) *Feb* 24, 1357

Commins, Mr. A., *Roscommon, S.*
- Ireland — Law and Justice — Inquest at Mitchelstown, 378
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 114, 432

Committee of Council on Education—Vice President (*see* Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H.)

Companies' Acts Consolidation and Amendment Bill
(*Mr. James Maclean, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Lees*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1º *Feb* 27 [Bill 144]

Contagious Diseases Ordinances in Crown Colonies
- Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) *Feb* 21, 1002

Copyhold Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Hobhouse*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 10 (No. 6)

Corbet, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow, E.*
- Ireland—Fishery Piers and Harbours—Bray, Co. Wicklow, 1224
  - Irish Land Commission — Sub-Commissioners (Wicklow), 1222

Cossham, Mr. H., *Bristol, E.*
- Distress among the Labouring Classes—Appointment of a Royal Commission, 382
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 471
- Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—County Courts, 1544

Cotton, Capt. E. T. D., *Cheshire, Wirral*
- Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. X. Address in Answer to the Queen's Speech, 1768, 1771

County Courts Consolidation Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 10 (No. 5)
Read 2ª *Feb* 28, 1596

County Government (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Maurice Healy*)
c. Ordered; read 1º* *Feb* 10 [Bill 6]

Courtney, Mr. L. H. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cornwall, Bodmin*
- Grand Junction Water, 2R. 1634, 1635
- Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1416, 1446; Amendt. 1450, 1459; II. Closure of Debate, 1672; III. Disorderly Conduct, 1690; VI. Government Business, 1721; IX. Divisions, 1741, 1759; XI. Public Bills, 1781
- Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Public Buildings, Ireland, 1501
  - Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers in Ireland, 1559, 1572, 1583
  - Special Missions Abroad, 1852

Craig-Sellar, Mr. A. C., *Lanarkshire, Partick*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1413, 1428, 1462; II. Closure of Debate, 1664

Cranbrook, Viscount (Lord President of the Council)
Cathedral Churches, 2R. 536
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 46
Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services, 2R. 705

Crawford, Earl of
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 6

Crawford, Mr. D., *Lanark, N.E.*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, Amendt. 1448, 1450

Cremer, Mr. W. R., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, 1715
Public Meetings in the Metropolis, Res. 1914

Crimes Act, Ireland—see *Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act,* 1887

Criminal Evidence Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Attorney General*) *Feb* 20, 981; Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 132]

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—see *Ireland*

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Anderson, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. A. Sutherland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 58]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Feb* 22, 1195; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Mark Stewart*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn
Original Question put; A. 102, N. 190; M. 88 (D. L. 9)

Cross, Viscount (Secretary of State for India)
Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings, Motion for Papers, 1811
India (Civil Service Commission)—The Report, 1463

Crossley, Mr. E., *York, W.R., Sowerby*
British Guiana—Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1818

Curzon, Viscount, *Bucks, Wycombe*
Rabies in Dogs—Recommendations of the Select Committee, 547

Customs
Customs Officials and Political Organizations, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 1, 1848
Outport Writers, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson *Mar* 1, 1830
Statistical Department—Report of Committee, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Mar* 1, 1830

Dawnay, Colonel Hon. L. P., *York, N.R., Thirsk*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 915

Deacons (Church of England) Bill
(*Mr. Gedge, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Robert Fowler, Lord Henry Bruce*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 56]

Deasy, Mr. J., *Mayo, W.*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Proceedings at Rathmore Petty Sessions, 1483, 1484
State-Aided Emigration—Charges against Mr. Stoney, 1370, 1372

De Cobain, Mr. E. S. W., *Belfast, E.*
Post Office—Irregular Delivery of Irish Mails, 1652
Wages (Ireland), Leave, 1122

Deeds of Arrangement Act, 1887—*Charges for Searching*
Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 1, 1848

De La Warr, Earl
Malta—The New Constitution—Papers and Correspondence, 138
Vivisection, Motion for Papers, 1811

De Lisle, Mr. E. J. L. M. P., *Leicestershire, Mid*
Army—Entrance Examinations at Woolwich, 330
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 607

Derby, Earl of
Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings, Motionf Papers, 1813, 1815

De Worms, Baron H. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
  Australia (Western)—Grant of Responsible Government, 1638
  British Guiana—Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1818
  Colonization—Colonial Conference, 1358
  Malta—Boundary Commissioners—Expenses, 1481
    Constitutional Changes, 1375
  Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—Action of Colonial Governments, 1640
  Sugar Bounties—International Conference, 1247
  Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Pacific Islanders' Protection Act, 1875, 1868, 1869, 1871, 1872

Dillon, Mr. J., *Mayo, E.*
  Estimates, The, 1497, 1498
  Ireland—Administration of the Law—"Blunt *v.* Byrne," 880
    Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Cases Tried, 1127;—Re-arrest of Mr. Pyne, M.P., 875
  Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Questions
    Lord Lieutenant's Co. Down Tenants, 1492
    Mr. O'Callaghan, Sub-Commissioner, 1641
    Special Report—Schedules, 1493
    Sub-Commissioners, Co. Down, 1234
  Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1440; II. Closure of Debate, 1661; III. Disorderly Conduct, 1681; IX. Divisions, 1738, 1754, 1755, 1761
  Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 646, 771; Report, 1279, 1331, 1333, 1335, 1339, 1340
  Public Meetings—Special Shorthand Reporters, 556
  Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1561

Dillwyn, Mr. L. L., *Swansea, Town*
  Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Cases Tried), 1122
    Statistics, 1479
  Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. II. Closure of Debate, Amendt. 1658, 1660, 1674

Dimsdale, Baron R., *Herts, Hitchin*
  Army—Horse Breeding—Report of the Royal Commission, 1476

Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
  Grand Junction Water, 2R. Amendt. 1619, 1623
  Inland Revenue—Stamps on Bankers' Cheques, 545
  Members of Parliament—Index to the Return, 1247
  Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—Labels on Goods—"Foreign Make," 1642
  Metropolitan Board of Works, Motion for an Address, 677

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Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D.—*cont.*
  Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1439
  Parliamentary Elections—Deptford Election, 1003, 1004
  Post Office—Questions
    English Mail to South Africa, 540
    Select Committee on Sunday Postal Labour, 542
    Subsidies to Steam Shipping Companies, 989
  Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, 1829
  Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—County Courts, 1536, 1537

Dogs, Rabies in—Recommendations of the Select Committee
  Question, Viscount Curzon; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 16, 547

Duncan, Colonel F., *Finsbury, Holborn*
  Army—Civil Appointments for Reserve and Discharged Soldiers, 1849
  Haytian Government—Imprisonment of Mr. Coles, 376
  Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 66

Dunraven, Earl of
  Mr. M'Neill, Death of, at Boulogne, 367
  Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. 1801
  Sweating System, Motion for a Select Committee, 1590

Dutch East Indies, The—Importation of Coolies
  Question, Sir Robert Fowler; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 13, 251

Dwelling Houses (Sanitary Inspection) Bill (*Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Davenport, The Marquess of Stafford*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 82]

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Kent, Dartford*
  Charity Commissioners—Christ's Hospital, 1373
    Milton Abbas School, Blandford, Dorsetshire, 1246
  Education Department—Questions
    Award of the Merit Grant, 1652
    Practical Elementary Science, 1238
    Technical Instruction—Institution of Schools, 709
  Literature, Science, and Art—South Kensington Museum—Loans of Works of Art, 1828, 1829
  Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Charity Commission, 1529

Early Closing Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. John Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Whitley*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 8]

East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) Bill
(*Sir John Gorst, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Moved, "That To-morrow a Committee be appointed to consider of authorizing the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise money in the United Kingdom for the purchase of the Oudh and Rohilcund Railway, and for the construction, extension, and equipment of Railways in India through the agency of Companies (Queen's Recommendation signified)" (*Sir John Gorst*) *Feb* 23, 1350; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Resolutions in Committee *Feb* 24, 1462
Resolutions reported *Feb* 27, 1592; Res. 1 read 1° and 2°, and agreed to
Res. 2 read 1°; Moved, "That this House doth agree with the said Resolution" (*Sir John Gorst*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Res. 3 read 1° and 2°, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 143]

Ebrington, Viscount, *Devon, Tavistock*
Parliament—Admission of Strangers to the Speaker's Gallery, 57

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill (*Mr. James A. Campbell, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Mark Stewart*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 27]

Ecclesiastical Commissioners, The, and the Paddington Trustees—Sale of Land
Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson *Mar* 1, 1819

Ecclesiastical Contumacy Bill
(*Colonel Sandys, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Wardle, Mr. Joicey, Colonel Saunderson*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 13 [Bill 100]

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) (*Questions*)
Award of the Merit Grant, Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *Feb* 28, 1652
Education of the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb—Report of the Royal Commission, Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 21, 1008
Practical Elementary Science, Question, Mr. Hubbard; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *Feb* 23, 1238

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (*England and Wales*)—cont.
Technical Education, Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 23, 1250
Technical Instruction—Institution of Schools, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *Feb* 17, 708

Education (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Caine, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Thorburn*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 12]

Egerton, Hon. A. de T., *Cheshire, Knutsford*
Metropolitan Board of Works, Motion for an Address, 670, 686
Metropolitan Improvements—Subway between Greenwich and Blackwall, 987
Theatres (London and the Provinces)—Construction, 1656

Egypt
Administration—Sir Evelyn Baring, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 23, 1227
Lighthouses in the Red Sea, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 28, 1641
The Judge Advocate General at Cairo, Questions, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 13, 256; Questions, Mr. Bryce; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 16, 561; Question, Mr. Osborne Morgan; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 20, 878
The Suez Canal, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 20, 869

Electric Lighting Act, 1882
Questions, Mr. J. W. Barclay, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Feb* 23, 1226

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Thurlow*)
l. Presented; read 1°* *Feb* 9 (No. 1)

Ellenborough, Lord
Law and Justice—Appointment of a Public Prosecutor, 368, 369

Elliot, Hon. A. R. D., *Roxburgh*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1745

ELLIS, Mr. J. E., *Nottingham, Rushcliffe*
- Army and Navy Estimates, Select Committee on—Re-appointment, 1654
- Charity Commission—The Commissioners, 155
- Ireland—Questions
  - Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Boycotting the Police—Sentences, 1220; —John Sullivan, Blacksmith—Captain Massey, R.M., 1639
  - Land Law Act, 1887—Return of Eviction Notices, 250;—Return of the Judicial Rents, 1357
  - Law Officers—Resignation of Mr. J. C. Blake, Crown Solicitor, 1226
  - Magistracy — Appointments under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887, 1835
  - Purchase of Land Act, 1885—Arrears of Instalments of the Purchase Money, 1356;—Returns, 258
- Parliament—New Rules of Procedure, 1888—Rule I. (Sittings of the House), 1496
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 477, 494
- Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Charity Commission, 1527
  - Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1552, 1555, 1559, 1560, 1572

ELLIS, Mr. T. E., *Merionethshire*
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 898
- Quarries, Inspection of, 718
- Wales — Tithe Agitation — Employment of Military, 1835

Emigration and Immigration
- *Immigration of Foreign Paupers into England —Legislation*, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 10, 149

Emigration and Immigration
- Select Committee appointed, "to inquire into the Laws existing in the United States and elsewhere on the subject of the Immigration of destitute aliens, and as to the extent and effect of such Immigration into the United Kingdom, and to report whether it is desirable to impose any and, if so, what restrictions on such Immigration, with power to send for persons, papers, and records" (*Captain Colomb*) *Feb* 13
- Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 14, 379

Employers' Liability
- Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 13, 261

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Byrne, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. W. A. Macdonald, Mr. Chance, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Sexton*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 26]

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Lockwood*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 71]

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill
(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 27 [Bill 145]

ESSLEMONT, Mr. P., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
- Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment, 2R. 1197, 1198
- Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1388
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1159
- Parochial Boards (Scotland), 2R. 1204
- Scotland—Fishery Board—Purchase of Boats, 1830
- Sea Fishery Department—Trawling within Territorial Waters, 1486

EVELYN, Mr. W. J., *Deptford*
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 613

EWART, Sir W., *Belfast, N.*
- Ireland—Local Bankruptcy Courts, 150

Factory Acts—The "Sweating System" at the East End of London
- Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 14, 383

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill
(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 29 [Bill 154]

Fairs and Markets (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Crilly, Dr. Tanner, Dr. Commins, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Lane, Dr. Kenny*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 44]

FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
- Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1421
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1145

FENWICK, Mr. C., *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
- Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887—Checkweighmen, 869, 1002
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 200

FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Manchester, N.E.*
Africa (Central)—Slave Trade—Attack on Presbyterian Mission Stations, 1649
America (North)—Anglo-American Fisheries Disputes, 558 ;—The Treaty, 1248
Asia (Central)—Afghan Boundary, 150
Dutch East Indies—Importation of Coolies, 251
Egypt—Questions
  Administration—Sir Evelyn Baring, 1227
  Lighthouses in the Red Sea, 1641
  Suez Canal, 869
Foreign Affairs—Alleged Agreements with European Powers, 153, 377, 558
Great Britain and Venezuela — Rumoured Hostilities, 881
Haytian Government—Imprisonment of Mr. Coles, 376
H.I.H. the Crown Prince of Germany, 157
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Labour Statistics—Periodical Returns, 246
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Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—The Convention of Rome, 250
Morocco—Alleged Outrage upon a British Subject, 1656
North Sea Liquor Traffic—Floating Grog Shops—International Conference at the Hague, 543
Pacific, Islands of the—Samoa, 1838
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  The Convention of 1847, 1473
  The Loyalty Islands—Expulsion of the Rev. John Jones, 1237
  The New Hebrides, 873
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, Report, 1181
Spain—Alleged Murder of a British Merchant Seaman by a Spanish Sentry in the Port of Bilbao, 1233
  Madrid Conference, 148
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Special Missions Abroad, 1852, 1854, 1867
Trade and Commerce—Failure of Messrs. Greenway, Smith, and Greenway (the Warwick Bank), 156
Trades Unions—Statistical Tables, 249
Turkey—Dardanelles—Alleged Purchase of an Island, 1496
Venezuela—Expulsion of a British Official, 1478
Zanzibar—Land Disputes, 373

FIELD, Admiral E., *Sussex, Eastbourne*
Spain—Alleged Murder of a British Merchant Seaman by a Spanish Sentry in the Port of Bilbao, 1232

FINLAY, Mr. R. B., *Inverness, &c.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 591, 593, 594

Fishery Acts Amendment Bill
Colonel Nolan, Mr. E. Harrington, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Foley)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 32]
Read 2° * *Feb* 29

Fishing in Rivers Bill
(*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. Coleridge*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 29 [Bill 152]

FLYNN, Mr. J. C., *Cork, N.*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Arrest of Mr. Gilhooly, M.P. 709, 710 ; — Sentence on the Mayor of Cork, 713, 714, 865, 866
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 305

Food Supply, The—Exportation of Cattle, &c. from the Argentine Republic
Question, Mr. Stephens ; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Feb* 27, 1489

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Secretary of State (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Under Secretary of State (*see* FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J.)

Foreign Affairs
Alleged Agreements with European Powers, Questions, Mr. Labouchere ; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 10, 152 ; *Feb* 14, 377 ; *Feb* 16, 557
Italy—Speech of Admiral Sir William Hewett at Genoa, Question, Mr. Burt ; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 17, 715

Foreshore and Fishery Rights Bill
(*Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Hunter*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 14 [Bill 123]

FORTESCUE, Earl
Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. 1803

FOSTER, Sir B. W., *Derby, Ilkeston*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 329

FOWLER, Right Hon. H. H., *Wolverhampton, E.*
Islands of the Pacific—Religious Persecution in Tonga, 988
Parliament—Business of the House—Order of Public Business, 1204
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1411, 1441 ; Amendt. 1451, 1453, 1454 ; II. Closure of Debate, 1659 ; V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, Amendt. 1713 ; IX. Divisions, Amendt. 1723, 1753, 1761
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Pacific Islanders' Protection Act, 1875, 1867

FOWLER, Sir R. N., *London*
Africa (South)—Zululand—The Chief Usibepu, 1005
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Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1405, 1406, 1437, 1455; II. Closure of Debate, 1666; IV. Irrelevance or Repetition, 1710; V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, 1715
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 978; Report, 1293
Spain—Madrid Conference, 148

France (Price of Bread)
Question, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) *Feb* 17, 698

Franchise Extension Bill
(*Mr. Walter M'Laren, Mr. Woodall, Sir Albert Rollit, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Edwards-Heathcote, Mr. Arthur Williams, Mr. Howorth*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 38]

Friendly Societies—A Royal Commission
Question, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Feb* 13, 259

Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Norton, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Llewellyn*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 107]

Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Francis Stevenson, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Sir Savile Crossley, Mr. Channing, Mr. Burt, Mr. Mason*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 74]

Friendly Societies (Transmission of Money) Bill
(*Viscount Curzon, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Grotrian*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 51]

FULTON, Mr. J. Forrest, *West Ham, N.*
Civil Service—Clerks of the Lower Division—Salary of Writers Promoted, 998
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 121

Gambling Acts—Prize Drawing at Stoke-on-Trent
Question, Captain Heathcote; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 27, 1483

GARDNER, Mr. H., *Essex Saffron Walden*
Allotments Act, 1887—Crown Lands—Compulsory Purchases, 1485
Boundary Commissioners—The Report, 1250
Ireland—Criminal Law—Juvenile Convicts, 1249
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 601, 892

GARDNER, Mr. R. RICHARDSON-, *Windsor*
Grand Junction Water, 2R. 1628

GEDGE, Mr. S., *Stockport*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1407, 1435, 1447, 1460; II. Closure of Debate, 1666
Post Office and Inland Revenue—Stamps for Cheques, &c. 1353

GENT-DAVIS, Mr. R., *Lambeth, Kennington*
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Germany, The Crown Prince of
Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 10, 157

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c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 34]

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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Dodds*) *Feb* 23, 1619
- Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Dixon-Hartland*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c. ;" after debate, Question put ; A. 104, N. 188 ; M. 84 (D.L. 16)
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c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 22 [Bill 141]

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c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 97]

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c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 15 [Bill 127]

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Graving Dock in Bombay Harbour, Question, Mr. J. M. Maclean; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *Mar* 1, 1843

Indian Contagious Diseases Act (Act XIV. of 1868) ; *and Cantonment Acts,* Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *Feb* 23, 1246

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Industrial Agricultural Education Bill (*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Henry Fowler, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Howell, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. G. Dixon, Mr. Robert Reid, Major Rasch*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 80]

Industrial Schools Act, 1875—*Amendment—Emigration*

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Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill (*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richard, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. William Abraham*)

c. Ordered; read 1 * *Feb* 10 [Bill 61]

Intermediate Education (Wales) (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Kenyon, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Swetenham, Mr. Walsh, Admiral Mayne*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 21 [Bill 136]

Intestates Estates Bill (*Mr. Ambrose*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 28 [Bill 151]

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Land (Ireland)

The "Plan of Campaign," Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 13, 256

Land Act (Ireland), 1870

Compensation, Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 21, 997

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887

Return of Eviction Notices, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 13, 250

Returns of the Judicial Rents, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1357

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885

Returns, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Feb* 13, 258

Arrears of Instalments of the Purchase Money, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Feb* 24, 1356

Irish Land Commission

Appeal of Jeremiah Green, of Beaufort, Killarney, Questions, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 28, 1643

[*cont.*

Ireland—*Irish Land Commission*—cont.

Irish Land Commission Court, Kerry—Fair Rents, Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 27, 1480

Schedules of Prices, Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 16, 545; Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 21, 991

Special Report and Schedules, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 27, 1493

Sub-Commissioners

Sub-Commissioners for the County Divisions, Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 16, 559

Mr. O'Callaghan, Sub-Commissioner, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 28, 1641

Sittings

Co. Donegal, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 21, 999; *Feb* 24, 1356; *Feb* 27, 1490

Co. Down, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 14, 381; Questions, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 20, 862; Questions, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1233; Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 27, 1490;—*Tenants of the Lord Lieutenant*, Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1376; —*Co. Down*, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 27, 1492

Wicklow, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1222

National Education (Ireland)

Miss Donnelly, Aughiogan National School, Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Under Secretary *Mar* 1, 1822

Board of National Education—Special Fees, Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1245

Fisheries (Ireland)

Salmon Fisheries—Killaloe, Question, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 21, 1001

Piers and Harbours (Ireland)

Galway Dock, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 14, 372

Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland)

Bray, Co. Wicklow, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 23, 1224

Inland Navigation and Drainage (Ireland)

The River Barrow, Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Feb* 20, 867; Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1369

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Ireland—*cont.*

Lunatic Asylums (Ireland)

Cork District Lunatic Asylum—Appointment of Rev. Mr. Kerr, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1355

Poor Law (Ireland)

Belfast Union—Charges against Dr. Spedding, Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Under Secretary *Mar* 1, 1825

Macroom Union—Protestant Inmates, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1355

Workhouses, Question, Colonel Waring; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 17, 707

Post Office (Ireland)

Non-Delivery of a Registered Letter, Question, Mr. P. M'Donald; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 20, 860

Salaries—Delay in Payment, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 24, 1366

The Sorting Office, Dublin, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 24, 1359

Post Office, Dublin (Telegraph Department)—Miss M. A. Gough, Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 1, 1816

Law and Justice (Ireland)

"*Blunt* v. *Byrne*," Question, Sir Charles Lewis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 13, 260; Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 16, 552; Questions, Mr. E. Robertson, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 20, 879;—*Prison Clothing*, Questions, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1363

Mrs. Ryan, a Prisoner for Contempt, Questions, Mr. Picton; Answers, The Under Secretary *Mar* 1, 1833

Resignation of Mr. J. C. Blake, Crown Solicitor, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Feb* 23, 1226

The Inquest at Mitchelstown, Question, Mr. Commins; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 14, 378

County Inspector Brownrigg, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 20, 870

Bantry Petty Sessions, Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Feb* 24, 1374

Durrus Petty Sessions, Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Feb* 23, 1236; Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Under Secretary, 1242

Criminal Law (Ireland)

Juvenile Convicts, Question, Mr. Herbert Gardner; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1249

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Ireland—*cont.*

The Magistracy (Ireland)

Appointments under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Mar* 1, 1835

Petty Sessions Court, Kanturk—Refusal of Summons, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Feb* 24, 1370; *Feb* 27, 1491

Resident Magistrates, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 23, 1253

Supersession, Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1219

Mr. J. E. Barrett, J.P., Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 13, 251

Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Feb* 24, 1361

Captain Seagrave, R.M., Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *Feb* 16, 556

Law and Police (Ireland)

Alleged Police Outrages in Cork, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary; Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Gilhooly [no reply] *Feb* 20, 860

State of Ireland

Boycotting—Death of Michael Sullivan, Car Driver, Killarney, Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 28, 1642

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)

Agrarian Outrages—The Returns, Question, Observations, Earl Spencer; Reply, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) *Feb* 13, 242; Questions, Earl Spencer, Lord Herschell; Answers, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) *Feb* 17, 690

Attack on a Funeral Procession at Belfast, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 24, 1380; Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 27, 1488

Attack on the Protestant Church of Mulloughdun, Co. Fermanagh, Questions, Mr. Johnston, Mr. H. Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 14, 373

Alleged Attacks on Churches, &c., Questions, Mr. Johnston, Mr. H. Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 20, 858

Attack on a Church at Castlecaldwell, Questions, Mr. H. Campbell, Mr. Jordan; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1223

City of Cork, Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. J. O'Connor; Answers, The Under Secretary *Feb* 27, 1470

The Affray near Ennis—The late Head Constable Whelehan, Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 23, 1220

Tenants of Evicted Farms, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 21, 996

The Returns, Question, Mr. A. E. Pease; Answer, The Under Secretary *Feb* 21, 995

Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act (1887) (*Cases Tried*)

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Return of Cases tried under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' up to the 18th day of February, under the following heads:—Date of Trial; Place of Trial; Names of Magistrates presiding; Name and age of accused; Date when offence was committed; Place where offence was committed; Nature of offence; Result of Trial; Sentence (if convicted); whether appealed against; Date when Appeal heard; Place where Appeal heard; Name of Judge by whom Appeal heard; Result of Appeal" (*Mr. Dillwyn*) *Feb* 21, 1122; after debate, Question put; A. 92, N. 134; M. 42. (D.L. 7)

Ireland—Sunday Closing Acts

Moved, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the operation of the Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland)" (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*); *Feb* 27, 1594; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Isaacs, Mr. L. H., *Newington, Walworth*

Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1419

Isaacson, Mr. F. Wootton, *Tower Hamlets, Stepney*

War Office (Contracts)—Default from Tenders, 1839

Italy and Abyssinia—Massowah

Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *Feb* 16, 540

Jackson, Mr. W. L. (Secretary to the Treasury), *Leeds, N.*

Civil Service—Questions
- Appointments—Examination of Candidates, 1237
- Civil Service Commission—Suspension of Writers, 1379
- Clerks of the Lower Division, 1000;—Salary of Writers Promoted, 998
- Writers, 1241;—Promotion to the Lower Division, 1640

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Customs—Customs Establishments—Outport Writers, 1830
- Statistical Department—Report of Committee, 1830

Estimates, The, 1498

Ireland—Questions
- Fishery Piers and Harbours—Bray, Co Wicklow, 1224
- Piers and Harbours—Galway Dock, 372
- Salmon Fisheries—Killaloe, 1001

Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—Labels on Goods—"Foreign Make," 1643
- The Instructions, 548

Pensions—Civil List of George III., 1239, 1650

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JACKSON, Mr. W. L.—*cont.*
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—
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Charity Commission, 1527
County Courts, 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1538, 1539, 1540, 1541, 1542, 1543
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Police, Counties and Boroughs, Great Britain, 1545, 1547
Public Buildings (Ireland), 1501, 1505, 1508, 1509, 1513
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, 1519, 1520, 1522

JAMES, Right Hon. Sir H., *Bury, Lancashire*
Parliament—Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien), Res. 278, 279

JERSEY, Earl of
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 46
Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. Amendt. 1796, 1800, 1805

JOHNSTON, Mr. W., *Belfast, S.*
Ireland—Questions
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Belfast, Alleged Outrage at, 1488
Crime and Outrage—Attack on a Protestant Church, &c. 373, 858
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1736
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 102
Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation), 2R. 1349
South Pacific, Islands of the—Convention of 1847, 1473
The Loyalty Islands—Expulsion of the Rev. John Jones, 1237

JOICEY, Mr. J., *Durham, Chester-le-Street*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1743

JORDAN, Mr. J., *Clare, W.*
Ireland—Crime and Outrage—Attack on a Church at Castlecaldwell, 1223

Jurors' Detention Bill
(*Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Howard Vincent*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 65]

Justices of the Peace Bill
(*Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Howell, Mr. Rendel, Sir Bernhard Samuelson*)
Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 20]

KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Right Hon. Sir U. J., *Lancashire, Clitheroe*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 974
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KENNY, Mr. M. J., *Tyrone, Mid*
Army Pensions—Invalided Soldiers, 1477
Ireland—National Education—Miss Donnelly, Aughiogan National School, 1822

KENYON, Hon. G. T., *Denbigh, &c.*
County Boundaries—Report of the Commission, 149

KENYON-SLANEY, Lt-Col. W., *Shropshire, Newport*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 910

KIMBER, Mr. H., *Wandsworth*
Commons (Metropolis)—Wandsworth Common—Damage by Vehicular Traffic, 544
Rating Assessments—Exemption of Lunatic Asylums, 1494
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Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—County Courts, 1541

KIMBERLEY, Earl of
Army—Royal Barracks, Dublin—Insanitary Condition, Res. 856
India—Civil Service Commission—The Report, 1463
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KING, Mr. H. S., *Hull, Central*
Australia (Western)—Grant of Responsible Government, 1637
Civil Service—Clerks of the Lower Division, 1000
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Inland Revenue—Sale of Judicial Stamps for India, 1837
Merchant Seamen—Case of the Negro Riley, 1636

KING-HARMAN, Right Hon. Colonel E. R. (Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland), *Kent, Isle of Thanet*
Ireland—Questions
Arms Act—Refusal of Gun Licence—Mr. W. Cotter, 1359
Boycotting—Explanation of Terms, 551;—Death of Michael Sullivan, Car Driver, Killarney, 1642
Criminal Law—Juvenile Convicts, 1250
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    - Law and Police—Alleged Police Outrages in Cork, 861
    - Lunatic Asylums—Cork District Lunatic Asylum—Appointment of Rev. Mr. Kerr, 1355
    - Magistracy—Supersession, 1220
    - Mitchelstown Inquest—County Inspector Brownrigg, 871
    - National Education—Board of National Education—Special Fees, 1245;—Miss Donnelly, Aughiogan National School, 1822
    - Riots, &c.—City of Cork, 1470, 1471
    - Royal Commission on Irish Public Works—Drainage Works, 708;—Proposed Expenditure, 1218
    - State-Aided Emigration—Charges against Mr. Stoney, 1370
- Ireland—Crime and Outrage—Questions
    - Affray near Ennis—The late Head Constable Whelehan, 1220
    - Attack on a Belfast Funeral Procession, 1380, 1381, 1489
    - Attack on a Protestant Church, 374, 859, 1223
- Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Questions
    - Arrest of Mr. Gilhooly, M.P. 710
    - Boycotting the Police—Sentences, 1221, 1222
    - Press Prosecutions, 998
    - Proclaimed Meeting at Dromore—Sentence on a Ballad Singer, 1821, 1822
    - Re-arrest of Mr. Pyne, M.P. 874, 875, 876
    - Sentence on the Mayor of Cork, 714, 865, 866
    - Statistics, 1479, 1480
    - Sullivan, the Kerry Blacksmith, 1378, 1639
    - Trial of Rev. J. M'Fadden, P.P. 1353
- Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Questions
    - Appeal of Jeremiah Green, of Beaufort, Killarney, 1643
    - Kerry—Fair Rents, 1480
    - Lord Lieutenant's Co. Down Tenants, 1492
    - Mr. O'Callaghan, Sub-Commissioner, 1641, 1644
    - Schedule of Prices, 546, 991
    - Special Report—Schedules, 1494
    - Sub-Commission for Co. Donegal, 999, 1356, 1491
    - Sub-Commission for Co. Down, 381, 382, 560, 862, 863, 1234, 1235, 1490
    - Sub-Commissioners, Wicklow, 1222
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Questions
    - Administration of the Law—"Blunt v. Byrne"—Prison Clothing, 553, 1363, 1364
    - Durrus Petty Sessions, 1243
    - Inquest at Mitchelstown, 378
    - Mrs. Ryan, a Prisoner for Contempt, 1833, 1834
- Ireland—Poor Law—Questions
    - Belfast Union — Charges against Dr. Spedding, 1826
    - Macroom Union — Protestant Inmates, 1355, 1356
    - Workhouses, 707
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 500, 502, 505, 512, 514

Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. H. T., *Kent, Faversham*
- Navy—Dockyard Establishments—Sheerness, 375;—Accidents at, 374

Labouchere, Mr. H., *Northampton*
- Admiralty—Devonport Dock—Vice Admiral Grant, 867
- Egypt—Judge Advocate General at Cairo, 257
- Estimates, The, 1498
- Foreign Affairs — Alleged Agreement with European Powers, 152, 153, 377, 557, 558
- Grand Junction Water, 2R. 1624
- Grants to Members of the Royal Family—A Select Committee, 561
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    - Mitchelstown Inquest—County Inspector Brownrigg, 870
- Mr. R. T. Gunton, Secretary to the Prime Minister, 1251
- Parliament—Adjournment, 1596
    - Business of the House, 1251, 1252
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- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 420, 421, 424; Report, Amendt. 1172
- Public Meetings — Special Shorthand Reporters, 556
- Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Miscellaneous Expenses, Amendt. 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878
    - Special Missions Abroad, 1851, 1852; Amendt. 1853, 1861, 1866

Labourers' (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill

(*Mr. Stack, Mr. Matthew Kenny, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Tuite, Mr. Lalor*)

c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 18]

Labouring Classes
- *Distress among the—Appointment of a Royal Commission*, Questions, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 14, 382
- *Ironworking Industry, The—Importation of Polish Workmen*, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 13, 249

Labour Statistics
- Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 17, 715
- *Periodical Returns*, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 13, 246

Lafone, Mr. A., *Southwark, Bermondsey*
- Army Contracts—Supply of Leather, 1377

LALOR, Mr. R., *Queen's Co., Leix*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 502

LAMINGTON, Lord
Office of Works and Public Buildings, 841, 850

Land Law (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. T. M. Healy*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 1]

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) Bill
(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sinclair*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 27 [Bill 147]

Land Law (Wales and Monmouthshire) Bill
(*Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. John Roberts, Mr. Warmington, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Thomas Ellis*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 14 [Bill 122]

Land Tenure (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Barclay, Mr. Mackintosh, Sir George Balfour, Mr. William Hunter*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 14 [Bill 115]

Land Transfer Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 23 (No. 21)

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) (*Questions*)
Appointment of a Public Prosecutor, Question, Observations, Lord Ellenborough; Reply, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) *Feb* 14, 368
Court Houses—Accommodation for Prisoners awaiting Trial, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 16, 542
House of Lords—Appeals, Question, Mr. E. Robertson; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 27, 1476
Law of Evidence—County Court Practice, Question, Mr. O'Hea; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 16, 554
Affirmations by Jurymen, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 10, 153
Suffolk County Courts, Questions, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 21, 992; *Feb* 27, 1479

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LAW AND JUSTICE (*England and Wales*)—cont.
The Assizes—North-Eastern Circuit, Question, Mr. Herbert Gladstone; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 1, 1845

CRIMINAL LAW
Criminal Statistics—The Anthropometrical System, Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 1, 1817
Liverpool Assizes — Sentences of Corporal Punishment by Mr. Justice Grantham, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 22, 1205; Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Powell-Williams; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 23, 1248; Question, Mr. Powell-Williams; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 28, 1638
Case of Cope, a Convict, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 28, 1651
Murder of Elizabeth Oliver at East Hull, Question, Mr. Grotrian; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 27, 1482
Release of George Beaseley, a Convict, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 23, 1238
The Convict Bowles, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 17, 716

Law and Police
Revival of Pugilism, Questions, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 20, 864

Law of Distress Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Herschell*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 10 (No. 4)
Read 2ª, after short debate *Feb* 16, 537
Committee *Feb* 27, 1463 (No. 23)

LAWSON, Mr. H. L. W., *St. Pancras, W.*
Post Office—Dismissal of Samuel Harvey, a Letter Carrier, 1375
Sugar Bounties Conference—The Papers, 1008
Town Holdings Committee—Re-appointment, 157

LEA, Mr. T., *Londonderry, S.*
Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act (1878) Amendment, 2R. 362

LEAHY, Mr. J., *Kildare, S.*
Ireland—Questions
Board of National Education — Special Fees, 1245
Inland Navigation and Drainage—River Barrow, 867, 1369
Poor Law — Belfast Union — Charges against Dr. Spedding, 1825

Leaseholders (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill
(*Mr. Lawson, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. J. Rowlands, Mr. Warmington, Mr. R. Reid, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Thomas Ellis*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 74]

LEFEVRE, Right Hon. G. J. Shaw, *Bradford, Central*
Ireland—Administration of the Law—"Blunt *v.* Byrne," 553
Parliament—Business of the House, 565
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. VII. Committees of the Whole House, 1722; IX. Divisions, Amendt. 1754
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 742; Report, 1194; Amendt. 1254, 1261, 1262, 1271, 1273, 1274, 1277, 1327
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1548, 1555, 1558

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, Oswestry*
Tithe Rent Charge Recovery, 1250

LETHBRIDGE, Sir R., *Kensington, N.*
Ceylon—Foreign Mail Steamers, 550
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 955, 978

LEWIS, Sir C. E., *Antrim, N.*
Ireland—Administration of the Law—"Blunt *v.* Byrne," 260

Liability of Trustees Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Herschell*)
l. Presented; read 1ᵃ * *Feb* 28 (No. 24)

Libel Law Amendment Bill
(*Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Jennings, Dr. Cameron, Mr. John Morley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 17]

Licensing Laws Bill
(*Sir William Houldsworth, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Whitmore*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 22]

Life Leases Conversion Bill
(*Sir Edmund Lechmere, Mr. Hastings, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 99]

Lighthouse Illuminants
Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 13, 248

Limited Liability Acts Amendment Bill—Holders of Stock in Companies
Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 21 1005

Limited Owners (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Haldane, Mr. Asquith, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Mark Stewart, Lord Elcho, Mr. Ferguson*)
c. Ordered read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 63]

Liquor Ordinances (Crown Colonies)
Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) *Feb* 17, 711

Liquor Traffic Local Option (England) Bill
(*Mr. Allison, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Burt, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Caine, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Henry Wilson, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14 [Bill 119]

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Johnston, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Jordan*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 25]

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Lyell, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Stewart, Dr. Clark, Mr. Munro-Ferguson, Mr. Thorburn*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 106]

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill
(*Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Richard, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Carew*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14 [Bill 117]

Literature, Science, and Art—South Kensington Museum—Loans of Works of Art
Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *Mar* 1, 1827

Local and Imperial Finance—Incidence of Imperial Taxation
Question, Sir Richard Paget; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Mar* 1, 1815

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—President (*see* RITCHIE, Right Hon. C. T.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—Secretary to (*see* LONG, Mr. W. H.)

Local Government Board—County Boundaries—Report of the Commission
Question, Mr. Kenyon ; The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 10, 149 ; Question, Mr. Herbert Gardner ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 23, 1250

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Bangor and Warrenpoint) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Balfour of Burley*)
l. Presented ; read 1ᵃ * *Feb* 16

LOCKWOOD, Mr. F., *York*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 116

LONDON, Bishop of
Truro Cathedral—Fabric and Services—Select Committee, 983

London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance Bill
(*Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Baring, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Colonel Hughes, Mr. Webster, Colonel Duncan, Mr. Seager-Hunt, Mr. Wootton Isaacson*)
c. Considered in Committee ; Resolution agreed to, and reported ; Bill ordered ; read 1º * *Feb* 13 [Bill 96]

London Corporation (Charges of Malversation)
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 13, 258

LORD ADVOCATE, The (*see* MACDONALD, Right Hon. J. H. A.)

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND — Chief Secretary to the (*see* BALFOUR, Right Hon. A. J.)

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND—Parliamentary Under Secretary to the (*see* KING-HARMAN, Right Hon. Colonel E. R.)

LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (*see* CRANBROOK, Viscount)

LORD PRIVY SEAL (*see* CADOGAN, Earl)

Lotteries—Gambling Acts—Prize Drawing at Stoke-on-Trent
Question, Captain Heathcote ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 27, 1483

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W., *Cumberland, Penrith*
Charity Commission—The Commissioners, 155
Royal Holloway College, 987
City of London Parochial Charities—The Return, 1004

LUBBOCK, Sir J., *London University*
Parks (Metropolis)—Trees in St. James's Park, 1357
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. XIII. Standing Committees, 1792

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented ; read 1ᵃ * *Feb* 23 (No. 22)

Lunatic Asylums—Exemption from Rating Assessment
Question, Mr. Kimber ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 27, 1494

MCARTHUR, MR. A., *Leicester*
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Liquor Ordinances (Crown Colonies), 711

MCARTHUR, Mr. W. A., *Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1453

MCCARTAN, Mr. M., *Down, S.*
Ireland—Questions
  Crime and Outrage—Attack on a Belfast Funeral Procession, 1380
  Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Boycotting the Police—Sentences, 1222 ; —Re-arrest of Mr. Pyne, M.P., 873, 876
  Irish Land Commission — Schedules of Prices, 991 ;—Sub-Commission for Co. Down, 381, 382, 559, 862, 1233, 1234, 1490
  Land Law Act, 1887—Tenants of the Lord Lieutenant, 1376
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M'CARTHY, Mr. Justin, *Londonderry*
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MACDONALD, Right Hon. J. H. A. (Lord Advocate), *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Crofters' Commission—Holdings, 1375
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment, 2R. 1201

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Salmon Fisheries—Tweed Fishery Acts—Amendment, 1657
Sea Fishery Department—Trawling within Territorial Waters, 1486, 1487
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McDONALD, Mr. P., *Sligo, N.*
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McDONALD, Dr. R., *Ross and Cromarty*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1063, 1068
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MACDONALD, Mr. W. A., *Queen's Co., Ossory*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887 — Suppression of National League Branches, 260, 261

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McLAREN, Mr. W. S. B., *Cheshire, Crewe*
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MACLEAN, Mr. J. M., *Oldham*
Burmah (Upper)—The Ruby Mines, 1843
India—Graving Dock in Bombay Harbour, 1843
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MADDEN, Mr. D. H. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Dublin University*
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Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1575

MAGHERAMORNE, Lord (Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works)
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MAHONY, Mr. P., *Meath, N.*
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Boundary Commissioners—Expenses, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) *Feb* 27, 1481

MANNERS, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Leicestershire, E.*
Agricultural and Dairy Schools—Report of the Commission, 1233
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Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 889, 890

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
(*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Charles Cameron, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. T. W. Russell*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 2]

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister (India) Bill
(*Sir William Plowden, Dr. Farquharson, Viscount Baring*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20 [Bill 134]

MARUM, Mr. E. M., *Kilkenny, N.*
Ireland — Planting of Trees — "Statutory Termors," 710
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Wales—Tithe Agitation—Questions
Cwm, Co. Flint—Alleged Assault by an Emergency Man, 1476
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MATTINSON, Mr. M. W., *Liverpool, Walton*
War Office—Army Contracts—Specification and Inspection, 1824

MAXWELL, Sir H. E. (A Lord of the Treasury), *Wigton*
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Miscellaneous Expenses, 1878, 1879

MAYNE, Admiral R. C., *Pembroke and Haverfordwest*
Admiralty—Pensions to Widows, &c.—Unclaimed Prize Money, 545

Merchandise Marks Act, 1887
Action of Colonial Governments, Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) *Feb* 28, 1640
Labels on Goods—"Foreign Make," Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 28, 1642
Sale of Foreign Meat, Question, Mr. C. W. Gray; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Mar* 1, 1836

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Merchandise Marks Act, 1887—cont.
The Convention of Rome, 1886—Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 13, 250
The Instructions, Question, Sir Bernhard Samuelson; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 16, 548

Merchant Seamen—Case of the Negro Riley
Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 28, 1636

Merchant Shipping Act—"The Embleton"
Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 23, 1224

Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. King, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. White, Sir John Puleston, Lord Claud Hamilton, Admiral Field, Mr. Bond*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20 [Bill 133]

Metalliferous Mines Bill
(*Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Burt*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 27 [Bill 146]

METROPOLIS (*Questions*)
Commons—Wandsworth Common—Damage by Vehicular Traffic, Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *Feb* 16, 544
The Parks—Trees in St. James's Park, Questions, Sir John Lubbock, Dr. Farquharson; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *Feb* 24, 1357
Metropolitan Improvements
Gray's Inn Road—Dwellings of the Labouring Classes, Question, Mr. Atherley-Jones; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 23, 1227
New Street from Holborn Town Hall, Questions, Mr. J. Rowlands, Mr. Atherley-Jones; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 23, 1229
St. Martin's-le-Grand, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *Feb* 20, 865
Subway between Greenwich and Blackwall, Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *Feb* 21, 986
[See title *Public Meetings*]

Metropolis Local Government Bill
(*Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Kimber, Major-General Goldsworthy, Mr. Baumann, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Hunt, Sir Guyer Hunter, Colonel Duncan*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 14]

Metropolitan Board of Works
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and into the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connection therewith, and to assure Her Majesty that this House will concur in empowering such Commission to take evidence on oath, to compel attendance of witnesses, to grant certificates of indemnity to witnesses in such cases as may be desirable and proper, and to call for all necessary records and documents" (*Lord Randolph Churchill*) *Feb* 16, 664
Aftnr short debate, Amendt. after "therewith," insert "and also in the transactions of such of the London Vestries and District Boards as the Commissioners may deem necessary" (*Mr. Broadhurst*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after further short debate, Question put; A. 39, N. 130; M. 91 (D.L. 4); Main Question put, and agreed to
HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS reported *Feb* 27, 1469

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—Chairman (*see* MAGHERAMORNE, Lord)

Metropolitan Board of Works (Local Management, &c.) Bill
(*Colonel Hughes, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Whitmore, Sir Algernon Borthwick*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 88]

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses Bill
(*Mr. Webster, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Maple*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 113]

Metropolitan Police, The
Case of Constable Bloy, Questions, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 10, 151; *Feb* 13, 253
Charges of "Blackmailing," Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 23, 1230
Crossing Sweepers, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 1, 1845
Notice of Police Orders, Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 10, 151
Numbers, Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 27, 1489; *Mar* 1, 1841

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Metropolitan Police, The—cont.
The Chief Commissioner—Alleged Reflections on the Stipendiary Magistrate of West Ham (*Mr. Baggallay*), Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 16, 559
Street Robberies in St. Luke's, Questions, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 10, 149; *Feb* 28, 1647

Midleton, Viscount
House of Lords—Hour of Meeting, 695

Milltown, Earl of
Pharmacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 1352
Theatres—Burning of the Exeter Theatre—Report of Captain Shaw, 985

Mining Accidents Insurance (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Baird, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Vernon, Mr. Hugh Elliot, Mr. Bruce*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 14 [Bill 120]

Mining Leases (Cornwall and Devon) Bill
(*Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Bickford-Smith, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. Courtney, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. Seale-Hayne*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 114]

Montagu, Mr. S., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*
Post Office—Mail Despatches to the United States, 1474
Public Meetings in the Metropolis—Tower Hill, 253
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Mint (including Coinage), 1530, 1532

More, Mr. R. J., *Shropshire, Ludlow*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 920, 921

Morgan, Right Hon. G. Osborne, *Denbighshire, E.*
Egypt—Judge Advocate General at Cairo, 257, 878
Malta—Constitutional Changes, 1375
Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1385
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1441; II. Closure of Debate, 1669
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 903

Morgan, Mr. O. V., *Battersea*
Deeds of Arrangement Act, 1887—Charges for Searching, 1848
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Sale of Beer—Adulteration of Malt Liquors, 1825

Morley, Right Hon. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Parliament—Adjournment, 1595, 1596
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1427, 1437; III. Disorderly Conduct, 1685, 1692; IV. Irrelevance or Repetition, 1706
Parliament—Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien), Res. Amendt. 301
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 177, 179, 182, 650, 654, 658, 811, 819

Morocco—Alleged Outrage upon a British Subject
Question, Sir John Simon; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 28, 1656

Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 17 (No. 16)
Read 2ª *Feb* 28, 1597

Moss, Mr. R., *Winchester*
Parliamentary Elections—Winchester Election, 1368

Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) Bill
(*Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Bowen Rowlands*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 17 [Bill 129]

Mount-Edgcumbe, Earl of (Lord Steward of the Household)
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 532
Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services, 2R. 698

Mundella, Right Hon. A. J., *Sheffield, Brightside*
Charity Commissioners — Royal Holloway College, 988
Electric Lighting Act, 1882, 1226
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Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1730, 1759
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 158, 162, 505
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, 1525
Trade and Commerce—Foreign Competition—Mr. Giffen's Report, 1480

Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill
(*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Fenwick*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. De Cobain*) *Feb* 21, 1121; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 138]

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Henry Campbell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Carew, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Gray, Sir Thomas Esmonde*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 15]

Municipal Rates Bill
(*Mr. Craig, Mr. Rowntree, Mr. Dodds, Sir Albert Rollit*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 109]

Murphy, Mr. W. M., *Dublin, St. Patrick's*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 440, 447

National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Mayne, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Tuite, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. E. Harrington*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 23]

Navy (*Questions*)
Coastguard Station on Bere Island, Questions, Mr. Gilhooly; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 24, 1366
Greenwich Hospital Fund, Question, Sir Samuel Wilson; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) *Feb* 23, 1230
H.M. Yacht "Victoria and Albert," Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 16, 555
Mr. F. W. Smith, a Lower Division Clerk, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 24, 1367
Naval Intelligence Department, Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 13, 247
Pensions to Widows, &c.—Unclaimed Prize Money, Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 16, 545

The Dockyards
Accidents at Sheerness, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 14, 374
Dockyard Establishments—Sheerness, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 14, 375
Devonport Dock—Vice Admiral Grant, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 20, 867

Nolan, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*
Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Cases Tried), 1125
Harbours and Railways in Ireland—Reports of the Commissioners, 157

Nolan, Colonel J. P.—*cont.*
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Public Buildings, Ireland, 1516
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, 1519
Ways and Means—Financial Statement of 1887—Relief of Local Taxation, 560

Nonconformist Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) Bill
(*Mr. Atkinson, Captain Colomb, Sir John Simon, Mr. Grotrian, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Thomas, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Ambrose, Mr. Aird, Mr. J. M. Maclean, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Sinclair*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 29 [Bill 153]

Norris, Mr. E. S., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*
Army—Royal Barracks, Dublin—Insanitary Condition, 154
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1430
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Public Departments—Superannuation Allowances, 1006
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—County Courts, 1537

North American Fisheries
The Fisheries Disputes, Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 16, 558
The Treaty, Questions, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 23, 1248

Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford, *Exeter*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1438; V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, 1717
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North Sea Liquor Traffic—Floating Grog Shops—International Conference at the Hague
Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Feb* 16, 543

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Norton, Lord
Artizans and Labourers' Dwellings, Motion for Papers, 1814

Oaths Bill
(*Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir John Simon, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Courtney Kenny, Mr. Burt, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Richard, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Jesse Collings*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 7]

O'Brien, Mr. P., *Monaghan, N.*
Ireland—Post Office, Dublin (Telegraph Department)—Miss M. A. Gough, 1816
Parliament—Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien), Res. 282

O'Brien, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary, N.*
Ireland—Salmon Fisheries—Killaloe, 1001

O'Brien, Mr. W., *Cork Co., N.E.*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887 — Alleged Meetings of Suppressed Branches of the National League, 882
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 566, 593, 645, 649, 721, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 771

Occupiers' Disqualification Removal Bill
(*Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Mowbray*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 110]

O'Connor, Mr. A., *Donegal, E.*
Admiralty—Mr. F. W. Smith, a Lower Division Clerk, 1368
Army—Questions
  Army Contracts—Ordnance Store Department — Inspection and Reception of Leather, 1647;—Supply of Leather, 1376, 1377
  Auxiliary Forces—Tower Hamlets Engineer Volunteers—Burgess Short, 1835
  Chaplains' Department, 1377
  Royal Commission on Warlike Stores, 995
Board of Inland Revenue—Political Servants, 1847
Customs Department—Political Servants, 1848
Ireland—Boycotting—Explanation of Terms, 550
  Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission for Co. Donegal, 999, 1356, 1490, 1491
Parliament—Business of the House, 1382
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. III. Disorderly Conduct, 1699
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 418, 527, 834
Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation), 2R. 1349
Public Departments—Superannuation Allowances, 1007
Scotland—Inspectors of Mines (Western District), 1472

[*cont.*

O'Connor, Mr. A.—*cont.*
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—
  Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, 1525
  Pacific Islanders' Protection Act, 1875, 1872
  Public Buildings (Ireland), 1499, 1505 1513

O'Connor, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*
Ireland—Riots, &c.—City of Cork, 1471
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules o Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1749
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 309
Parliamentary Elections—Winchester Election, 1369
Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland), Motion for a Committee, 1594

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*
Admiralty—Mr. F. W. Smith, a Lower Division Clerk, 1367, 1368
Ireland—Magistracy—The Resident Magistrates, 1253
Literature, Science, and Art—South Kensington Museum—Loans of Works of Art, 1827, 1828
Parliament—Business of the House, 1382
Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1385
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. III. Disorderly Conduct, 1687
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, Report, 1276
Parliamentary Elections—Deptford Election, 1003, 1004
  Winchester Election, 1369
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—
  Miscellaneous Expenses, 1878
  Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1573, 1587
  Special Missions Abroad, 1862
Wages (Ireland), Leave, 1121, 1122
War Office—Army Contracts—Specification and Inspection, 1825
  Island Bridge, Dublin, 1831

Office under the Crown (Vacating of Seats) Bill
(*Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Seager Hunt*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 98]

Official Trustee Bill
(*Mr. Warmington, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Bowen Rowlands*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 22 [Bill 142]

O'Hea, Mr. P., *Donegal, W.*
Law and Justice—Law of Evidence—County Court Practice, 554
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 319
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—
  Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1568, 1574

ONSLOW, Earl of (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies)
Africa (South)—Delagoa Bay Railway, 1467
Colonization—Answers to Circular, 697
Malta—The New Constitution—Papers and Correspondence, 138

(*Secretary to the Board of Trade*)
Sweating System, Motion for a Select Committee, 1614

Ordnance Department—see *Army*

Outlawries Bill
c. Read 1° * *Feb* 9

Pacific, Islands of the
Religious Persecution in Tonga, Question, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) *Feb* 21, 988
Samoa, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir James Fergusson) *Mar* 1, 1838
[See title *Southern Pacific*]

PAGET, Sir R. H., *Somerset, Wells*
Agricultural and Dairy Schools—Report of the Commission, 1233
Local and Imperial Finance—Incidence of Imperial Taxation, 1815
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. II. Closure of Debate, 1671; III. Disorderly Conduct, 1689, 1690
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 903
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—County Courts, 1541

Parish Vestries Reform Bill
(*Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Winterbotham*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 91]

PARKER, Mr. C. S., *Perth*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, 1714

Parliament
LORDS—
MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT *Feb* 9
The Session of Parliament opened by Commission
ROLL OF THE LORDS—Garter King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Third Session of the Twenty-fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom *Feb* 9

Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech delivered by The LORD CHANCELLOR *Feb* 9, 3
The Queen's Speech having been reported by The LORD CHANCELLOR; An Address to HER MAJESTY thereon moved by The Earl
[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—LORDS—*cont.*
of CRAWFORD (the Motion being seconded by Lord ARMSTRONG) *Feb* 9, 6; after debate, Address agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*
Personal Statement, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Earl of Kimberley *Feb* 10, 133
HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS reported *Feb* 16, 532
[*For Lords' Address*—see *Appendix.*]
Chairman of Committees—The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos appointed, *nemine dissentiente*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session *Feb* 9
Committee for Privileges—appointed *Feb* 9
Sub-Committee for the Journals, appointed *Feb* 9
Appeal Committee—appointed *Feb* 9
Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod — Select Committee appointed and nominated *Feb* 10; List of the Committee, 144
Standing Orders Committee—appointed *Feb* 16; List of the Committee, 532
Committee of Selection—appointed *Feb* 16; List of the Committee, 532

Private Bills
All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered *Feb* 16
House of Lords—Hour of Meeting, Question, Observations, Earl Beauchamp, Viscount Midleton; Reply, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) *Feb* 17, 695

COMMONS—
Privileges—Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed *Feb* 9
Public Petitions—Select Committee appointed and nominated *Feb* 10; List of the Committee, 240
Printing—Select Committee appointed and nominated *Feb* 13; List of the Committee, 364
Selection—Committee nominated *Feb* 16; List of the Committee, 690
Standing Orders — Committee nominated *Feb* 16; List of the Committee, 690
Public Accounts—Select Committee nominated *Feb* 23; List of the Committee, 1350
Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (*House of Commons*)—Select Committee appointed and nominated *Feb* 13; List of the Committee, 364
Committee on Public Accounts, Session 1887—Question, Mr. E. Robertson; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 24, 1367

Address in Answer to Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech
The Queen's Speech having been reported by Mr. SPEAKER; An humble Address thereon moved by Mr. WHARTON (the Motion being seconded by Colonel DUNCAN) *Feb* 9, 58; after long debate, Debate adjourned
[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

Debate resumed [Second Night] *Feb* 10, 158; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Third Night] *Feb* 13, 305; after debate, Amendt. to leave out paragraphs ten and eleven, insert "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that the portion of the Irish legislation of last Session which was of an ameliorative character has tended to diminish agrarian crime, whereas the repressive legislation of the Session has done much to alienate the sympathy and respect of Her Majesty's Irish subjects for the law; and that the administration of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as well as much of the action of the Executive in Ireland, has been harsh, partial, and mischievous" (*Mr. Parnell*), 352; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further debate, Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Fourth Night] *Feb* 14, 384; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Fifth Night] *Feb* 15, 477; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Sixth Night] *Feb* 16, 566; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Seventh Night] *Feb* 17, 718; after long debate, Question put; A. 317, N. 229; M. 88; Division List, Ayes and Noes, 836

Main Question again proposed, 841; Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Eighth Night] *Feb* 20, 883; after long debate, Amendt. at end, add "But this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that another deficit is threatened in the Indian Budget, and that it has been deemed necessary to raise the Salt Tax in order to meet the same;

"That it views with anxiety these recurring deficits in the Indian Revenue Accounts, and urges greater economy in the Administration;

"That it calls upon the Government of India to meet the wishes of the Native population, both in respect of finance and administration, so far as it can do so consistently with prudence and sound policy, and that it urges Her Majesty's Government to redeem the promise made in the Queen's Speech two years ago, that an inquiry should be made into the Government of India by the appointment of a Royal Commission for that purpose" (*Mr. Samuel Smith*), 945; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question again proposed, 979; Debate further adjourned

Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 21, 1008

Debate resumed [Ninth Night] *Feb* 21, 1010

Amendt. at end, add "Humbly to express to your Majesty our regret that no reference is made in Your Most Gracious Speech to the acute distress which prevails in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, to the disturbances which have arisen out of that distress, or to any projected remedial legislation intended to put an end to the critical state of matters which at present exists

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

in the North of Scotland" (*Dr. Cameron*), 1034; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Wallace*); Question put, and negatived; original Question put; A. 133, N. 194; M. 61 (D. L. 6)

Main Question again proposed, 1119; after short debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Tenth Night] *Feb* 22, 1134

Amendt. at end, add "Humbly to represent to Her Majesty that, owing to the great fall in the value of agricultural produce, the payment of rents in Scotland fixed before such fall has in many cases become impossible, and that, by reason of many landlords not having made any reduction of rents or having made reductions wholly inadequate, great loss, in some cases amounting to ruin, is being incurred by occupiers of land, and to pray that, by the creation of some competent tribunal or otherwise, steps may be taken to relieve the occupiers of agricultural land from the serious consequences above mentioned" (*Mr. Anderson*); Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after debate, Question put; A. 77, N. 190; M. 113 (D. L. 8)

Main Question put, and agreed to

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to draw up the Address to be presented to Her Majesty upon the said Resolution; List of the Committee, 1172

Report of Address brought up, and read a first and second time *Feb* 22, 1172

Amendt. at end of paragraph 7, insert "Humbly to represent to your Majesty that it will conduce to our proper appreciation of certain of the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to our consideration, if we can be informed that no Correspondence has been exchanged between Her Majesty's Ministers and the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, containing any assurances of a contractual character, which would constitute a binding pact upon Her Majesty's actual Ministers in the unfortunate event of a war breaking out during their tenure of office between the French Republic and the Kingdom of Italy, or, if such assurances have been given, that they should be brought to our knowledge" (*Mr. Labouchere*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn; after further short debate, Further Proceeding on the Report of the Address deferred

Personal Explanation, Mr. W. E. Gladstone *Feb* 23, 1253

Further Proceedings resumed *Feb* 23, 1254

Amendt. after paragraph 11, insert "That this House humbly expresses to Her Majesty its regret that no reference is made in Your Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to any measure for Ireland which shall deal with the arrears of excessive and unjust rents which have accumulated in many cases during the last two years of agricultural depression from the inability of tenants to pay them, and which shall prevent the wholesale eviction of tenants which is

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

threatened in the district of Loughrea and Woodford" (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after long debate, Question put; A. 186, N. 261; M. 75 (D. L. 11); Address agreed to

HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS reported *Feb* 27, 1469

Mr. Bradlaugh and the Marquess of Salisbury, Personal Statement, Mr. Bradlaugh; Observations, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 9, 48; Personal Explanation, Mr. Bradlaugh *Feb* 21, 1008

ARREST OF MEMBERS.

Mr. Cunninghame Graham's Imprisonment, Letter received by Mr. Speaker Feb 9, 57

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887

Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. D. Sheehy, Mr. Alderman J. Hooper, Mr. Lane, Mr. J. R. Cox, Mr. A. Blane, Mr. E. Harrington, Mr. T. Harrington; Letters received by Mr. Speaker *Feb* 9, 52

Mr. D. Sheehy, Mr. J. D. Pyne, Mr. J. Gilhooly; Letters received by Mr. Speaker *Feb* 13, 244

Remand of a Member in Custody (Mr. J. D. Pyne); Letter received by Mr. Speaker *Feb* 20, 857

Imprisonment of a Member (Mr. J. C. Flynn); Letter received by Mr. Speaker *Feb* 28, 1657

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Ash Wednesday

Moved, "That this House will meet To-morrow, at Two of the clock" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Feb* 14, 384

Question put; A. 161, N. 91; M. 70 (D. L. 2)

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" *Feb* 27; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day

The Address, Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day, and To-morrow of the other Orders of the Day (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Feb* 14; *Feb* 21

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day subsequent to Supply be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to Public Meetings in the Metropolis" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Mar* 1, 1850; Motion agreed to

Observations, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); Questions, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, Mr. W. H. Smith *Feb* 16, 564; Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Labouchere, Sir Bernhard Samuelson; Answers, the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *Feb* 23, 1251; Questions, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Arthur

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Business of the House and Public Business*—cont.

O'Connor, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 24, 1381;—*Irish Questions and Answers,* Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Feb* 20, 876;—*Order of Public Business,* Questions, Mr. Henry Fowler, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 22, 1204

Public Bills—Amendments to Question for Second Reading—Parochial Boards, &c. Bill—Crofters, &c. Bill, Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Feb* 27, 1495

"Members of Parliament"—Index to the Return, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *Feb* 23, 1247

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

Admission of Strangers to the Speaker's Gallery, Question, Viscount Ebrington; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 9, 57

The Police, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 14, 379

Westminster Hall—The Restoration, Questions, Mr. Webster, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *Feb* 17, 713

Parliament—Business of the House

Moved, "That the Consideration of the proposed Rules of Procedure have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion on every day on which the consideration of those Rules may be set down by the Government" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Feb* 24, 1382; after short debate, Amendt. in line 3, after "day," insert "except Wednesdays" (*Mr. Bradlaugh*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after further short debate, Question put; A. 150, N. 247; M. 97

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1397

Main Question put, and agreed to

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)— I. SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Moved, "That, unless the House otherwise order, the House shall meet every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, at Three of the clock, and shall, unless previously adjourned, sit till One of the clock a.m., when the Speaker shall adjourn the House without Question put, unless a Bill originating in Committee of Ways and Means, or unless proceedings made in pursuance of any Act of Parliament or Standing Order, be then under consideration:

That at Eight of the clock the Speaker or Chairman, as the case may be, shall suspend the sitting by leaving the Chair until Nine

[*cont.*

Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure—I. Sittings of the House—cont.

of the clock. If, after the resumption of business, at Nine of the clock, and before a quarter-past Nine, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until a quarter-past Nine, when he shall count the House or Committee:

That at half an hour after midnight on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, except as aforesaid, and at half-past Five of the clock on Wednesdays, the proceedings on any business then under consideration shall be interrupted: and, if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the business then under consideration, and any business subsequently appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit, unless the Speaker ascertains by the preponderance of voices that a Majority of the House desires that such business should be deferred until a later day:

Provided always, That on the interruption of business the Closure may be moved, and if moved, or if proceedings under the Closure Rule be then in progress, the Speaker or Chairman shall not leave the Chair, until the Questions consequent thereon, as provided in the Rule 'Closure of Debate,' have been decided:

That after the business under consideration at half-past Twelve, and half-past Five respectively, has been disposed of, no opposed business shall be taken; and the Orders of the Day not disposed of at the close of the Sitting shall stand for the next day on which the House shall sit:

That a Motion may be made by a Minister of the Crown at the commencement of Public Business, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, to the following effect. 'That the proceedings on any specified business, if under discussion at half-past Twelve this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order 'Sittings of the House:'

Provided always, That after any business exempted from the operation of this Resolution is disposed of, the remaining business of the sitting shall be dealt with according to the provisions applicable to business taken after half-past Twelve o'clock" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Feb* 21, 1400

After debate, Amendt. in line 1, after "otherwise order," insert "the Standing Orders relating to Wednesday sittings shall no longer apply to the sittings on Wednesday, but shall apply to the sittings on Friday, and the Standing Orders relating to Fridays shall no longer apply to the sittings on Friday, but shall apply to the sittings on Wednesday, and" (*Mr. Labouchere*), 1428; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after further short debate, Question put; A. 105, N. 167; M. 62

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1432

Amendt. in line 2, after "at," insert "half-past" (*Mr. Labouchere*), 1435; Question proposed, "That 'half-past,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 100, N. 214; M. 114 (D. L. 14)

Amendt. in line 3, leave out "One of the clock a.m.," insert "half-past Eleven of the clock p.m." (*Mr. Broadhurst*), 1444; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. to omit from the proposed New Rule lines 8 to 13 inclusive (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1447; Question, "That the words, &c.;" put, and negatived

Amendt. in Rule I, line 14, to omit "half-an-hour after" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1448; Question, "That the words, &c.;" put, and negatived

Amendt. in line 16, leave out from "interrupted," to "day," in line 25, inclusive, insert "and the Question then under consideration shall be put, unless at the times before mentioned a Motion shall be made 'That the Debate be now adjourned,' which Motion shall be decided without Amendment or Debate. If such Motion be resolved in the affirmative, the business under consideration shall stand adjourned until the next day on which the House shall sit. If the Motion be resolved in the negative, the Question under consideration shall be put forthwith" (*Mr. D. Crawford*), 1449

Question, "That the words, 'and if the House be in Committee, the Chairman shall leave the Chair, and make his report to the House; and if a Motion has been proposed for the Adjournment of the House, or of the Debate, or in Committee That the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, every such dilatory Motion shall lapse without Question put; and the business then under consideration, and any business subsequently appointed, shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit,' stand part of the Question;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. in line 23, leave out from "sit" to "day," in line 25, inclusive (*Mr. F. S. Powell*), 1450; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. in line 29, after "thereon," insert "and on any further Motion" (*Mr. Leonard Courtney*), 1451; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" Question put, and agreed to

Amendt. in line 31, leave out "half-past" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1451; Question proposed, "That 'half-past,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Amendt. in line 35, leave out "by a Minister of the Crown" (*Mr. Buchanan*), 1455; Question proposed, "That by a Minister of the Crown' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. line 33, leave out "half-past" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1457; Question proposed,

[*cont.*

Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—I. Sittings of the House—cont.

" That the words, &c. ;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Amendt. at end, add " That whenever the House is in Committee at half-past Twelve of the clock a.m. the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means may, at the request of Mr. Speaker, take the Chair as Deputy Speaker, for the purpose of concluding the business of the sitting" (*Mr. Howorth*), 1458 ; Question proposed, " That those words be there added ;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. at end, add 'That the Chairman of Ways and Means do take the Chair as Deputy Speaker when requested so to do by Mr. Speaker without any formal communication to the House. And that Mr. Speaker do nominate, at the commencement of every Session, a panel of not more than five Members to act as temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested by the Chairman of Ways and Means" (*Mr. Labouchere*), 1458 ; Question proposed, " That those words be there added ;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Amendt., at end, add " That if, during the first quarter of an hour after the Speaker or Chairman has returned to the Chair, notice be taken that 40 Members are not present, the Speaker or Chairman shall, unless 40 Members are sooner present, suspend the sitting until the termination of the said quarter of an hour, when he shall count the House or the Committee" (*Mr. Labouchere*), 1459 ; Question proposed, " That those words be there added ;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis ; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Feb* 27, 1496

II.—Closure of Debate [Second Night]

Moved, " That Questions for the Closure of Debate under Standing Order XIVA shall be decided in the affirmative, if, when a Division be taken, it appears by the numbers declared from the Chair that not less than One Hundred Members voted in the Majority in support of the Motion" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Feb* 28, 1657

Amendt., at end, add " Provided always, that should the Question for the Closure of Debate be decided in the negative, no similar Motion shall be made on the same Question until after the time of two hours has elapsed" (*Mr. Dillwyn*), 1659 ; Question proposed, " That those words be there added ;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question again proposed, 1660 ; after debate, main Question put ; A. 256, N. 134 ; M. 122

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1674

III.—Disorderly Conduct

Moved, " That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman do order Members whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's sitting ; and that the Serjeant-at-Arms do act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair, in pursuance of this Resolution. But if, on any occasion, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman deems that his powers under this Standing Order are inadequate, he may name such Member or Members in pursuance of the Standing Order (Order in Debate), or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members

" Provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate), shall forthwith withdraw from the precincts of the House subject, however, in the case of such suspended Members, to the proviso in that Standing Order regarding their service on Private Bill Committees" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1677

After debate, Amendt. in line 8, leave out from "(Order in Debate)" to end (*Sir Lyon Playfair*), 1689 ; after further short debate, Question put, " That the words ' or he may call upon the House to adjudge upon the conduct of such Member or Members

" Provided always, That Members who are ordered to withdraw under this Standing Order, or who are suspended from the service of the House under the Standing Order (Order in Debate) shall' stand part of the Question ;" A. 135, N. 85 ; M. 50 (D. L. 18)

Amendt. in line 12, after " shall," insert " if Mr. Speaker or the Chairman so direct" (*Mr. Whitbread*), 1696 ; Question proposed, " That those words be there inserted ;" after short debate, Question put ; A. 89, N. 117 ; M. 28 (D. L. 19)

Amendt. in line 13, leave out from " House," to end, add " and shall, ipso facto, be exempted for the same period from service on Committees" (*Sir Henry Tyler*), 1700 ; Question proposed, " That the words, &c. ;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn.

Main Question put ; A. 134, N. 74 ; M. 60

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1703

IV.—Irrelevance or Repetition

Moved, " That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition either of his own arguments, or of the arguments used by other Members in Debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1705

Amendt. in line 1, leave out from " That," to end, add " if it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, that a Member is addressing the House with continued irrelevance, or tedious repetition, or that he is unduly and unnecessarily prolonging Debate and arresting the Progress of Public Business, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, may so inform the House or the Committee

[*cont.*

Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—IV. Irrelevance or Repetition—cont.

"Thereupon any Member, rising in his place, may claim to move, That the Member in possession of the House be no longer heard

"Such Motion shall be put forthwith without Amendment or Debate, unless the Member in possession of the House elects to discontinue his speech, in which case he may so inform the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees, and the Question shall not be put

"A Member who is put to silence under this Rule by order of the House or the Committee is thereby prevented, on the first occasion, from taking part in any Debate during the remainder of that sitting; on the second occasion during a week; and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, during a month from the time when such order of the House, or of the Committee, has been made" (*Mr. Chaplin*), 1709; Question proposed, "That the words 'That Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House or of the Committee to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition,' stand part of the Question;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Amendt. in line 3, leave out "either" (*Mr. Bradlaugh*), 1712; Question proposed, "That 'either,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 170, N. 94; M. 76 (D. L. 21)

Main Question put, and agreed to

V.—Motions for Adjournment in abuse of the Rules of the House

Moved, "That, if Mr. Speaker, or a Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, shall be of opinion that a Motion for the Adjournment of a Debate, or of the House, during any Debate, or that the Chairman do report Progress, or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, he may forthwith put the Question thereupon from the Chair, or he may decline to propose the Question thereupon to the House" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1713

Amendt. in line 6, leave out from "Chair" to end (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*), 1713; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 214, N. 112; M. 102 (D. L. 22)

Main Question put, and agreed to

VI.—Government Business

Moved, "That, on days on which Government business has priority, the Government may arrange such Government business, whether Orders of the Day or Notices of Motions, in such order as they may think fit" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1720; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

VII.—Committees of the whole House

Moved, "That whenever an Order of the Day is read for the House to resolve itself into Committee (not being a Committee to consider a Message from the Crown, or the Committee of Supply, or of Ways and Means), Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair

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Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—VII. Committees of the whole House—cont.

without putting any Question, and the House shall thereupon resolve itself into such Committee, unless Notice of an Instruction thereto has been given, when such Instruction shall be first disposed of" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1721; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

VIII.—Amendments on Report

Resolved, That upon the Report stage of any Bill no Amendment may be proposed, which could not have been proposed in Committee without an Instruction from the House (*Mr. W. H. Smith*)

IX.—Divisions

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee, by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either declare the determination of the House or Committee, or name Tellers for a Division" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1722

Amendt. in line 4, after "and," omit "he shall thereupon, as he thinks fit, either," insert "if the minority be less than 40 he shall at his discretion" (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*), 1723; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. to leave out from "That," to end, add "it be in the discretion of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman to take the Vote of the House in the following manner:—He shall, on his decision being challenged, forthwith order the doors to be closed, whereupon he shall call upon the Members who support or who challenge his decision successively to rise in their places, and he shall proceed to count them one by one in an audible voice. At the conclusion of such count he shall declare the determination of the House or Committee" (*Mr. T. P. Gill*), 1724; Question proposed, "That the words 'Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, may, at his discretion, take the Vote of the House or Committee by calling upon the Members who support, and who challenge his decision, successively to rise in their places; and,' stand part of the Question;" after short debate, Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Third Night] *Feb* 29, 1732; after debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. in line 1, after "may," insert "after the lapse of two minutes as indicated by the sand-glass" (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*), 1754; Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to

Amendt. in line 1, to leave out "at his discretion," insert "if he shall be of opinion that a Division is called for dilatory or obstructive purposes" (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*), 1754; Question proposed, "That the words &c.;" Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. in line 1, leave out "at his discretion," insert "if in his opinion the Division, is frivolously or vexatiously claimed" (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*), 1754; Question proposed,

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Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—IX. Divisions—cont.

"That 'at his discretion,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived; words inserted

Amendt. at end of main Question, add "And, in case there is no Division, the Speaker or Chairman shall declare to the House, or the Committee, the number of the Minority who had challenged his decision, and their names shall be thereupon taken down in the House, and printed with the lists of Divisions" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1760; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Main Question, as amended, proposed, 1762; after short debate, main Question put; A. 236; N. 93; M. 143

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1763

X.—Address in Answer to the Queen's Speech

Moved, "That the stages of Committee and Report on the Address to Her Majesty to convey the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, at the opening of the Session, be discontinued" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1766

Amendt. in line 1, leave out from "That," to end, add "the Address to Her Majesty be restricted to a Motion conveying the thanks of the House for Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and promising the careful attention of the House to the subjects which Her Majesty has recommended to their consideration, and such Motion shall be put without Amendment not later than the third day of the Debate thereon, unless the House shall otherwise order" (*Mr. Heneage*), 1768; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question put, and agreed to

XI.—Public Bills

Moved, "That after Whitsuntide, Public Bills other than Government Bills, be arranged on the Order Book so as to give priority to the Bills most advanced, and that Lords Amendments to Public Bills appointed to be considered, be placed first, to be followed by Third Readings, Considerations of Report, Bills in Progress in Committee, Bills appointed for Committee, and Second Readings" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1774

Amendt. in line 1, after "That," insert "all Public Bills (other than Government Bills) introduced on or before the first Monday of the Session shall be set down in the Order Book for Second Reading in a list to be called 'The Second Reading List for Wednesdays up to Whitsuntide,' in an order to be determined by the number of signatures which shall have been subscribed to each such Bill at the close of the Sitting on the following Tuesday, each Member being entitled to subscribe his own name to three such Bills and no more; those Bills which have received most signatures being placed

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Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—XI. Public Bills—cont.

first, and the priority in the case of Bills which have received an equal number of signatures, being determined by lot, in a manner to be prescribed by Mr. Speaker; and that" (*Mr. Bryce*), 1779; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question put, and agree to

XII.—Bills relating to Religion and Trade

Resolved, That the Standing Order of the 9th and 30th of April 1772 concerning Bills relating to Religion and Trade be repealed" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*)

XIII.—Standing Committees

Moved, "That the Resolutions of the House of the 1st December 1882 relating to the Constitution and Proceedings of Standing Committees for the Consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, and to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures, be revived

"Provided always, That the Committees shall consist of not more than Sixty nor less than Forty Members, subject to the power of addition to the said Committees by the Committee of Selection, as provided by the said Resolutions" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1789

Amendt. after "Shipping," insert "Agriculture" (*Mr. Heneage*), 1790; Question proposed, "That 'Agriculture,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question again proposed, 1790; after short debate, Debate adjourned

Parliament—Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien)

Moved, "That the wrongful arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien, a Member of this House, in going from the House on Friday, 10th February, was a high infringement of the Privilege of Parliament" (*Mr. Picton*) *Feb* 13, 262

After short debate, Amendt., to leave out from first "That" to end, add "this House regrets that an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan; but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter" (*Mr. Attorney General*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further debate, Question put, and negatived

Question proposed, "That the words 'this House regrets an indignity should have been offered to the honourable Member for North Monaghan, but, considering it to have been a mistake on the part of the Police Officer, does not think it necessary to proceed further with the matter' be there added"

Amendt. to said Amendt. to leave out all after "but" to end, add "the circumstances attending his arrest be referred to the Committee of Privileges of this House, to consider whether any or what action should be

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Parliament—Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien)—cont.

taken thereupon, and what measures should be taken to prevent such occurrences in the future" (*Mr. John Morley*); Question put, "That the words, &c.;" A. 246, N. 151; M. 95

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 301

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

New Peer

Feb 28—The Right Honourable Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, Baronet, G.C.M.G., created Baron Knutsford of Knutsford in the County Palatine of Chester

Representative Peers for Ireland (Certificates)

Feb 9—The Earl of Kingston, *v.* Viscount Doneraile, deceased

The Earl of Wicklow, *v.* Viscount Lifford, deceased

Sat First

Feb 21—The Earl Russell, after the death of his grandfather

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

During Recess

For Cambridge University, *v.* The Right honble. Alexander James Beresford Beresford Hope, deceased

For Camberwell (Dulwich Division), *v.* John Morgan Howard, esquire, County Court Judge

For Winchester City, *v.* Arthur Loftus Tottenham, esquire, deceased

For Liverpool (Walton Division), *v.* The Right honble. John George Gibson, Judge of High Court of Justice (Ireland)

For Dublin University, *v.* Dodgson Hamilton Madden, esquire, Solicitor General for Ireland

Feb 9—*For* Southwark (West Division), *v.* Arthur Cohen, esquire, Manor of Northstead

For Borough of Dundee, *v.* Charles Carmichael Lacaita, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

Feb 10—*For* Edinburgh Burgh (West Division), *v.* Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, Manor of Northstead

For York, West Riding, Southern Part (Doncaster Division), *v.* Walter Shirley Shirley, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

Feb 15—*For* Bristol (Western Division), *v.* The Right honble. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, baronet, President of the Board of Trade

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PARLIAMENT — COMMONS — *New Writs Issued*—cont.

Feb 21—*For* Deptford Borough, *v.* William John Evelyn, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

Feb 23—*For* Hampstead, *v.* Sir Henry Thurstan Holland, baronet, G.C.M.G., now Baron Knutsford, called up to the House of Peers

New Members Sworn

Feb 9—Dodgson Hamilton Madden, esquire, *Dublin University*

Richard Moss, esquire, *Winchester City*

Miles Walker Mattinson, esquire, *Borough of Liverpool (Walton Division)*

Denis Kilbride, esquire, *County of Kerry (Southern Division)*

John Blundell Maple, esquire, *Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division)*

George Gabriel Stokes, esquire, *Cambridge University*

Feb 20—Richard Knight Causton, esquire, *Southwark (West Division)*

Feb 21—Thomas Ryburn Buchanan, esquire, *Edinburgh Burgh (West Division)*

Feb 22—The Right honble. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, baronet (*Bristol Burgh (West Division)*

Feb 28—Edward Brodie Hoare, esquire, *Hampstead Borough*

The Honble. William Henry Wentworth Fitzwilliam, *York, West Riding, Southern Part (Doncaster Division)*

Mar 1—Charles John Darling, esquire, Q.C., *Deptford*

Affirmation

Feb 20—Joseph Firth Bottomley Firth, esquire, being one of the people called Quakers, made the Affirmation required by Law, *Burgh of Dundee*

Parliamentary and Municipal Elections (Registration) Bill

(*Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Childers, Sir Charles Russell*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 59]

Parliamentary Elections

The Deptford Election, Questions, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Feb* 21, 1003

Winchester Election, Questions, Mr. Moss, Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *Feb* 24, 1368

Parliamentary Elections Bill

(*Mr. Howell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Fenwick, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Warmington, Mr. Bowen Rowlands*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 16]

Parliamentary Elections (Meetings in Schools) Bill
(*Mr. Herbert Gardner, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Maitland, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Stevenson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 45]

Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Bill
(*Mr. Childers, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Picton*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 70]

Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Esslemont, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Hunter, Mr. M'Ewan*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 4]

Parliamentary Elections (Seamen's Votes) Bill
(*Mr. Atkinson, Sir George Baden-Powell, Sir Edward Birbeck, Mr. Brookfield, Marquess of Carmarthen, Sir James Corry, Sir Donald Currie, Colonel Duncan, Mr. Donkin, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Grotrian, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Heneage, Mr. King, Sir Charles Palmer Sir John Puleston, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Thomas Sutherland, Mr. Whitley, Sir Samuel Wilson, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 28 [Bill 150]

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill
(*Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Woodall, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Stansfeld, Dr. Cameron*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 11]

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [Salary, &c.]
c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (*Mr. Secretary Stanhope*) *Feb* 15, 531; Debate adjourned

Parnell, Mr. C. S., *Cork*
- Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1395
- Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, 1718; IX. Divisions, 1726; XI. Public Bills, 1780
- Parliament — Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien), Res. 262, 293, 298, 299
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, Amendt. 333, 310, 634, 636, 637, 723, 725; Report, 1276

Parochial Boards (Scotland) Bill
(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Preston Bruce*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 63]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Feb* 22, 1203; after short debate, Question put; A. 91, N. 168; M. 77 (D. L. 10)

Pauper Lunatics' Asylums (Ireland) (Officers' Superannuation) Bill
(*Mr. Johnston, Mr. Chance*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20 [Bill 135]
Read 2° *Feb* 23, 1349

Pease, Mr. A. E., *York*
- Ireland—Evictions—The Returns, 995

Peel, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* Speaker, The)

Pensions—Civil List of George III
Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 23, 1239; Questions, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Feb* 28, 1649

Personal Property Exemption Bill
(*Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Picton, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Channing, Mr. M'Ewan, Mr. Howorth*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 15 [Bill 126]

Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Milltown*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 16 (No. 13)
Read 2ª *Feb* 24, 1352

Pickersgill, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
- Factory Acts—Sweating System at the East End of London, 383
- Houses of Parliament—The Police, 379
- Law and Justice—Liverpool Assizes—Sentences of Corporal Punishment by Mr. Justice Grantham, 1205
- Metropolitan Board of Works, Motion for an Address, 686
- Metropolitan Police—Questions
  - Case of Constable Bloy, 151, 254
  - Crossing Sweepers, 1845
  - Numbers, 1489, 1841
  - Stipendiary Magistrate of West Ham and Sir Charles Warren, 559
- Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 223
- Public Meetings in the Metropolis—Trafalgar Square, 47
- Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens—The Return, 871
- Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—
  - Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, 1526, 1527
  - Police, Counties and Boroughs, Great Britain, 1547
- Vaccination Laws — Fines, &c. — Bradford West Riding Court, 712

PICTON, Mr. J. A., *Leicester*
Asia (Central)—Afghan Boundary, 150
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Cases of M. Moyniham and T. Quinlan, 248
Law and Justice—Mrs. Ryan, a Prisoner for Contempt, 1833, 1834
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1744
Parliament—Privilege (Wrongful Arrest of Mr. Patrick O'Brien), Res. 262, 263, 279
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Miscellaneous Expenses, 1877

Piers and Harbours (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Clancy, Dr. Fox, Mr. Carew*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 (No. 43)

Places of Worship Sites Bill
(*Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. Henry Wilson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 93]

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Leeds, S.*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1406 ; II. Closure of Debate, 1667 ; III. Disorderly Conduct, Amendt. 1688 ; IV. Irrelevance or Repetition, 1709 ; XIII. Standing Committees, 1791

PLOWDEN, Sir W. C., *Wolverhampton, W.*
Army (Ordnance Store Department)—Examination and Acceptance of Leather, 1824
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 952

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R. (First Commissioner of Works), *Dublin University*)
Metropolitan Improvements—St. Martin's-le-Grand, 865
Parks (Metropolis)—Trees in St. James's Park, 1357
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—Westminster Hall—Restoration, 713
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens—The Return, 871

Pluralities Acts Amendment Act, 1885, Amendment Bill
(*The Lord Bishop of Bangor*)
l. Presented ; read 1ª * *Mar* 1 (No. 26)

Poinding (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Watt, Mr. Bolton, Mr. M'Ewan, Mr. Baird, Mr. Howell*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 36]

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)
Boards of Guardians—Oakum Picking, Question, Mr. Cobb ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 23, 1216

POOR LAW (*England and Wales*)—cont.
St. Olave's Board of Guardians, Question, Mr. Cobb ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 23, 1215

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Harris, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. Thomas Gill, Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Maurice Healy*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 10]

Poor Rates (Metropolis) Bill
(*Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Sydney Buxton*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 87]

Port and Harbour Authorities (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. T. Harrington, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Hooper*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 46]

PORTMAN, Hon. E. B., *Dorsetshire, N.*
Charity Commissioners—Milton Abbas School, Blandford, Dorsetshire, 1246

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)
(*Questions*)
Addresses—" and Co.," Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 21, 994
Dismissal of Samuel Harvey, a Letter Carrier, Question, Mr. Lawson ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 24, 1375
Government Electrical Factory, Holloway, Question, Mr. Norris ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 16, 549
Inland Revenue—Stamps for Cheques, &c., Question, Mr. Sydney Gedge ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 24, 1353
Postage to India and China, Questions, Mr. J. M. Maclean ; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 14, 376
Postal Charges at Shanghai, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 27, 1487
Postal Orders, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 27, 1487
Re-direction of Letters, Question, Mr. Hoyle ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 10, 150
Delivery and Detention of Letters, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 14, 371
Select Committee on Sunday Postal Labour, Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. Dixon-Hartland ; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 16, 542
Travelling Post Offices—Sunday Duty, Question, Mr. Tuite ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 20, 863

[*cont.*

POST OFFICE (*England and Wales*)—cont.
Mail Services
The English Mail to South Africa, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 16, 540
Australian Mail Contracts — Privileges to Foreign Steamers, Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 24, 1365; *Feb* 27, 1487; *Mar* 1, 1817
Irregular Delivery of the Irish Mails, Question, Mr. De Cobain; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 28, 1652
Mail Despatches to the United States, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 27, 1474
Mail Contracts—Subsidies to Steam Shipping Companies, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 21, 989; Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 24, 1364

SAVINGS BANK DEPARTMENT
Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 23, 1239

TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT
Central Telegraph Office—Promotion, Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 23, 1244
Deductions from Pay, Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 1, 1829
Money Orders, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 20, 871
The Submarine Telegraph Company, Questions, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Feb* 20, 868

POWELL, Mr. F. S., *Wigan*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1450; V. Motions for Adjournment in Abuse of the Rules of the House, 1715; IX. Divisions, 1742
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Charity Commission, 1528

PRIME MINISTER (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. P. J. Power, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Molloy*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 83]

PROVAND, Mr. A. D., *Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.*
Parliament—Queen's Speech, Address in Answer to, 1083

Public Departments
Attendance in, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Feb* 10, 148

Public Departments—cont.
Superannuation Allowances, Questions, Mr. Norris, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 21, 1006

Public Health
Infectious Diseases—Compulsory Notification, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 27, 1469
Inspection of Inhabited Houses, Question, Mr. Thorburn; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Feb* 13, 255

Public Houses, Hours of Closing (Scotland) Bill
(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Angus Sutherland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 85]

Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing) Bill
(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Lea*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 3]

Public Meetings—Metropolis
Observations, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 13, 261
Special Shorthand Reporters, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Marum, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 16, 556
Tower Hill, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 13, 253
Trafalgar Square, Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Feb* 20, 879

Public Meetings in the Metropolis
Notices of Amendments on the Address, Mr. Pickersgill, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Bradlaugh *Feb* 9, 47
Moved, "That, having regard to the importance of preserving and protecting the right of open air public meetings for Her Majesty's subjects in the Metropolis, and with a view to prevent ill-will and disorder, it is desirable that an inquiry should be instituted by a Committee of this House into the conditions subject to which such meetings may be held, and the limits of the right of interference therewith by the Executive Government" (*Sir Charles Russell*) *Mar* 1, 1879; after long debate, Debate adjourned

Public Record Office—Use of Ink in Transcribing
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 24, 1354

[*cont.*

Public Trustee Bill
(*Mr. Howard Vincent, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bradlaugh*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 90]

PULESTON, Sir J. H., *Devonport*
Civil Service Writers—Promotion to the Lower Division, 1640

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- Dublin (Telegraph Department)—Miss M. A. Gough, 1817
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(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Barran, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Hunter, Mr. J. Maclean, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Woodall*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 49]

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill
(*The Lord Stanley of Preston*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 14 (No. 12)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *Mar* 1, 1793
Amendt. to leave out all after ("That") insert ("no general measure dealing with railway traffic can be considered satisfactory which does not prohibit preferential rates in favour of foreign imports") (*The Earl of Jersey*), 1799; after debate, on Question, "That the words, &c.;" Cont. 72, Not-Cont. 45; M. 27
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Resolved in the affirmative; original Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª

Railway Companies (Carriage of Fish) Bill
(*Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Hunter, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Mallock, Mr. Gilhooly, Sir Albert Rollit*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 72]

Railway Regulation Bill
(*Mr. Channing, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Charles Parker, Mr. A. H. Dyke Acland, Mr. H. L. Lawson, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Jacoby*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 84]

Railways (Acquisition by the State)
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- Industrial Schools Act, 1875—Amendment—Emigration, 1358
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(*Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Maclure, Mr. W. L. Bright, Mr. John Barry, Mr. Hayne*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 31]

Reid, Mr. R. T., *Dumfries, &c.*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. IX. Divisions, 1730
Public Meetings in the Metropolis, Res. 1916
Supply (Supplementary Estimates, 1887-8)—Miscellaneous Expenses, 1878

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(*Mr. Murphy, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Chance, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. O'Doherty, Mr. T. M. Healy*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 29]

Reproductive Loan Fund (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (*Mr. Hayden, Dr. Commins, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. Conway*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 69]

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill
(*Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Cozens-Hardy*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 76]

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Cornwall) Bill
(*Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Bickford-Smith, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Courtney, Mr. M'Arthur*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 102]

Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act (1878) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Lea, Sir James Corry, Sir William Ewart, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr Jordan*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 86]
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(*Mr. Howard Vincent, Sir Edward Birkbeck Lord Charles Beresford, Mr. Hoare, Mr. Menzies, Captain Price Mr Mallock*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 1 [Bill 89]

School Board Elections (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Esslemont*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 51]

School Board for London Election Bill
(*Colonel Hughes, Sir Richard Temple, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Lafone, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Isaacs*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 78]

School Board for London (Pensions) Bill
(*Sir Richard Temple, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. M'Arthur, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. Gent-Davis*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 40]

School Fees (Non-Paupers) Bill
(*Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Quilter*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 13]

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Selwyn, Captain C. W., *Cambridge, Wisbeach*
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(*Mr. Caldwell, Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Sir Archibald Campbell, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Cunninghame Graham*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 27 [Bill 148]

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(*Mr. Alfred Pease, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Henry Anstruther*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 42]

Small Debts (Scotland) Bill

(*Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Provand*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 41]

Small Holdings Bill

(*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Burt, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Newnes, Mr. Flower, Mr. Pitt-Lewis*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 9]

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(*Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Whitmore, Colonel Hughes*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 66]

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Solicitor General for Ireland (*see* Madden, Mr. D. H.)

Solicitors' Annual Certificate (Duty Repeal) Bill
(*Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Sexton, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Deasy*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 67]

Solicitors (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. O'Doherty*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 21 [Bill 140]

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  Railway and Canal Traffic, 1R. 370; 2R. 1793

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  Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 17, 715

Steam Engines and Boilers Bill
(*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Burt, Mr. William Abraham* (*Glamorgan*), *Mr. Pickard, Mr. Arthur Acland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 21 [Bill 137]

STEPHENS, Mr. H. C., *Middlesex, Hornsey*
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(*Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Godson, Mr. Hastings*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 92]

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Suffragans' Nomination Bill
(*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. John Talbot, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Francis Powell, Admiral Field, Mr. Penrose-Fitzgerald, Mr. Dixon-Hartland*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 35]

Sugar Bounties
  The International Conference, Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) *Feb* 23, 1247
  The Papers, Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 21, 1008
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SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Dublin, College Green*
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Select Committee on Army and Navy Estimates—Re-appointment, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 28, 1654

SUPPLY
Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *Feb* 23
Considered in Committee *Feb* 27, 1499—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887-8)—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 21, 2, and 3; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 9, 6, 10 and 17; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Votes 5, 11, 16, 19, and 28; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Vote 4
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Resolutions reported *Mar* 2

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) *Feb* 20, 979; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 131]

SUTHERLAND, Mr. A., *Sutherland*
Parliament—Public Bills—Amendments to Question for 2R.—Crofters, &c. Bill, 1496
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Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Feb* 14, 383
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the sweating system at the east end of London, and to report thereon to the House; and that the witnesses before the said Select Committee be examined on oath" (*The Earl of Dunraven*) *Feb* 28, 1598; after short debate, Motion agreed to

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Technical Education Bill
(*Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. G. Dixon, Mr. Arthur Acland*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 53]

Technical Education (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Kilbride, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Alderman Hooper*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 33]

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(*Mr. Foley, Dr. Fox, Mr. Crilly, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. T. M. Healy*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 10 [Bill 19]

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London Theatres—Report of Captain Shaw, 1882, Observations, The Earl of Strafford, Lord Magheramorne; Reply, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) *Feb* 17 692

Theatres (Metropolis) Bill
(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Lawson, Sir Albert Rollit*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 37]

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(*Mr. Hunter, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Esslemont*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 1 [Bill 155]

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TREASURY—Secretary to (*see* JACKSON, Mr. W. L.)

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Trees (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Nolan, Mr. Chance, Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Marum, Mr. Sheehan*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 60]

TREVELYAN, Right Hon. Sir G. O., *Glasgow, Bridgeton*
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Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *Feb* 28, 1653

Truro Cathedral Fabric and Services Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Steward*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 10 (No. 3)
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Bill referred to a Select Committee, after short debate *Feb* 21, 982
Moved, "That it be an instruction to the Committee to consider the best means for providing for the maintenance and for the services of the Cathedral Church of Truro" (*The Earl Stanhope*), 984; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
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l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 10 (No. 7)

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(*Mr. Biggar, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Dillon, Dr. Fox, Mr. Thomas Gill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Clancy, Dr. Kenny, Mr. T. M. Healy*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 30]

University of Glasgow (St. Mungo's College) Bill
(*Mr. Baird, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Mason*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 13 [Bill 108]

Vaccination Bill
(*Mr. Picton, Mr. Holden, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. James Ellis, Mr. Colman, Mr. Channing*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 77]

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(*Mr. Charles Acland, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Caine*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 14 [Bill 125]

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Vivisection
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WADDY, Mr. S. D., *Lincolnshire, Brigg*
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(*Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Howell*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. De Cobain*) *Feb* 21, 1121 ; after short debate, Motion agreed to ; Bill ordered ; read 1° * [Bill 139]

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Tithe Seizures and Sales, Question, Mr. J. Roberts ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 1, 1844

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 10 [Bill 57]

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WHITLEY, Mr. E., *Liverpool, Everton*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure), Res. I. Sittings of the House, 1431
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ERRATA.

Page 174, line 13, from bottom, *for* 57 per cent, *read* 76 per cent.
,, line 9, from bottom, *for* 76 per cent, *read* 57 per cent.
Page 312, lines 27 and 28, from top, *for* East Cork (Mr. Lane) *read* North Cork (Mr. Flynn).

END OF VOLUME CCCXXII., AND FIRST VOLUME
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